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# Medical Commission Bill passed

Opposition says it's 'undemocratic'; Harsh Vardhan calls it revolutionary

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed the National Medical Commission Bill, 2019 (NMC) with Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan assuring the House that the Bill, which seeks to repeal the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, will go down in history as the most revolutionary step taken to improve medical education in India.

According to him, no powers of the State government will be taken away by the

Centre through this Bill. Dr. Vardhan said: "We have also withdrawn the suggestion of a bridge course."

A motion for consideration of the Bill was passed by 260-48 votes after a division of votes was sought and the Bill was then passed by a voice vote.

Speaking about the exit-examination during the four-hour debate which saw the participation of 32 MPs across parties, Dr. Vardhan said: "We are bringing this to ensure good standard of

medical students and colleges and to bring in transparency." The Minister added that the State governments would be fully involved with the running of the councils

The Bill was opposed by several Opposition MPs. While Vincent Pala of the Congress asked the Minister to explain what happens to MBBS students who don't pass the NEXT or the national exit exam, DMK's A. Raja called the Bill a 'joke' and 'undemocratic.'

Trinamool leader Dr. Ka-

koli Ghosh Dastidar said many students who study in the regional language find it difficult to clear NEET. She also described the Bill as going against the federal structure of the Constitution.

## IMA stages protest

Doctors and medical students under the Indian Medical Association (IMA) held a protest march from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences to Nirman Bhawan on Monday, calling the Bill anti-poor and anti-student.