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Auxiliary nurse midwives demands on recruitment of 440 vacant posts

DEHRADUN: Bringing the government's immunisation programme and other health services to its knees, over 1,750 auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) continued with their strike on the second day running on Wednesday. They are demanding immediate revision of pay grade, proper structuring of their cadre and recruitment on 440 vacant posts of the ANMs.

The midwives are also demanding U-health cards, saying that they are also integral part of health department. In the capital city, the striking ANMs shut down an alternate vaccination facility, opened at Doon Medical College Hospital, by forcibly pulling out contractual nurses from its rooms and locking the vaccination unit.

The move caused inconvenience to hundreds of people who had come from across the Garhwal region for vaccination of their children. However, chairperson of ANM association, Guddi Matura, said that it would give momentum to their stir.

After the incident, chief medical superintendent (CMS) of the hospital, Dr. Meenakshi Joshi, met Dehradun chief medical officer (CMO) Dr. YS Thapliyal and asked him to intervene into the matter. General secretary of ANMs association, Pawan Saini, said, "We have not ransacked any property, our ANMs simply did what was good for them. We will continue to keep all the units across the state locked until our demands are met."

"The strike will continue till government gives a written assurance to us," Saini said. Meanwhile, the striking ANMs met secretary of health department on Wednesday.

But the ANMs claimed that they only got verbal assurance. "The health department is expert at giving verbal assurances. Hence, this time, our agitation will come to an end only with written assurance from the top brass of health department," Saini added.

Under the banner of Matra Shishu Evam Pariwar Kalyan Mahila Karamchari Sangh, the ANMs have sought immediate revision of pay

grade, which was reduced to Rs 2,000 from Rs 2,800. Along with proper structuring of midwives cadre, they want promotion to 257 posts of women health inspectors and recruitment on 440 vacant posts of the ANMs.

"We feel cheated. Government has not fulfilled any of our demands. We are the backbone of the health department in hill districts, but the department is making us feel like obsolete staff," Matura said on Tuesday.

The association has also sought inquiry into the alleged irregularities in appointment of ANMs in Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar districts.