

Court to hear plea for extension to Venugopal Wednesday

The Delhi High Court will Wednesday hear a petition moved by the mother of a nine-year-old heart patient who has sought extension of term for All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) director P. Venugopal.

A bench of Justice G.S. Sistani will hear the plea after a vacation bench Friday posted the hearing to a regular bench till July 2.

Filing a petition through her counsel Sugriv Dubey, Mira Mishra has appealed to the court that her son's treatment would remain incomplete if Venugopal retired as scheduled - the noted cardiologist's term at the hospital ends July 2.

Mishra urged the court to extend Venugopal's term by six months so that her son's treatment could be completed.

'We argued before the bench that if his tenure won't be extended, it would be an infringement of the rights of patients who are presently under his treatment,' Dubey told IANS.

Mishra said her son was suffering from a heart problem as one of the valves of his heart was not functioning properly and Venugopal and his team have been treating the boy since his birth.

'We were assured that the final treatment would be given to him in January this year. When I approached the hospital for final treatment in January, I was told that the heart surgeon was removed from the post,' she said.

Following a Supreme Court judgement reinstating him to the post, Mishra said she again approached the hospital for treatment of the child.

However, she said, Venugopal's term will come to end July 2, before the completion of her son's treatment.

Meanwhile, many doctors supporting Venugopal are hopeful that the cardiac surgeon stands a slight chance of getting an extension.

'We are not holding any farewell meeting in the first half of Wednesday. We will wait for a court verdict before organizing a farewell function for Venugopal,' said a senior doctor at AIIMS.

He also said that Venugopal himself was 'not keen on holding a farewell meeting'.

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