Regulating MCI

What is the issue?

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The regulator of medical education, MCI (Medical Council of India) is itself in need of regulation.

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What are the recent issues with MCI?

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- Medical education scams continue persistently under the MCI's stewardship.
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- Earlier, a colonel of the Army Medical Corps was arrested for passing on sensitive information about inspections to a medical college in Pondicherry.
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- Recently, a former high court judge and his associates were arrested for agreeing to help an under-equipped college make the grade in court.
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- The volume of litigation that MCI faces concerning issues of policy, admission and examination suggests that the regulator is neither in command nor perceived to be so.
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What are the shortfalls in this regard?

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- MCI has rightly imposed a uniform benchmark for admissions at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
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- But different syllabi set by states and the diverse languages they are taught in tilt the playing field.
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- While MCI is standardising entrance tests, it is failing to assure uniform, quality education for entrants who qualify.

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- Due to this, the implications for the health of the nation are sobering.
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- The lucrative promise that India holds as a destination for medical tourism and education stands compromised.
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How can these be addressed?

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- The National Medical Commission Bill of 2016, trifurcate the functions of the MCI to reduce opportunities for corruption.
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- Transparent accreditation process guided by checks and balances conferring credibility should be its priority.
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- While it is progressive that the regulation of medical education has been handed over to the professionals instead of administrators, only a functional reform can strike at the root of corruption.
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- Merely replacing the MCI will not suffice; its successor must be armed with rules-based transparency.
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Source: Indian Express

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