

Hosp won't pull down hoarding on 'docs' cut'

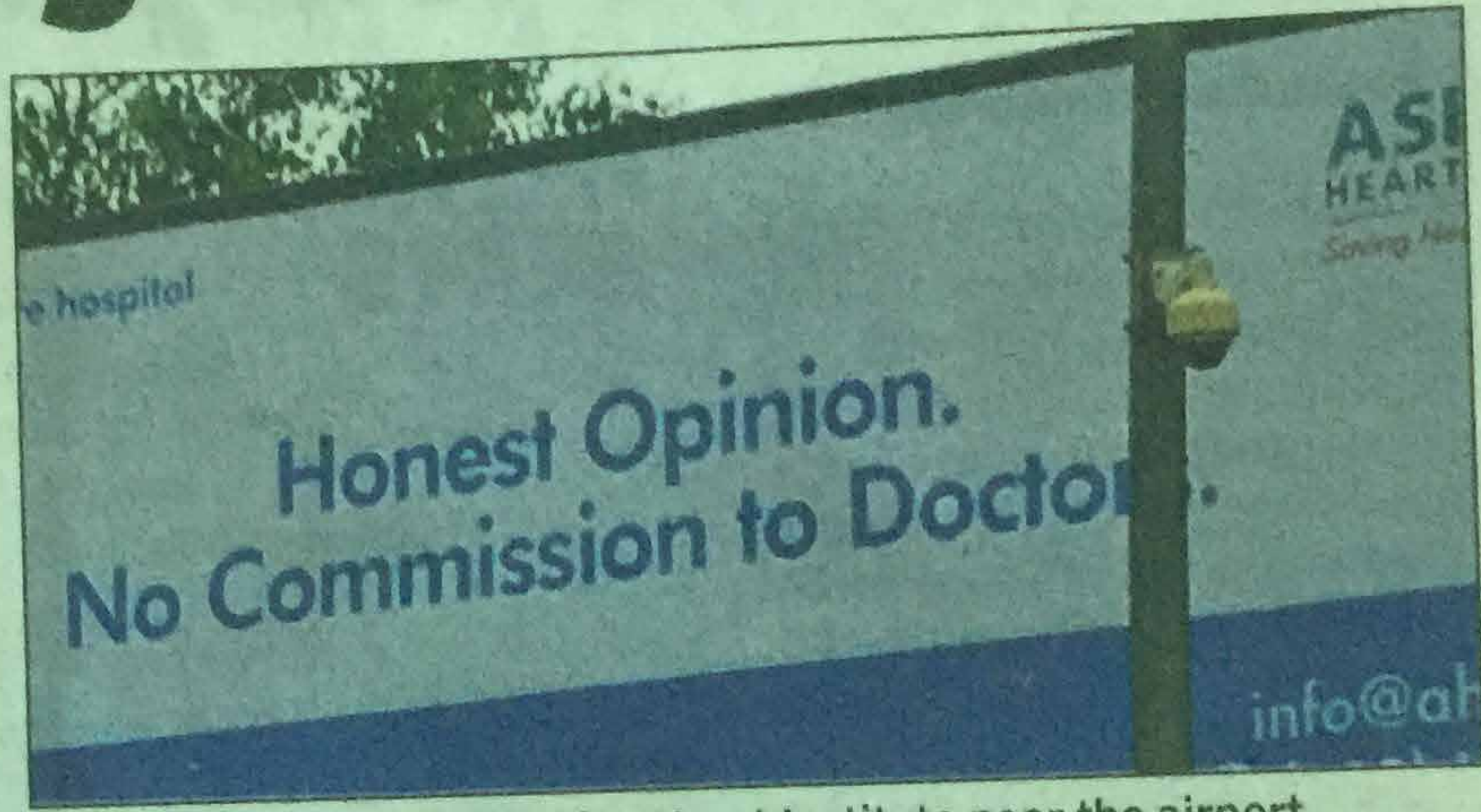
Indian Medical Association May Pursue Matter

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: A city hospital has refused to remove a hoarding it put up about cut practice despite the Indian Medical Association's (IMA) displeasure.

The IMA had written to the hospital, asking it to remove the hoarding near the airport that said, 'Honest Opinion. No Commission to Doctor'. Dr Ramakant Panda, vice chairman of the Asian Heart Hospital that put up the hoarding, said he had received calls from IMA members as well in this regard. "But we also got positive feedback from many young doctors who are unable to set up their own practice because of cut practice," he said. On Tuesday, the heart institute wrote to the Maharashtra Medical Council with 38 doctors signing the letter.

Dr Jayesh Lele of state IMA said his association is against cut practice but the hoarding is nothing but an advertisement. "The ethical ru-



The hoarding put up by Asian Heart Institute near the airport

les of advertising should be applied here. How can an ad blame others and suggest that it is the only hospital being ethical?" asked Dr Lele. He said the national IMA as well as several other medical associations will take up the issue further.

Meanwhile, Dr Sanjay Nagral, transplant surgeon and editorial board member of the Indian Journal of Medical Ethics, said cut practice is medicine's worst kept secret. "Cut practice is widely prevalent. It is a public-interest issue because it affects the cost of care; doctors and hospitals factor in the commission while making a patient's bill. Moreover, it also affects the quality of care. It isn't the best specialist who is recom-

mended to you, but the one who pays the biggest commission," he said.

He said cut practice has become a bigger problem than before. "It is not only widely prevalent, it has changed from being a payment from one doctor to another doctor to assume an industrial proportion. Now, hospitals are doing it," said Dr Nagral. "Cut practice has now become the centre of healthcare."

The Asian Heart Institute's letter to the Maharashtra Medical Council said, "We appeal to you to aggressively pursue and eliminate this unethical practice. All doctors should unite to curb this menace and will be happy to extend our full support to MMC in this endeavour."

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CITY'S COSTLIEST BUSES TO HIT ROADS IN JULY

The MMRDA will get delivery of five hi-tech hybrid buses within a

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