

# We Use PT, Say Physiotherapists

by Rajeshwari Ganesan Iyer

**Coimbatore:** Joining issue with the Tamil Nadu Dr MGR Medical University for seeking to strip them of the title "Dr", physiotherapists are insisting that they have a right to use the prefix "Dr" as much as their counterparts who hold the MBBS, MD and such other degrees.

"As physiotherapists we add the suffix 'PT' to our names. Being asked to drop the prefix 'Dr' despite this is grossly unjust," says Dr S V Siva Subramanian, PT, convenor of the Chennai unit of The Indian Association of Physiotherapists.

"We also undergo the rigour of studying all the subjects pertaining to medi-

cine. We are also specialists in our fields. Is it fair for the university to insist that we should drop the hard-earned prefix 'Dr' from our names," he asks.

Dr Umashankar Mohanty, president of the Indian Association of Physiotherapists, agrees. Interestingly, he sought to turn the tables on medical doctors claiming that even they cannot use the prefix 'Dr', going strictly by the Latin definition.

"The word doctor originates from the Latin verb 'docere' which means 'to teach'. Therefore, it has nothing to do with the medical profession. Indian medical practitioners have been adding the prefix 'Dr' by convention. Even the British sur-

geons merely use the prefix 'Mr' and not 'Dr'," he says.

Therefore, he had once written to the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons claiming that Indian doctors should not be using the prefix 'Dr' going by the origin of the term doctor.

"I got a response saying that the surgeons are more of artists than medical practitioners; therefore they use 'Mr' instead of 'Dr' (in Britain). The word physiotherapist includes therapy in it which is synonymous with treatment. Therefore, if anybody can prefix 'Dr' to their names, it has to be the physiotherapist," Mohanty argues, adding, "we condemn the university's move to deprive us of this right".