SLUG: LETTER

Title: The puzzling silence of BMA

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This is in reference to the piece ‘Medical ethics in times of conflict – why silence is not an option’ that appeared in the *IJME* (1).

I support wholeheartedly the argument that silence is not an option in times of conflict but suggest that there are other situations in which this principle applies.

Since the authors, Drs. Chisholm and Sheather, have referred to the World Medical Association (WMA) in their essay, I request them to favour us with their opinion on the deafening silence maintained by the British Medical Association on the troubling issue of Dr. Ketan Desai being elected President of the WMA despite his being under trial in a court of law in India for corruption.

Our publication in the BMJ (2) and that by Dr. Kunal Saha (3) did not result in any action from the British Medical Association (BMA) or its Medical Ethics Committee. Our request to the WMA and BMA for information on the financial statements of the WMA and contributions made to it by the Indian Medical Association over the past 10 years too elicited no response.

I can understand the inability of the Indian Medical Association to provide this information as the findings may implicate it in the behind-the-scenes dealings which facilitated Dr. Desai’s election.

I find the BMA’s silence puzzling.

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1. Chisholm J, Sheather J. Medical ethics in times of conflict – why silence is not an option’ *Indian J Med Ethics.*2018 Jan-Mar;3(1). NS: 39-42. DOI: 10.20529/IJME.2017.095.

2. Pandya S, Nagral S, Nundy S: World Medical Association’s tainted president, Ketan Desai. *BMJ* 2016;335:i5867 (Published 10 November 2016)  
3. Saha Kunal: World Medical Association’s tainted president, Ketan Desai *BMJ*2016; 355:i5867 (Published 25 November 2016)