

UNDETERRED

## *Doctors in Kolkata defy court order, protest for safety*

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Junior doctors in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal defied a Supreme Court order requiring them to return to work on Tuesday, as they vowed to continue a weeks-long strike for workplace safety following the gruesome murder of a female doctor. The 31-year-old trainee doctor was raped and murdered in early August inside the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in West Bengal's capital, Kolkata, where she worked.

A police volunteer also working at the hospital has been charged with the murder and arrested,



Junior doctors hold placards and shout slogans during a protest over the rape and murder of a medic, in Kolkata, on Sept. 2. File/AFP

but the case has since triggered daily demonstrations by medics calling for greater protection and workplace safety.

On Monday, the Supreme Court, which took up the matter in the

wake of nationwide outrage over the incident, ordered the protesting doctors to return to work by 5 p.m. the next day and the state's authorities to ensure the safety and security of doctors in

hospitals. The West Bengal Junior Doctors' Front, which represents about 7,000 physicians in the state, said it would follow the court's order only if their safety demands were met by the state.

"The Supreme Court has said that the state can take action after 5 p.m., if they want to. At the same time, the Supreme Court has also asked the state to increase the security measures which has not been done at all," Dr. Anustup Pal, the association's member, told Arab News, as protesters gathered in front of the state's health department to demand the resignation of its key leadership.