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SC allows mop-up counselling

To fill medical super-speciality seats

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has revised its earlier order refusing to extend the deadline for filling vacant seats in medical super-speciality courses.

In a separate order on Wednesday, a Bench of Justices A.K. Goel and U.U. Lalit directed the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) to hold mop-up counselling to fill 553 vacant medical super-speciality seats within the next 10 days.

The court said the DGHS should decide the date of counselling and the scheduled time, giving adequate time for the candidates to attend. The information should be duly publicised for five days continuously in national newspapers and also put up on the DGHS and Medical Council of India (MCI) websites at the earliest. The joining period post the counselling should not exceed four days.

The extension of the deadline is only applicable for the present academic year, the court clarified.



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would result in chaos. Ineligible students would benefit from such confusion, leaving the worthy ones in dire straits.

'Sustenance of order'

"We are of the convinced opinion that an extension at this juncture would not be appropriate. A sense of concern is one thing, but sustenance of discipline and order is another aspect. Weighing both the concepts in a balanced manner, we unhesitatingly come to the conclusion that the prayers made in the interlocutory applications do not deserve any acceptance and, accordingly, they stand rejected."

The court's refusal came

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Earlier decision

Earlier, another Bench led by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra had refused to extend the September 14 time limit, especially in the case of super-speciality courses.

In a four-page order on September 22, that Bench referred to the apprehensions raised in the various pleas that many seats remained vacant and there was a need to extend the date for admissions.

But the court dismissed these pleas, saying the concern voiced in them “travels from rational sphere to emotional sphere.” It acknowledged the MCI’s stand that discipline was essential in academic admission matters and any extension

despite the Centre favouring an extension.

Among the applications was one by 23 doctors from various parts of the country seeking an extended round of counselling for the candidates who had qualified in the NEET-SS examination to fill vacant seats available in government and private medical colleges. NEET-SS is an eligibility-cum-ranking examination prescribed as the single entrance examination to various DM/M.Ch. courses under the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Act, 2016.

The petitioners, led by Chennai doctor T.T. Senthilnathan, contended that over 25% of seats in super-speciality DM/M.Ch courses remain unfilled even after two rounds of counselling.