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INDIAN EXPRESS

Online Newspaper Clipping Service
Dtd-Sunday, 21st, January- 2018

Page No. 01

Now, Centre takes a NEET turn, back to CBSE syllabus

Move comes after students, parents oppose govt's proposal to base exam on state syllabi

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

THREE days after announcing that the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) would also take state board curricula into consideration from this year, the Union government on Saturday took a U-turn and declared that the syllabus for the examination would remain the same as last year.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the body under the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development that conducts NEET, put out a public notice which read: "The syllabus of NEET (UG), 2018 will be exactly same as it was for NEET, 2017." The official notification for the entrance test — that would include the date sheet and other details — is yet to come out.

On Wednesday, Union HRD minister Prakash Javadekar, while talking to *TNIE*, said that to put an end to the disadvantages faced by students of state boards, NEET papers would also take various state syllabi into account from this year.

Government sources, however, said the change in stance comes following angry responses from students and guardians who protested the proposal to change the syllabus a few months ahead of the exam, which is the entrance test for MBBS and BDS courses in the country.

A group of parents had also met Ja-

'Change would have gone against purpose of exam'

An MCI member who played a key role in drafting the NEET structure said efforts to change the syllabus would make the exam lose its objective of "bringing uniformity". "When students can write civil service exams based on a standard syllabus, why can't they adhere to a common syllabus for NEET?"



vadekar in Pune on Friday to register their protest on the proposal.

"We will stick to the same syllabus and there will not be any further review of any portion on which exam papers are based," an official in the HRD ministry said. "The decision to issue the notice through the CBSE was taken to pacify anxious parents and students after the Medical Council of India and health ministry, too, raised concerns on the proposed last-minute tweak in syllabus."

The decision brought a sigh of relief to hundreds of thousands of NEET aspirants and their parents. "We are greatly relieved that good sense has prevailed on this issue and the government has now withdrawn its earlier stance," said Jasmine Gogri, mother of a NEET aspirant in Mumbai, who along with many others had written a letter to Javadekar.