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Dtd-Saturday, 26th, May- 2018

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# SC allows pvt medical colleges to fill up vacant seats

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** The Supreme Court on Friday allowed private medical colleges across the country to fill up vacant seats in post-graduate courses from all India National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) merit list.

It, however, clarified that the court would not consider any plea for extension of cut-off date of May 31.

A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and Indu Malhotra accepted a suggestion made by advocate Gaurav Sharma on behalf of the Medical Council of India "in the larger public interest".

"We find this suggestion to be most appropriate and also assuage the grievance of the

private medical colleges and open up a new opportunity to the aspiring candidates in the merit list who otherwise could not secure admission in other medical colleges," the bench said. The court, however, directed Dr K K Gupta, Director General of Medical Education to take the responsibility of allotting students from the all-India NEET merit list in order of merit to the respective colleges by May 31.

The court passed its order in view of a peculiar situation arising out in UP where almost 41.95% of post-graduate medical seats in the private unaided medical colleges remained vacant for the academic year 2018-2019 and as the cut-off date was

already over on May 18.

Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand, appearing for the Union Government submitted that similar dispensation can be followed in other states, if they so desire while ensuring that the cut-off date of May 31, 2018, was strictly adhered to. The court accepted this suggestion as well.

However, the bench said, "We make it clear that in the guise of recommending names of candidates to private colleges, the candidate who has already secured admission elsewhere cannot be permitted to resign from the concerned college to avail of the opportunity under the stated dispensation."