



SRI DEVARAJ URS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH
SRI DEVARAJ URS MEDICAL COLLEGE
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Integrated option entry in CET counselling this year

BENGALURU:With the declaration of the National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET) prior to the commencement of the Common Entrance Test counselling, the students will now can do integrated option entry.

S N Gangadharaiah, administrative officer, Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) said, "Last year, the NEET results had come late due to which they could not be integrated for counselling. This year, we are able to do it,"

he added. Accordingly, the KEA has announced the revised schedule for document verification. The process will now commence on June 12 and the details have been uploaded on KEA website. Eligible candidates have to attend the document verification as per the revised schedule with all the original documents.

There are 16 centres across the state that are assigned to students for their document verification. The list of places is available on the KEA website.

Money, not quota, dilutes merit in med admissions

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It is not caste-based reservation but money that compromises merit in medical admissions. This is obvious from the difference of about 140 marks or close to 20 percentage points between the average NEET scores of admissions to over 39,000 government-controlled seats and those to the over 17,000 management and NRI quota seats in private colleges where fees determine admission. **TOI** analysed details of nearly 57,000 students admitted to 409 colleges last year. The average NEET score of students in govern-

MAX FEE FOR NRIs

Govt Colleges		Private Colleges		
Quota	Avg NEET Score	Quota	Avg NEET Score	Avg Annual Fees
Gen	524	Govt	399	₹5L
OBC	465	Mgmt	315	₹13L
SC	398	NRI	221	₹19L
ST	332			
All	470	All	345	₹10L

ment-controlled seats was 448 out of 720, while the quotas under private control averaged just 306.

Incidentally, the average

score of students admitted under the SC quota in government colleges was 398 and the overall average for SC students in all colleges was 367, both much higher than the overall average for privately controlled seats. The conclusion that it is high fees that are driving this dilution of merit in private college admissions comes from looking at how fees and NEET scores are correlated (see graphic). The higher the range of fees, the lower the average scores. The NRI quota, which typically has the highest fees, has the lowest NEET scores, a mere 221 on average.

► **Pure merit in Assam, P 8**

Medical admissions: Why pure merit works in Assam, not in Uttar Pradesh

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If medical admissions were entirely merit based what would be the cut-off percentile required to fill all seats? Without the entire list of NEET qualified students in the country, gauging this cut-off percentile is an exercise in approximation. However, the list of students who qualified from Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Kerala and Telangana are available in the public domain. An analysis of these shows that for all categories other than ST, even an 88th percentile cut-off (equivalent to a score of 340) would have ensured enough and more students qualified to fill seats available. For the ST category, this would be true at about the 75th percentile or above a score of 234.

The cases of Assam and UP are particularly illuminating to show how merit is being compromised severely by money in medical admissions. Assam has no private colleges, while UP has no government quota in its 22 private colleges with 2800 seats.

An analysis of NEET scores shows that in Assam, only 49 of the 603 students admitted were

STUDY IN CONTRAST

State/ total seats	Category	No. of seats	Cut-off percentile needed to fill them based on merit alone	Actual admissions below this cut-off	
				No. of admissions	Share of admissions %
Assam 603	General	301	93rd	5	1.7
	OBC	157	89th	25	15.9
	SC	36	88th	4	11.1
	ST	109	74th	15	13.8
Uttar Pradesh 4,908	General	2,454	97th	2,050	83.5
	OBC	1,325	97th	736	55.5
	SC	1,031	88th	89	8.6
	ST	98	75th	26	26.5

below the cut-offs that would have been needed (from 93rd percentile for unreserved to 74th for ST) to fill all the seats available if merit alone mattered and all students who qualified were willing to join.

In contrast, in UP, over 2,900 of the 4,908 students admitted were below the cut-offs calculated on the basis of merit (from 97th for unreserved and OBC to 75th for ST). About 95% of these students were in the private colleges in UP.

This happens because

many high-scoring students from the different categories cannot afford the exorbitant fees charged by private medical colleges and are forced to drop out despite merit. This allowed rich students with scores as low as 17-18% at the 50th and 40th percentile cut-offs to grab the seats.

Instead of fixing the cut-off percentile based on the number of seats available and the marks scored by students in each year, the health ministry and the Medical Council of India fixed the cut-off in advance at 50th

Avg score in govt med colleges is 487

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As a result, the NRI quota, which typically has the highest fees, has the lowest NEET scores, a mere 221 on average. The correlation between fees and NEET scores can be seen even in government colleges, some of which have started charging fees beyond the means of even middle-class families. The average score of students in government colleges where the annual fee is less than Rs 50,000, was 487, whereas for those with fees of 1L or more, it was 372.5.

and 40th percentile. To make matters worse, with no stipulation on minimum marks in each subject, students with single digit marks in chemistry and physics, and a few with even zero and negative marks in these subjects have qualified and got admission. Despite this being brought to the notice of the health ministry and the MCI, the system remains unchanged. In 2018, the eligibility scores fell even further to 119 (16.5%) and 96 (13.3%) for the unreserved and reserved categories respectively.