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OCIs are to be treated as NRIs for admission to MBBS course: Centre

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that the Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) are a special class of foreigners and they have to be treated as NRIs only for the purpose of their admission to MBBS course.

A bench of Justices Arun Mishra and S Abdul Nazeer, however, said it is still a debatable issue as there is a difference between the NRIs and the OCIs.

A counsel, appearing for the Union government, submitted before the court that he had received instructions to state that the OCIs are entitled to be considered as NRIs only.

The top court was hearing a plea by a group of OCIs, led by Trupti V Reddy, Shreya Joshi and others, challenging the Karnataka regulations, debaring them from competing for 85% state quota seats for admission to MBBS and other professional courses in colleges of Karnataka by appearing in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET).

The court gave further one week time to the Centre to file its affidavit on the issue and put



the matter for further consideration on July 17.

It, however, declined a plea for passing any interim order in view of the fact the counselling for admission is to begin shortly. "We will not disturb counselling," the bench said.

The medical education regulator MCI had earlier endorsed the provisions of the Karnataka Professional Educational Institutions (Regulations of Admission and Determination of Fee) Act, 2006, as amended in 2017, whereby the Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and OCIs have been treated within the category of NRIs.

With the amendment in the Citizenship Act, 1955, the OCIs claimed they have legal rights to secure admission like other citizens of the country.

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