



Engineering, medical seat matrix to be out today as standoff ends

Govt Allows 10% Fee Hike In Pvt Engg Colleges

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Bengaluru: The fortnight-long nightmare for aspiring engineers and doctors who have qualified in respective entrance tests is set to end with the government and private professional colleges ending the stalemate over fee hike.

On Saturday, the complete seat matrix for engineering/medical courses will be published on the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) website, paving the way for first round of counselling for government quota BE, BArch, MBBS and BDS seats in government and private colleges.

"We have asked the higher education department (for engineering) and directorate of medical education (DME) to send the entire seat matrix and fee structure, discipline-wise, college-wise and category-wise, by Friday evening so that we can upload it by Saturday evening. DME wants to initiate the process of counselling by allowing students to start selecting options for mock seat allotment by July 7. For engineering, we will give students a three-day window to select options," said K Vinothpriya, executive director, KEA.

On Thursday, the government decided to increase fee by 10% in private engineering



LONG WAIT ENDS: Publishing the seat matrix will pave the way for first round of counselling for government quota seats

New fee fixation committee

Higher education minister GT Devegowda and medical education minister DK Shivakumar have agreed to set up a new fee fixation committee. "It will have members from college managements too. I am hoping it will follow some basic standards and methodology to approve fee hikes," said MK Panduranga Shetty, secretary, KUPECA.

DME bargains with deemed universities

The eight deemed medical/dental universities in the state have already filled up maximum seats through the first round of all-India National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) counselling, conducted by the directorate general of health services (DGHS). "We are still in talks with deemed

universities to share some seats with the government to admit Karnataka-domicile students. As per our information, 300-odd students haven't reported to these colleges after the first round of counselling," said an official in DME. Meanwhile, DGHS has begun the second round of counselling.

colleges for both government and ComedK quota, though the Fee Regulatory Committee had capped the hike at 8% for engineering, medical and dental courses in private colleges. Medical and dental colleges, however, have settled for an 8% hike. The higher education department has signed a consensual agreement with Karnataka Unaided Private Engineering Colleges Association.

"The committee had no basis to fix the fee. The hike approved on Thursday has some basis but it's still not enough for many institutions. Colleges

with admissions lower than 50% last year will opt to cut cost by reducing staff, because AICTE's new direction allows colleges to have a teacher-student ratio of 1:20. But education quality will suffer," said MK Panduranga Shetty, chairman, RV College of Engineering and secretary, KUPECA.

DME said the maximum fee for government quota seats in private colleges will be Rs 97,350 for MBBS and Rs 63,030 for BDS. It has also signed a consensual agreement with three associations of private medical and dental colleges.

Fee panel: Govt action is contempt of court

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Bengaluru: The Fee Regulatory Committee has taken exception to the government and private engineering colleges coming together to defy its 8% ceiling on fee hike.

The panel headed by retired high court judge DV Shylendra Kumar said the move amounted to contempt of the Supreme Court's 2005 order, that led to formation of a fee fixation committee by the state in 2006.

"The government created this committee and now it thinks the members have no right to fix fee, whereas the Karnataka Professional Educational Institutions (Regulation of Admission and Determination of Fee) Act 2006 gives us the power: The government doesn't have the right to override its legislation. What it has done now amounts to contempt of the SC order," said Justice Kumar.

He said the committee is a quasi-judicial statutory body and doesn't need permission from the government to decide the fee.

"The history of the panel never saw the fee order being made public but I did it because my predecessors fixed the fee and gave directions to

the government and marked copies to the chief secretaries, which only gathered dust in government offices. Ministers want to make deals. If the government doesn't want to consider our report, why are we there," Justice Kumar told TOI.

Sources privy to the development said the committee hasn't been paid its honorarium regularly since it was set up in December 2017. "The chairman was appointed by the Chief Justice of Karnataka high court in December 2017 and is supposed to be paid as per his last-drawn salary. But he hasn't been paid regularly. He also recommended honorarium for the other two members at Rs 60,000, which is a pittance as they both are very well remunerated in their own professions. But the finance department questioned his authority. Both members have not been paid. They have spent from their own pocket to participate in the committee's deliberations," they claimed.

Sources said the government's attitude towards the committee is one of the reasons why retired judges who were appointed to head the body resigned much before their tenure ended.