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Irregularities in pvt varsities: Higher edu dept to form panel

ENS@Bengaluru

FOLLOWING the order issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to set up an expert committee to conduct inquiry into the alleged irregularities at some of the private universities in the state, the state higher education department has also decided to constitute a committee to review the functioning of the private universities.

The department has decided to appoint a retired vice-chancellor to head the committee and three months' time will be given to the committee to review and submit a report. "Soon after Dasara, we will finalise the name for the panel head post," said state higher education minister GT Devegowda. "Even the pending applications for private university status will be reviewed soon," he added. The department has also decided to bring in general amendments to the existing act to ensure that government will have a say in the varsity affairs. There are 17 private universities functioning in the state, and at least six applications are pending before the department for approval.

SC-appointed panel's report sealed MCI fate

Oversight Committee said that its directions were defied by medical education regulator

PANEL'S DAMNING REPORT

MCI was extremely opaque in carrying out inspection of medical colleges, leading to a large number of complaints from colleges

MCI was not following the instructions given to it by the Oversight Committee and not furnishing the information desired by it

MCI did not submit to OC the list of assessors or inspectors who had inspected various medical colleges in 2017

In response to OC directive asking for the details of assessors, mechanism of evaluation and their full reports, the MCI declined to share the information saying it would be "too bulky"

MCI did not follow OC's directions on taking urgent steps on filling gaps that led to a many vacant PG seats resulting in wastage of speciality seats

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

THE Medical Council of India (MCI) was extremely opaque in carrying out inspection of medical colleges, leading to a large number of complaints from most colleges, and had messed up the PG admissions this year, causing high number of vacant speciality seats after counselling.

These were some of the clinching points of a report submitted to the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry by the Supreme Court appointed Oversight Committee, which led to the unceremonious dissolution of the country's medical education regulator last week.

"We inform you with great distress that MCI is not following the instructions given to it by the OC and not furnishing the information desired by it from time to time," said the report, a copy of which is with *TNIE*. The committee also said that the MCI showed "complete disregard for most of its orders and instructions".

The Centre, through an ordinance last Wednesday, had notified that the MCI would be superseded with a seven-member Board Of Governors under Niti Aayog member (health) V K Paul.

Other members in the board include AIIMS-Delhi director Randeep Guleria, PGIMER-Chandigarh director Jagat Ram, NIMHANS-Bangalore director B N Gangadhar and Nikhil Tandon, professor, Department of Endocrinology and Metabolism, AIIMS, among others.

The OC, which resigned in early September, was constituted in July last year and had been tasked with vetting all decisions and recommendations of the corruption-tainted MCI.

It was, however, peeved that none of its directions were followed by the body. The MCI, for instance, did not submit to it the list of assessors or inspectors who had inspected various medical colleges in 2017 and found faults with them.

"The OC observed that 59.82 per cent of the 351 representations received from medical colleges are related to disagreement or dissent by the college authorities against the assessment process/report," the committee wrote to the government.

In response to an OC directive asking for the details of assessors, mechanism of evaluation and their full reports, the MCI declined to share the information saying it would be "too bulky" and would set a wrong precedent.

"It would also be akin to undermining the credibility of MCI assessors who are professors of government medical colleges," the MCI had replied to the OC.

In addition, the MCI also did not follow the OC's directions on taking urgent steps on filling gaps that led to a large number of vacant PG seats in medical colleges this year, resulting in wastage of "crucial speciality seats", the committee said in its report submitted in July.

"The committee was formed for indefinite period of time. But they were so stressed by the malpractices in the MCI that they put in their papers in a year," said a health ministry official. "In such a scenario, the only way left for us was to dissolve the MCI."