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Hope renewed

Aspiring docs above 25 can appear in NEET

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NEW DELHI, DHNS: The National Testing Agency (NTA) has allowed all aspiring doctors above 25 years of age to apply and appear for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test- Under Graduate (NEET-UG) to be held in May 2019.

The NTA also extended the last date for filling up forms online by a week for such candidates, saying those willing to take the entrance examination must register online by December 7 and submit examination fee by December 8.

The testing agency, however, made it clear that participation of such candidates in the nationwide test will be provisional and subject to the final outcome of the matter which is before the Supreme Court.

This comes a day after the apex court issued a notice to the Medical Council of India (MCI) and the NTA on a plea challenging the validity of the regulations putting an upper age limit of 25 years for candidates aspiring to join the MBBS/BDS course.

A three-judge bench presided over by Justice S A Bobde also provisionally allowed a group of petitioners above 25 years of age to appear in NEET-UG 2019 on Thursday.

"In view of the Supreme Court's Order in SLP (C) No(s). 14320/2018 and in other connected matters, dated November 29, 2018, the petitioners/candidates who are 25 years of age and above shall be entitled to apply and appear in NEET-UG 2019 examination provisionally subject to final outcome of these matters," the testing agency said in a notification on Friday.

"The date is also extended in view of the order passed by the High Court of Madras, Madurai Bench," it added.

The NTA is scheduled to conduct NEET-UG on May 5, 2019.

The apex court has directed the MCI and the NTA to submit their response on the upper age cap of 25 years for NEET-UG candidates within four weeks, putting the matter for further consideration in January 2019.