



Govt leaves engg, med students at mercy of college managements

Plaints pile up as admission overseeing panel awaits extension

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The inordinate delay by the state government in extending the term of members of Admission Overseeing Committee, headed by Justice B Manohar, has hampered effective disposal of complaints filed by parents and students against professional colleges in Karnataka.

The Admission Overseeing Committee was constituted by the Higher Education department during the academic year

Fee regulatory panel headless

Interestingly, the Fee Regulatory Committee constituted by the state government, which was headed by Justice D V Shylendra Kumar, has members, but no chairperson. Fee Regulatory Committee was also constituted along with Admission Overseeing Committee.

2018-19 with the term of the nominated members fixed at one year. The members' term expired in July and the committee brought this to the notice of the government in June, seeking extension of the existing members or nomination of new members.

But, till date, the government has not responded to the request, resulting in over 60 complaints pending before the committee since July 2019.

Sharing details with *DH*, a source from the committee said, "Now only the chairman is left in the committee. The term of the two nominated members has expired. Though the request was sent a month before the expiry of their term, we have not received any communication from the government, so far. This is causing a delay in disposal of cases which are pending before us," said the source.

"As per the Karnataka Professional Educational Institutions (Regulation of Admissions and Determination of Fee) Act, 2006, the term of the members of the Admission Overseeing committee shall be two years. But, the government limited it to one year," the source added.

According to the details available from the committee, over 60 cases filed after July 2019 for 2019-20 academic year are pending. A majority of the cases are against engineering and medical colleges where managements are accused of demanding/collecting excess fee.

"To issue notice to colleges, based on the complaints, we need to have members in the committee. If the nomination of members is delayed, then the number of cases will pile up, and justice will be delayed to students," the source said.

It can be recalled that while hearing cases during 2018-19, the committee had passed orders recommending repay of the excess fee collected along with 6% interest.

The recommendations were sent to the respective universities/institutions for implementation.

UGC-AICTE merger not decided yet

First Draft Bill had drawn flak

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Centre has not taken any final decision on the merger of the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) to create a single regulator for higher education, Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

He was responding to a written question from YSR Congress Party MP Prabhakar Reddy Vemireddy regarding the proposal to create a Higher Education Commission of India to oversee all non-medical college-level education in the country.

Objection from States

A June 2018 version of the draft HECI Bill had faced objections from States worried



Ramesh Pokhriyal

they would lose autonomy under the new regime as well as concerns that grant disbursement powers were being moved from autonomous bodies to the direct control of the HRD Minister.

By September 2019, a revised draft which reportedly made changes to address such concerns was ready for approval. Senior HRD Ministry officials indicated that it would be introduced in the winter session of Parliament.