



**SRI DEVARAJ URS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION & RESEARCH**  
**SRI DEVARAJ URS MEDICAL COLLEGE**  
Tamaka, Kolar



**UNIVERSITY LIBRARY & LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE**

DECCAN HERALD

**Online Newspaper Clipping Service**  
Dtd- Tuesday, 26th, November- 2019

Page No.01

# KEA smells link between data breach, seat scam

**Officials believe  
touts used leaked  
info to block seats  
and cheat students**

**RASHMI BELUR**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**I**n a new twist to the ongoing probe into the leak of data of thousands of pre-university students, the government has asked investigators to look into a possible connection be-

tween the data breach and seat-blocking scam.

The Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) first got wind of the link after several candidates who appeared for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) and Common Entrance Test (CET) told officials about the seat offers they were receiving from unknown numbers.

The KEA, which had filed a complaint on the data breach, soon alerted higher-ups in the government. "The offers came from unknown numbers but we are sure that agents involved in seat-blocking were

behind this," sources at KEA said.

KEA officials said medical and engineering seats were offered in Karnataka and in colleges in neighboring states. They were convinced of the connection after they noticed that students with good and lower ranks alike received such calls.

"Besides seat-blocking, the data might have been used by touts to cheat students and parents who were not confident of securing seats for professional courses. Such candidates try all means to get seats and are gullible," said a source.



Following an alert from the KEA, the state government has asked investigating officers to look into seat-blocking and cheating angles.

"We cannot deny or confirm any of the allegations. We are waiting for the investigation report," a senior official said.

Higher Education and

Medical Education Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan said, "We have asked the officials concerned to investigate all suspected angles and ensure a more secure system in future."

It may be recalled that the Income Tax department had raided two deemed-to-be medical universities where the seat-blocking racket had surfaced in the state.

The agents used to gather the academic records, family background, contact details and ranks secured in competitive exams by professional course aspirants.

KEA officials said there was

no way the data came from their website. "The entire process of CET is facilitated by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in a secure manner. Soon after complaints from students, we took a report from the NIC. As per our information, the leaked data consisted of only students' names, contact numbers and CET numbers," said an official.

Officials said the data might have come from the Pre-University Education Department. "The entire data of science stream students has been ported from PUE department to KEA," they said.