

# Pvt med colleges can fill all seats themselves

By Rukmini Shrinivasan/TNN

**Mumbai:** Students across the state are preparing for entrance exams to professional colleges but they are unaware that as things stand, there is no government quota in private medical, dental, engineering or management colleges. Management colleges can fill 100% of the seats themselves and there is also no quota for reserved category students.

The Supreme Court in August 2005 struck down quotas in private professional

colleges, allowing the management of private colleges to fill 85% of their seats themselves, with 15% seats reserved for NRIs. Until last year, there was a significant government quota in professional colleges which was filled on the basis of merit, through entrance exams conducted by the government. Half of the seats in private medical colleges, were filled through the government quota. Of this, 50% seats are reserved for SC/ST students.

In its order, the SC had

told the centre and states to frame "appropriate legislation" immediately but the Maharashtra state government has not yet tabled a Bill which it has drafted. As a result, in the present situation, the SC's order will govern admissions this year.

TOI spoke to many students who are completely unaware of the situation. Students who are confident of getting a good rank in the entrance exams but cannot afford to pay lakhs as fees often do not even take the entrance exam to private pro-

fessional colleges but this year it appears that they have no option as the number of government quota seats has shrunk significantly. "So if a student gets a good rank of 1000 or 1200 in the MH CET (Maharashtra Common Entrance Test), he or she will not get admission now this year," said Rajesh Jain of the Parents Association of Medical Students (PAMS). With the SC order in force, there will be 535 less seats in medical and 565 seats in dental colleges alone available through the

professionals.

**MHCET**

"I find the exam fees too high, let alone the college fees," said Ruia College student Devaki Jha who is studying for the MHCET only. In July last year, the Association of Management of Unaided Private Medical and Dental Colleges (AMUPMDC) reached a settlement with the state government, after which students who were admitted under the 50% government quota in private colleges had to pay the fees prescribed by a court-appointed

committee while students in the 50% private quota had to pay higher fees.

College managements too are unsure of the situation and some are wary of the repercussions of reservations for SC/ST students being struck down this year. "We have spoken to the government and they are likely to come put with an Act which will at least address SC/ST reservations," said AMUPMDC member Dr Shalish Kore of Tatyasaheb Kore Dental College and Research Centre.