

IT'S RS 50 LAKH FOR A MEDICAL SEAT

A Bangalore Mirror sting in four well-known medical colleges in the city reveals that merit is hardly the criterion for admission. Money is what matters

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A seat in a government medical college costs only Rs 16,700 (annual fee). Except that you need to be on top of your game to get an admission. There are reputed private medical colleges, but here too the competition is intense and it's difficult to get a seat under the general merit category.

That doesn't mean the not-so-bright, who desperately want to become doctors, have to resign themselves to a life at the wrong end of the CT Scan. There's always the money route. A Bangalore Mirror sting exposes how well-known medical colleges are more than willing to oblige in this respect. Posing as an outstation student and her guardian, we went to four colleges. Here's the lowdown:

Sri Rajarajeshwari Medical College and Hospital, Kengeri

We reached the college in an Opel Astra to give the right impression. We were trying to figure out how best to go about it when an office attendant approached us. When we said we wanted a management seat, he made a call right away to Vijay Anand Kumar, Controller of Admissions. As Kumar was in a meeting, we waited for an hour. When we were summoned by Kumar, the attendant asked us to first deposit our mobiles, wallets and purse in a bag. He said it

of Rs 1 lakh.

Dr B R Ambedkar Medical College, Shampura Main Road

Before meeting the chairman, we were directed to his personal secretary, Ramesh. We told Ramesh that money was not an issue. Initially, he refused the bait, saying that passing COMED was essential. When we persisted, he suggested, "You could opt for the NRI quota." He explained that we could ask one of our relatives abroad to 'sponsor' the candidate and the rest would be taken care of. He said the chairman would discuss details of the 'seat price' with us.

Though we waited for a couple of hours, the chairman didn't turn up. Ramesh asked us to come back the next day with all documents. We again asked him to quote a price so that we could get it ready, but he refused. We tried talking to some of the students, but two attendants intervened, asked the students to leave and told us that the chairman was the right person to speak to in this regard. As we went to our vehicle, we noticed one of the attendants following us and noting down our vehicle registration number. Looks like they smelt a rat.

Vydehi Institute of Medical Science and Research Centre, near Whitefield

Here too we posed as a student, accompanied by a local guardian. We were asked to meet Shiva Priya, officer in-charge of admissions. She said the management quota was already full. When we asked for a

price, she said it was Rs 25 lakh for a seat, exclusive of annual fees. She also clarified that dental seats were very much available. Of course, for a price. We said we were not interested.

M S Ramaiah Medical College, BEL Road

When we were enquiring for a management seat, an official

asked us to meet Prakash, who was in-charge of admissions. His immediate question was whether the candidate had taken a COMED test. When we said no, Prakash replied that it was not possible for them to offer a seat in such a scenario. Explaining that we could try next year, he took the trouble to elaborate a little and let the

cat loose in the bargain. "We have seven seats under management quota. Upon clearing COMED, you will be required to pay Rs 50 lakh, inclusive of the full-term fee," he said. Rs 50 lakh – now, that's the operative word. In private unaided colleges, 10 pc of seats are reserved for management and 15 pc for NRI categories.

was the protocol. We were then let in.

Kumar asked us whether the candidate had taken the Common Entrance Test (CET) or Consortium of Medical, Engineering and Dental Colleges (COMED) exam. When we answered in the negative, he wanted to know the candidate's PU marks.

This was the break-up we gave him: Biology - 48, Chemistry - 55 and Physics - 52. Kumar paused for a minute. "There are only five management seats and they are filling up fast," he said. He went on: "There are two options. Either you pay Rs 35 lakh, which is inclusive of annual fees, or you can go for the Rs 20 lakh development fee, exclusive of annual fee."

Kumar was even gracious enough to offer us a rebate. He said if we paid Rs 20 lakh upfront, we would get a discount

QUOTED PRICE

Sri Rajarajeshwari Medical College and Hospital, Kengeri
Quoted price: Rs 35 lakh (inclusive of annual fees) or Rs 25 lakh (exclusive of fees)
Entrance test: Not required
Discount: Rs 1 lakh for Rs 20 lakh payment at one go

M S Ramaiah Medical College, BEL Road
Quoted price: Rs 50 Lakh

Dr B R Ambedkar Medical College, Shampura Main Road
Quoted price: Negotiable, not disclosed
No COMED K or CET? Take the NRI route.

Vydehi Institute of Medical Science and Research Centre, Whitefield
Quoted Price: Rs 25 lakh, exclusive of fees.