

## Single test for MBBS: SC seeks states' reply Gives Them Four Weeks To Respond

**Dhananjay Mahapatra TNN**

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday asked all states and Union Territories to respond within four weeks to a proposal by the Board of Governors managing the affairs of Medical Council of India (MCI) for holding a single common entrance test (CET) for MBBS seats in all government and private medical colleges.

Interestingly, the Central Board of Secondary Education, ministry of human resource development and governing body of MCI came together to file another application proposing a combined common entrance test for medical, engineering and other professional course for Class XII passouts.

The application proposed that the CBSE would conduct the CET and prepare an all-India merit list allowing students to choose their preferred professional course in any college. Though a bench comprising Justices R V Raveendran and H L Gokhale adjourned CBSE's CET proposal, it issued notices to states and UTs on the application handed over by senior advocate Amarendra Saran for a single test for undergraduate medical courses.

However, it expressed doubts about the feasibility of such a single entrance test given the right of minority institutions and prevalent state quota, not to mention the opposition by Tamil Nadu. But Saran, aided by petitioner's counsel A D N Rao, said this would protect students from having to appear in 10 to 15 entrance tests to pursue their aspiration of studying medicine.

Saran said the state quota would remain intact as "National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test" would draw up a national merit list as well as state-wise ranking list.

The proposal said, "In order to be eligible for admissions to MBBS courses for a particular academic year, it shall be necessary for a candidate to obtain minimum 50% marks in each paper of NEET held for the said academic year."

### **Delay in using gory pic warnings on tobacco packs irks apex court**

New Delhi: The SC on Friday asked the Centre why it had shifted the deadline for pictorial warnings on packets of cigarettes and other tobacco products from June 1 to December 1. An SC bench asked additional solicitor general Vivek Tankha to take instructions from the government and file an affidavit explaining why the deadline was extended. Tankha said the government had already implemented display of pictorial warnings but wanted to give some more time to the industry to make the warnings more repulsive. TNN

### **SC pulls up def min on arms racket**

New Delhi: Dubbing as "very serious" the alleged involvement of army and civilian officers in illegal sale of arms, the Supreme Court on Friday took umbrage to a junior officer filing an affidavit on behalf of the defence ministry, which was asked to submit it afresh. "Is the Ministry of Defence shirking to file an affidavit in the matter," the SC said and wondered whether the weapons have landed in the hands of "dacoits". AGENCIES



