

NEET-2 is here, but students are still in a dilemma



• [Tanu Kulkarni](#)



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The stressful times for many candidates will end on Sunday after they take NEET Phase 2. Photo: R.V. Moorthy

TIMELINE

- ◉ **April 28, 2016:** Supreme Court gives the go-ahead for conducting the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) 2016-17 in two phases for admissions to undergraduate medical and dental courses
- ◉ **May 1:** The All-India Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Test (NEET Phase 1) is conducted
- ◉ **First week of May:** COMEDK and deemed universities cancel their medical and dental entrance tests
- ◉ **May 24:** With many State governments raising apprehensions as they had already conducted State entrance exams, the Centre promulgates an Ordinance, allowing States to conduct their own entrance exams to fill government and government-quota seats in private colleges
- ◉ **May 28:** Karnataka Professional Colleges Foundation announces decision not to give government-quota seats
- ◉ **June 23:** Private college managements agree to give government-quota seats after the State government agrees to hike fees from 27 to 41 per cent

Thousands of medical, dental seat aspirants to write the test today

While medical seat aspirants across the country have faced anxious moments with the Supreme Court giving the go-ahead for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) in the “last minute”, the admission season has been chaotic for students in the State in particular as the State government failed to act quickly and delayed the counselling schedule.

Although the stressful times for many candidates will end on Sunday after they take NEET Phase 2, they point out that the State government’s “lackadaisical” attitude has added to their anxiety and many are in a dilemma over what their choices are.

Additional seats

For instance, the Karnataka Examinations Authority last week announced that 506 medical and 299 dental seats from minority colleges and deemed university were added to the Common Entrance Test pool in the second extended round. However, this is unlikely to bring any relief to students as many who are likely to obtain these seats have decided to write NEET Phase 2 anyway, as the CET seat allotment in the second extended round would be done on July 26.

A medical seat aspirant said, "None of the medical seats were added to the seat matrix in the second round and the State government sat on the issue. A little planning would have helped us avoid taking NEET Phase 2," she said.

The matters were made worse as the State government heeded to pressure from private college managements and increased the fee from 27 to 41 per cent to end the chaos over government-quota seats, she said.

For the second time

Many of the 26,000 students from the State who wrote NEET Phase 1 on May 1 are writing NEET Phase 2 since they had little time to prepare for the first exam as it was a last-minute decision. Many of the medical seat aspirants have also decided to opt for a gap year, while some have chosen to pursue other disciplines because of the confusion this year.

A parent said his son, a medical seat aspirant who secured a rank above 1,900, opted for dental course and paid the fees as he did not get a medical seat.

"Counselling sessions of CET and NEET should have ideally been conducted simultaneously so that candidates would have know their chances through both these routes and made an informed decision," a parent said.

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