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Committee

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ: DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: (Parliament)

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India

ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 29/07/2019

### NMC bill restricting fee regulation a bonanza for private medical colleges

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New Delhi: The National Medical Commission Bill, 2019, if passed in its present



form, could be a bonanza for private medical colleges as it gives the proposed commission the power to fix fees for only 50% of seats in private institutions. Currently, in most states, a fee regulatory committee stipulates fee ceilings for all seats in private colleges other than those in deemed universities. The latter are regulated by a committee set up by the UGC.

Ignoring the concerns raised by state governments and other stakeholders about the fee fixation clause leading to malpractices and auctioning of seats, the Centre has chosen to continue with the bill seeking regulation for only 50% of seats.

The parliamentary standing committee to which the NMC Bill, 2017 was referred, after hearing various stakeholders, had recommended in March 2018 report that the existing fee regulatory mechanism by states for private colleges should not be diluted. As for colleges currently not under fee regulation — deemed universities and deemed-to-be universities — the committee had recommended that the fee “should be regulated for at least 50% of the seats”. In the NMC bill introduced in the Lok Sabha, the section on the powers and functions of the commission includes the “power to frame guidelines for determination of fees and all other charges in respect of 50% of seats in private institutions and deemed universities”.