

ICAR move irks candidates

Council cancels all-India entrance test for admission to various courses

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The cancellation of the 23rd online All India Entrance Examination (computer-based test), conducted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for admission to undergraduate, post-graduate, and PhD courses, has left candidates from the State and their parents fuming.

The examination, held on June 22 and 23 for admission to courses in agriculture and allied sciences, has been cancelled owing to administrative reasons, a notice issued by the ICAR said. The dates for the re-examination would be notified soon, it added.

The cancellation has come as a jolt for the sizeable number of candidates from the State. This was the first time that the examination was held online, parents say. However, candidates from

Kerala were asked to appear for the examination in States such as Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Odisha, and even farther.

Financial burden

This put a huge financial burden on families.

"Our son applied the day after the notification came out, but still had to go to Karnataka to appear for the examination. Now, the exam has been cancelled. Who will compensate us for the money spent? Will we have to spend from our pockets and travel out of the State if a re-test is held," says a worried parent.

Parents say at the exam centres they met many Malayali families that were not well to do and had been financially stressed by the expense incurred by going to other States.

"Wonder how they are going to afford travelling out-



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The examination held on June 22 and 23 has been cancelled by Indian Council of Agricultural Research citing administrative reasons

side the State again? Many candidates did not appear for the examination owing to this," a parent said.

A parent whose daughter's centre was in Andhra Pradesh said they received the hall tickets on June 16, and had to take a flight as no train tickets were available.

In one exam hall at the exam centre, of the 125 candidates from the Kerala, only nine turned up for the exam. Eventually, they made candidates in all the halls sit together, and yet there were not enough to fill a classroom, a parent said about

the low attendance.

The examinations were held on June 22 and 23, but the results were held up. "Online examinations are held so that the results can be announced at the earliest.

All this time, the ICAR website kept showing the message that the results had been postponed owing to some reason.

Now, we got to know about the cancellation and a re-examination. So many people were put to hardship but why aren't people's representatives taking up this matter, as was done by those in Tamil Nadu in the case of NEET," asks another parent.

Parents says they are not opposed to the re-examination, but want the ICAR to ensure that the exam centres are within the State this time around. "Many were pinning their hopes for a career on these programmes," they said.