

# Minority status: HC notice to govt, Jamia

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**

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THE grant of minority status to Jamia Millia Islamia by the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) came under the Delhi High Court's scrutiny on Wednesday, as it issued notices to the Central government, NCMEI, the university and others.

Admitting a PIL filed by Vijay Kumar Sharma, president of NGO Yuva Bharti Samiti, a Division Bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra sought responses from all the parties by May 18.

Challenging the February 22 or-

der of the Commission, the petition, filed through advocate Rakesh Kumar, stated: "The Jamia Millia Islamia Act incorporates and establishes the university and dissolves the Jamia Millia Islamia Society, which was managing and running it, and the Commission has no jurisdiction or authority to declare it a minority institution.

"The Act does not provide any special consideration for a person belonging to a particular community and the posts of the chief policy-making body (Anjuman)...are open to persons of all castes, creed and religion with no special consid-

eration to Muslims...."

The PIL added that granting of minority status defeated the purpose of the law, enacted by Parliament.

The Commission, headed by Justice M S A Siddiqui, had recently granted minority status to the university, enabling it to reserve up to 50 per cent seats for Muslim students and allowing it to not reserve seats for SC and ST students.

The panel, a quasi-judicial body, had passed the order while allowing the petitions of the Jamia Old Boys Association and the Jamia Teachers Association. The petitions were filed in 2006.