

# HC notice on minority status to Jamia varsity

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The grant of minority status to Jamia Millia Islamia University by the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions on Wednesday came under the scanner of the Delhi High Court. It has sought responses from the Centre and others on a public interest litigation (PIL).

“Issue notice to Human Resources Development Ministry, the Ministry of Minority Affairs .... for February 22,” a bench of Chief Justice Mr Dipak Misra and Justice Mr Sanjiv Khanna said.

The High Court admitted for hearing a PIL of Mr Vijay Kumar Sharma, president of

NGO Yuva Bharti Samiti, alleging that “the Jamia Millia Islamia Act, 1988, incorporates and establishes the university and dissolves the Jamia Millia Islamia Society, which was managing and running it, and the NCMEI has no jurisdiction or authority to declare it a minority institution.”

Besides the ministries concerned, the court has also sought responses from the Vice Chancellor of the University, the teachers’ association and five others including the students’ union.

The NCMEI headed by Mr Justice M.S.A. Siddiqui had recently granted “minority” status to the university which will enable

it to reserve up to 50 per cent seats for Muslim students.

The varsity will no longer have to give reservation to SC and ST students also, the panel, a quasi-judicial body, had said while allowing the petitions of students union, Jamia Old Boys Association and Jamia Teachers Association. The petitions were filed in 2006.

“The university is a central university of national importance and is an alloy of secular Indian culture where members of all caste, creed and religions have been benefited and cannot be conferred with the status of minority institution,” the petition, filed by advocates Mr Rakesh and Mr Santosh Kumar, said.