

renders. Sources said as per the recent notification for a first-time offence, the penalty would be Rs 1 lakh fine or imprisonment up to two years or both.

hendra Singh. Seventy-seven per cent of all pregnancies reported in villages and 74% in cities end with live birth, according to a just-released government survey. **P7**

Women to get more time for MPhil, PhD

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Acting on suggestions made by HRD minister Smriti Irani last week, the University Grants Commission (UGC) on Tuesday decided to relax criteria for women and disabled candidates pursuing MPhil and PhD degrees.

Women and those with more than 40% disability will now get a year extra to complete their MPhil papers and two years more to submit PhD theses. All women candidates will also be provided maternity leave and child care leave for up to 240 days once while they pursue these two degrees. In case a woman scholar needs to relocate because of marriage or otherwise during her study, she would be allowed to get research data transferred to the university to which she intends to shift provided all

Centre casts doubt on medical test

A day after the Supreme Court ordered the common medical entrance test (NEET) to be held from this year, the health ministry has indicated this may not be "practically" possible given the short notice. Officials said the notification for the test had to be issued by December in normal course. **P6**

other regulatory conditions are followed and the research work does not pertain to a project secured by the parent institution or her supervisor from any funding agency. The scholar will also have to give credit to her parent guide and institution for the part of research already done.

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UGC tweaks regulations for colleges to win autonomy tag

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In another important decision, the full commission of UGC also decided that award of degrees to those registered for MPhil/PhD programmes prior to July 11, 2009 will be governed by the provisions of the then existing ordinances/bylaws/regulations and will be exempted from the requirement of the minimum eligibility condition of NET/state-level eligibility test for recruitment and appointment of assistant professor or equivalent posts in universities/colleges and other higher educational institutions subject to few conditions.

The riders include award of PhD in regular mode only; PhD thesis should have been examined by at least two external examiners; open PhD viva voce of candidate should have been conducted, candidate should have published two research publications from his/her PhD work out of which at least one must have appeared in a refereed journal and candidate should have made at least two presentations in conferences/seminars based on his/her PhD work.

Also, a college accredited with highest grades in two running cycles and also secures the highest accreditation grade in the third from NAAC will get autonomous status provided it obtains an NOC from the affiliating varsity and adheres to certain UGC norms.