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THE TIMES OF INDIA

Madarsa Education Act: SC reserves order on appeals against Allahabad HC's 'unconstitutional' verdict

TIMESOFINDIA.COM | Oct 22, 2024, 04.49 PM IST



The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved its order on appeals challenging the Allahabad high court's ruling, which found the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, to be 'unconstitutional'.

The SC bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud and including Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, heard arguments from numerous lawyers representing eight petitioners and Additional Solicitor General K M Natraj for the Uttar Pradesh government over the course of nearly two days before reserving its judgment.

On Monday, the bench had heard opening arguments from senior lawyers such as Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Salman Khurshid, and Menaka Guruswamy on behalf of the petitioners. The following day, the Supreme Court also heard from senior advocates including Mukul Rohatgi, P Chidambaram, and Guru Krishna Kumar, who represented various litigants.

The Allahabad High Court had previously ruled on March 22 that the Act was "unconstitutional" and in violation of the principle of secularism, instructing the state government to integrate madrasa students into the formal education system.

However, on April 5, the CJI-led bench provided temporary relief to approximately 17 lakh madrasa students by staying the high court's decision to strike down the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004. The Supreme Court considered around eight petitions, with the primary one filed by Anjum Kadari against the high court's judgment.

The UP Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 was enacted to oversee and manage the functioning of madrasas within the state. The primary objective of this legislation is to guarantee that students in these educational institutions receive a high-quality education while ensuring that the principles outlined in the constitution are upheld and followed.