

HC reprimands PSC for rejecting candidature of eligible candidates

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 7: High Court has reprimanded the Public Service Commission (PSC) for rejecting the candidature of the eligible aspirants for the post of Assistant Professor (Botany) and directed it to consider their candidature.

The division bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Puneet Gupta set aside the rejection order of the PSC and held that the selection body can't sit over the opinion of the appointing authority based on the expert advice given in respect of relevance of prescribed qualification.

Court said there may be cases where even the opinion of the experts is, on the face of it, absurd or even actuated by bias or mala fide considerations and in such situation, nothing prevents a Constitutional Court to examine such opinion in exercise of its powers of judicial review.

Court said that counsel for the PSC could not bring it to its notice that any power or competence conferred upon the PSC to sit over such decision of the appointing authority in respect of prescribed qualification particularly when such opinion of the appointing authority is based upon the recom-

mendations of the experts' domain. "We have no doubt in our mind that it is neither for the selection body nor for the Courts to enter into the arena of finding out the equivalence or relevance of the qualification prescribed for the post" court said.

Court has made it clear that the need to seek the expert opinion and the point of view of the appointing authority in respect of qualification may arise only when there is some confusion or ambiguity in the prescribed qualification.

"Had the statutory Recruitment Rules and the Advisement notification notified the qualification for the post of Assistant Professor in Botany as M.Sc. Botany, perhaps it was not permissible for the appointing authority or, for this court, to look for any equivalent or relevant qualification", reads the judgment.

Court on seeking expert opinion on the equivalence of degree said, the matter was rightly taken up with University of Kashmir for its expert opinion, but the expert opinion tendered University of Kashmir was not honoured and the petitioners-aspirants were arbitrarily and without any justification declared ineligible.



Sham Lal Sharma addressing people during awareness camp at Jammu on Friday.

Modi Govt leading approver of organic farming, modern technology: Sham Lal

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: Sham Lal Sharma Vice President J&K BJP and former Minister today strongly batted for switching over to organic farming highlighting its numerous advantages including guarantee of better health prospects.

The senior BJP leader was addressing an impressive gathering during an awareness camp organized to promote organic farming here at Village Pandori in Mishriwala Panchayat.

Besides Sham Lal Sharma, Sarabjit Singh Johal, President BJP Kissan Morcha and DDC Member Ramgarh; Darshan Choudhary and Baba Chanchal Singh Chib, Vice Presidents of BJP Kissan Morcha were also present. The Camp was envisaged and organized by Gurbachan Singh, Secretary BJP Kissan Morcha, J&K and former Sarpanch.

Sham Lal said that the BJP Government led by PM Narendra Modi is a strong approver of organic farming as the PM himself has endorsed this kind of farming for its number of benefits and less damage

to the environment and public health. He said that the case studies of villages across the country which had started relying on organic farming has shown that this form of farming has been proven to be a game changer for the population as there are numerous advantages with almost no disadvantage. He asked the farmers to go for this type of farming to change the course of life, achieving health benefits and of course monetary as well.

Johal while appreciating Gurbachan Singh for taking his village towards organic farming in the last three years said that the decision is farsighted and in the coming days more and more villages will emulate this initiative as there are colossal benefits.

He said that more and more people should opt for organic farming because it gives increased soil fertility for a long time without harming the environment and controls diseases and pests. "The damage observed in cultivation by the use of synthetic chemicals is also prevented through this method of farming", he added.

Sinking blocks

Nachlana-Khari link road

Excelsior Correspondent

RAMBAN, Apr 7: The Nachlana Khari link road has been blocked due to sinking of a portion of the road near Nachlana since Thursday.

Official sources said that Nachlana-Khari link road was blocked after a portion of the road caved in near Nachlana alongside Jammu-Srinagar National Highway due to which Khari Tehsil including Mahu and Mangit areas got disconnected from Banihal, Ramsu and Ramban.

People in the area said they are facing difficulties in NH closed for repair work

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: On the directions of Government, Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained close for repair and maintenance works between Nashri and Banihal in Ramban district on Friday.

The companies engaged by NHA carried out macadamisation work of damaged road stretches at various locations between Nashri and Banihal.

Traffic authorities said that traffic would be resumed on Saturday morning.

The 6 km Nachlana-Khari link road is being maintained by railway construction company IRCON International since they are constructing several railway tunnels and a Railway Station in Khari for Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link.



Damaged portion of Nachlana Khari link road in Ramban.

Locals said earlier the Nachlana-Khari link road remained blocked in Harinihal and Arpinchla areas.

Locals of the area have appealed to Deputy Commissioner Ramban to intervene and direct the concerned agency to restore the road on war footing.

CID denies pressuring litigants to drop petitions

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 7: Police today denied "pressuring" litigants to drop their petitions from courts after the PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Ittija Mufti accused the CID wing of pressuring her not to litigate in the High Court.

In a statement issued, Police said that they have come across several items in the media suggesting that its intelligence and counterintelligence wing among other things is pressurizing litigants to withdraw from the process of redressing their grievances through courts of law.

"Ordinarily, law enforcement agencies do not rush to the public to discuss its work processes and procedures, especially those that are legally ordained to be discreet in the public interest."

Police said that since some of the published items contain outrightly false assertions attributed to figures with the public profile it has become necessary to point out the untruthfulness of the claims.

"On learning that accusations have been made that the CID of J&K Police has pressurized a litigant to refrain from litigating in the High Court in connection with her passport-related grievances, a quick internal audit was carried out."

Police said that it can affirm that the claim of such pressure is "completely false" and that the officers are being detailed to approach the aggrieved person and ascertain details who pressurized, when, where and under what circumstances, so that the internal inquiry if found inadequate, can be expanded to take suitable disciplinary action against the delinquent."

Unfortunately, police said that the public person-referring to Ittija-has apparently projected her grievance as also to be the grievance of the public in Kashmir. "This is very problematic. J&K Police and its affiliates are public institutions designed to serve the public interest. Denigrating the community's institutions for grievances that are personal based on false accusations is self-harm."

Police also present figures about the number of verifications received and cleared. As per details, in 2020 out of 77686 passport verifications received, 77644 (99.95%) were cleared; in 2021: out of 75714 passport verifications received, 75176 (99.68%) were cleared and in 2022 out of 134315 passport verifications received, 128939

Court has also nullified the judgment of Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) whereby the rejection of candidature by the PSC was upheld. Court said the Tribunal has completely strayed from point in issue and dismissed the plea of the petitioners on the ground that they did not possess the prescribed qualification in the advertisement notification, i.e., the Post Graduation in the relevant subject is Post Graduation in Botany only.

Court directed the PSC to consider the candidature of the aggrieved aspirants and if they are found to have obtained the merit, which is higher than the last cut off and otherwise fall in the selection zone, their candidature be recommended to the Government for appointment as Assistant Professor in Botany within four weeks and recommend their names for appointment as Assistant Professors, Botany.

The aspirants that apart from possessing the qualification of M.Sc. in the subject of Botany, they had to their credit the Degree of Ph.D. Botany and teaching experience. Being possessed of requisite qualification and eligibility, they applied for the post. Since they were possessing the qualification of M.Sc. in Environmental Botany, as such, their candidature was rejected by PSC vide its notice dated 5th July 2016.

Swarn Vihar delegation meets Mayor, raises issues

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: A delegation of Swarn Vihar (Police Colony) Welfare Association here today met Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Mayor, Rajinder Sharma and raised issues of their locality.

The delegation demanded construction of drains and laying of small RCC pipes or culverts wherever these are essentially required.

Other demands raised included blacktopping of by-lanes and main roads, installation of lights on newly installed poles and repair of damaged street lights.

After listening to the delegation the Mayor assured to redress the issues at the earliest. JMC Councillor, Kapil Chib representing the area was also present in the meeting.

The delegation was led by S.N Raina, Association president; N.M Gadroo, general secretary; Kuldeep Raj, Babu Ram and Avinash Thusuu.

J&K witnesses unprecedented development after abrogation of Art 370: Raina

Excelsior Correspondent

SAMBA, Apr 7: Ravinder Raina, president BJP Jammu & Kashmir, today launched cleanliness drive at Purmandal which is popularly known as Chota Kashi.

Speaking on the occasion, Raina said that Purmandal is a historical sacred place of Hindus, which has its mention in Kalhana's Rajtarangini, as well as in Hindu epic books, and has remained a well known place for pilgrims from the ancient times.

Speaking over the Samajik Nayag Saptah in connection with Party's Foundation Day celebrations, Raina said after 42 years of journey we feel indebted to the veteran leaders who contributed in raising its seats from 2 to 300 in the Lok Sabha. He said that today BJP is the largest party of the world and connected firmly to the people of this nation. He asserted that today J&K witnessing unprecedented development after abrogation of Art 370 is a result of the sacrifices of the leaders like Shyama Prasad Mookerjee.

He said that BJP and Central Government headed by the Prime

Two held with 3.8 kg Ganja

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: Police claimed today that they have arrested two drug peddlers here and recovered 3.895 kg of Ganja from their possession.

A police spokesperson said that Ashish Kumar Kurrey of Jangir Champa, Chattisgarh at present Patnitop Morh, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, and Laxminarayan Chauhan of Raigarh, Chattisgarh at present Adarsh Enclave, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu were arrested with the consignment during routine checking by a team of Police Station Bahu Fort led by SDPO East, Syed Zaheer Abbas Jafari assisted by SHO Bahu Fort, Inspector Shiv Dev Singh.

"The accused have been booked in case FIR number 112/2023 under Sections 8/20/29 of the NDPS Act registered at Police Station Bahu Fort and further investigation started," he said.

(99.61%) cleared.

"Security verifications preceding the issue of passports is a high-value public service," police noted while pointing out that it has detected as many as 54 young boys who were wrongly given passport service during 2017-18.

"Unfortunately, all of them went to Pakistan, were taken to terrorist camps, trained in arms, ammunition and explosives, many of them pushed back into J&K through LOC and 26 of them died while either crossing or during encounters in the hinterland."

The lives of 12 of these young boys could be saved by the CID after their return from Pakistan, by bringing them under preventive custody so that terrorist-separatist syndicates do not succeed in pressuring them to join terror ranks, police said.

Eventually, police said, all of the 12 have been handed over to their families and are alive and happily living amidst their families. "Unfortunately, 16 of them are still across and trapped in camps under the control of hostile agencies. It is heartbreaking to know that in some cases even parents had no idea that passport services have been extended to these boys of tender age."

Intelligence and investigation have confirmed that in every case the visa to Pakistan was arranged at the behest of one or the other leader of a constituent party of Hurriyat, police noted.

"CID is committed to helping the parents of vulnerable young persons not fall prey to the death traps. J&K Police is committed to speedy and hassle-free clearances for more than 99% who are 'clean and green' and professional filtering of those who should be prevented from availing of the service-some in their interest and others in the interest of the public."

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 7: The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Ittija Mufti today accused the Regional Passport Officer, Kashmir and Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of misleading the judiciary on her passport issue.

Addressing a press conference here, Ittija accused the RPO, Kashmir, Davinder Kumar, and the CID of misleading the judiciary.

"The passport issued to me is a two-year passport that is conditional and it is mentioned clearly that it is valid only for the UAE," she said.

Ittija said she was an "Indian and a law abiding citizen". "But, even to issue the two-year passport, the Official Secrets Act has been invoked against me. This Act is usually invoked for espionage," Ittija said.

"Am I a fugitive? Am I Nirav Modi, am I a terrorist, anti-national that I am being punished? If I talk about the Central Government, is it like talking against the country? What is my fault?" she asked.

"I am not a fugitive or a con-man like Kiran Patel who was treated as a VVIP," she said and alleged that she was being treated like a hardened criminal.

She asserted that she would continue to fight her case in the court despite "pressure to withdraw her petition".

She claimed that the CID told the court that it was not stopping her passport and "not violating any of my fundamental rights". "The right to travel abroad is a fundamental right and I am being deprived of that right," Ittija said.

"This is happening to me because I am the daughter of a former Chief Minister. I am not entitled to a passport because Mehbooba Mufti is my mother,"

Div Com Kashmir inspects ongoing beautification works at Airport Road

Excelsior Correspondent

BUDGAM, Apr 7: The Divisional Commissioner, (Div Com), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today inspected ongoing beautification works along the Airport Road at Humhama.

Deputy Commissioner Budgam, S F Hamid; SMC Commissioner Srinagar, Ather Amir; Chief Engineer R&B Kashmir, SSP Budgam and other officers were also present on the occasion.

During visit, the Div Com took detailed stock of works of footpath and pavement development plantations, parking facilities, market beautification, lawn

Excelsior Correspondent

development and other beautification works.

He said that parking facilities shall be created on both sides of the Airport Road near Panchayat Bhawan on the recently retrieved encroached land for public convenience.

He said as the Srinagar is set to host G-20 Meeting, special focus is being given on beautification and facility creation and various projects have been taken up for execution.

He directed officers to ensure all works are completed in a time bound manner including parking facilities for smooth traffic movement on Airport road.

Similarly, the details state that on April 12, the MFTVs will be stationed for the on-spot sample testing and surveillance at Baramulla, Anantnag, Ganderbal, on April 15 in Bandipora, Shopian, Budgam, on April 17 in Bandipora, Anantnag and Srinagar while on April 1, 3 and 5, the vehicles were stationed in Kupwara, Shopian, Kulgam, Anantnag, Budgam, Srinagar and Ganderbal.

Officials said that the stationing of the MFTVs will continue till April end while they noted that on April 19, the on-spot testing and surveillance of food items will be carried out in Baramulla, Shopian and Ganderbal; Baramulla, Anantnag, Budgam on April 24;

The concerned officials said that the step has been taken to implement the directives issued by Commissioner, FDA, J&K while noting that the deployment of MFTVs is for conducting testing for surveillance and organizing awareness & training programmes.

It should be noted that the FSSAI has already urged people to have their food products tested by the testing vehicles deployed closest to them, particularly milk and milk products while noting that such tests can be carried out free of cost. "The whole exercise is targeted towards ensuring availability of safe and pure products, especially, milk and milk products to the consumers," officials said.

4 vehicles seized for illegal mining

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: At least 4 vehicles were seized for mining illegally in Jammu District on Friday, police said.

They said one dumper was seized by Police Station Bishnah, and three tractor trolleys were seized by Police Station Nagrota, Police Post Sidhra, and Police Post Phallain Mandal.

The recoveries were made by SHO Bishnah, Inspector Vikram Sharma, SHO Nagrota, Inspector Vishav Partap Singh, Incharge Police Post Sidhra, PSI Arun Kumar, and Incharge Police Post Phallain Mandal, PSI Ajesh Singh Jamwal.

"The seized vehicles were mining in violation of a High Court order," said police, adding that DMO Jammu has been intimated about the recoveries.

Man found dead

Excelsior Correspondent

REASI, Apr 7: The dead body of a 29-year-old man named Mohd Hussain, son of Abdul Gani and resident of Charalakote (tehsil Bhomag) was found under mysterious circumstances at Purdoo, Charalakote.

Police Station Reasi had taken cognizance of the matter.

Panch Pran Utsav concludes at JU

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Apr 7: At the valedictory function of Panch Pran Utsav, organized by University of Jammu (JU) in collaboration with Indra Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Hindustan Samachar and Cluster University of Jammu, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Kashmir was the

chief guest who while speaking on the occasion gave some insightful comments on the role of educational institutions in shaping young minds.

It is noteworthy to mention here that Panch Pran Utsav has been organized to highlight five resolves of PM Modi during his 76th Independence Day address.

Prof. Umesh Rai, JU Vice-Chancellor in his concluding address summarized the core theme of this illustrious three-day 'Panch Pran Utsav'.

The third day of Panch Pran festival commenced with motivational words by retired Colonel (Dr.) Virendra Sahi, Vir Chakra awardee.

Prof. Lalit Magotra, former Head, Department of Physics, JU and president of Dogri Santha spoke of diversity of this country.

In the afternoon session, Prof. Arvind Jasrotia, Registrar introduced keynote speaker and Prof. Bechan Lal, Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu, the chairperson for the session.

The keynote speaker, Anchal Sethi, Secretary to Govt, Dept of Law, Justice and Parliamentary affairs, Govt of J&K gave a lecture on 5th Plan: Duties of the citizens towards Nation.

Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Director, Directorate of Distance & Open Education; Prof. Parikshat Manhas, Chairman J&K Board of School Education and others were also present on the occasion.

RPO, CID have misled judiciary on my passport issue: Ittija Mufti

Excelsior Correspondent

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Ittija Mufti daughter of former CM Mehbooba Mufti addressing media in Srinagar.

she said. Ittija asked if there was any FIR registered against her or if there were any charges against her that she was being "deprived of this right". "What is my fault? If this is happening to me, you can imagine what is happening to common Kashmiris,"

DFCO to deploy MFTVs across Kashmir for on-spot testing, surveillance

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Apr 7: With the Government directing the State and UTs to deploy the Mobile Food Testing Vans (MFTVs) to ensure the on-spot testing of food items, Drugs & Food Control Organization's (DFCO) Food Safety Wing has put out a roster for three of its MFTVs in Kashmir for the deployment in various districts on various dates.

The officials told Excelsior that the aim of deploying the MFTVs is to ensure that various food samples are tested on the spot apart from ensuring the necessary surveillance.

While the process has already begun on April 1, as per the details, three MFTVs available with the Food Safety wing under the tentative roster, on April 8 will be stationed in Baramulla, Anantnag and Budgam, while as on April 10, these vehicles will be stationed in Baramulla, Pulwama and Srinagar.

Similarly, the details state that on April 12, the MFTVs will be stationed for the on-spot sample testing and surveillance at Baramulla, Anantnag, Ganderbal, on April 15 in Bandipora, Shopian, Budgam, on April 17 in Bandipora, Anantnag and Srinagar while on April 1, 3 and 5, the vehicles were stationed in Kupwara, Shopian, Kulgam, Anantnag, Budgam, Srinagar and Ganderbal.

Officials said that the stationing of the MFTVs will continue till April end while they noted that on April 19, the on-spot testing and surveillance of food items will be carried out in Baramulla, Shopian and Ganderbal; Baramulla, Anantnag, Budgam on April 24;

The concerned officials said that the step has been taken to implement the directives issued by Commissioner, FDA, J&K while noting that the deployment of MFTVs is for conducting testing for surveillance and organizing awareness & training programmes.

It should be noted that the FSSAI has already urged people to have their food products tested by the testing vehicles deployed closest to them, particularly milk and milk products while noting that such tests can be carried out free of cost. "The whole exercise is targeted towards ensuring availability of safe and pure products, especially, milk and milk products to the consumers," officials said.

JAMMU & KASHMIR HOUSING BOARD NOTICE

Whereas, one time exemption as last and final opportunity was offered through notice issued vide No.HB/Secy/9133-34 dated 01.02.2023 to all vacant plot holders of Housing Colonies governed by J&K Housing Board to start the construction of residential houses within 02 months from the date of issuance of said notice, failing which, no further application for transfer, extension, NOC for Conveyance Deed, Building Permission of vacant plots shall be entertained/considered and relevant provisions of the lease deed agreement executed/registered between parties shall be invoked by issuance of order of cancellation of allotment of plot and same will be retrieved and put to open auction forthwith, and

Whereas, during the notice period a very good response has been received from plot holders and 301 No. of cases for Building Permission have been received and 623 cases for Lease extension/grant of freehold rights/ NOC for Conveyance Deed /transfer of leasehold rights have been received as per details available on Property Management Portal of J&K Housing Board, and

Whereas, various deputations/ representations from plot holders including Kashmiri migrants have approached /received in this office for grant of further extension to start the process of construction of residential houses, as many allot-tee/transferees could not get leasehold rights of purchased plots transferred in their favour or obtain building permissions, citing various reasons including delay at the level of JKHB, Municipalities and other ULBs in issuance of Building permissions due to sudden increase in no. of cases.

Therefore, in view of the above and demand of genuine plot holders, extension is hereby accorded for a further period of two months i.e. upto 04.06.2023 to all vacant plot holders to start the process of construction of residential houses, failing which, no further application for transfer, extension, NOC for Conveyance Deed, Building Permission of vacant plots shall be entertained/considered and relevant provisions of the lease deed agreement executed/registered between parties shall be invoked by issuance of cancellation order of allotment of plot (s) and plot(s) shall be retrieved and put to open auction forthwith without any further notice.

Sd/-
DIP/J-65-P
Dated : 5/4/2023
Secretary,
J&K Housing Board