


No. MS/10/2011/MHRD1/SEOTH/RU-III

Record of proceedings of the Sitting held in the NCST on 19/03/2013 at 1230 hrs. to discuss the issues raised in the representation of Shri Meer Singh, General Secretary, All India Confederation of SC/ST Organization, New Delhi regarding filling up of backlog reserved vacancies in Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU) by launching Special Recruitment Drive

List of the officials present in the meeting is annexed.

1. At the outset, Chairperson National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) noted with concern that the IGNOU authorities have been delaying the recruitment process to fill up the posts reserved for STs for a long time. In this connection, the Chairman, NCST referred to the proceedings of the Sitting held on 03/02/2012 wherein the Commission had desired an expeditious action to fill-up the posts reserved for STs with reference to the advertisement No01/2011/ACD dated 19/04/2011. Subsequently, in pursuance of the decision taken in the said Sitting, NCST vide letter dated 27/06/2012, had sought the information from the IGNOU regarding the action taken by them in the matter. However, IGNOU, instead of communicating the position with reference to the Advertisement dated 19/04/2011 quoted above, vide letter No. IG/Admn./Rectt./Fee/49/2012/94 dated 12/07/2012 provided information regarding recruitment against Advt. No. 48/2012.

2. Vice Chancellor, IGNOU mentioned that IGNOU had communicated position with reference to other on-going cases for recruitment. He further apprised the Commission that Visitor's Nominees have been nominated in respect of four disciplines out of total 20 disciplines. The Ministry of HRD has been requested to expedite for nominating Visitor Nominees in other disciplines. Vice Chancellor, IGNOU further mentioned that against the post of Professor in the Deptt. of Tourism and Hospitality, only one application had been received from a ST candidate who had not been found meeting the desired qualifying standards/selection criterion stipulated by the UGC.


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3. The Commission observed that abnormal delay in filling up the post reserved for STs was taking place due to delay in nomination of Visitor's Nominee. The Commission, therefore, desired that the Ministry of HRD should immediately communicate Visitor's Nominees in respect of the remaining disciplines, as mentioned by the Vice Chancellor, IGNOU in the Sitting. The IGNOU should also urgently complete the recruitment process in all disciplines in respect of vacancies reserved for STs.

Action: Ministry of HRD
IGNOU

4. The Commission desired that IGNOU should provide post-wise reservations and not discipline-wise to facilitate better representation of STs, especially considering the position that in certain disciplines like Urdu etc., there is bleak possibility of availability of a ST candidate. VC, IGNOU informed the Commission that IGNOU follows post-wise reservation only and not discipline-wise. He further assured that the suggestions of the Commission to implement post-wise reservation would be followed as per DoPT instructions.

Action: IGNOU

5. VC, IGNOU informed the Commission that IGNOU vide their letter dated 08/01/2013, had sent the action taken report with reference to the proceedings of the Sitting held on 05/10/2012 informing that the IGNOU had already advertised the backlog vacancies of SCs/STs/OBCs and PWDs categories in respect of non-teaching post by launching Special Recruitment Drive (SRD) vide Advertisement No. 48/2012 dated 31/03/2012. IGNOU had also engaged an outside agency to conduct the written test for the non-teaching posts advertised except Camera Person & Lab. Attendant. The status of filling up of Teaching/ Academic positions was also communicated to the Commission vide IGNOU letter dated 08/01/2013.



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6. The Commission noted with concern that one post of Professor in the Deptt. of Tourism and Hospitality, reserved for ST, is lying vacant since 2008 though it had been advertised 3 times in the past (January 2008- No applicant, January 2010- one applicant; not called for interview). Subsequently, in April 2011, only one ST candidate had applied who was not found to be meeting the stipulated qualifying standards/ selection criterion. Chairman, NCST observed that in the Sitting held on 5/10/2012, it was decided that IGNOU would examine relaxation of qualifying standards/selection criterion in respect of the application received from the ST candidate against the post and proceed with filling up of the post accordingly. IGNOU had also assured the Commission in the Sitting that the position in this regard would be communicated by the end of December, 2012.

7. VC, IGNOU submitted that the preliminary screening of the application of the sole candidate (Dr. Ramesh Solanki) for the post of Professor in the School of Tourism Hospitality Service Management had revealed that Dr. Solanki did not have PG degree in Tourism i.e. MTA/MTM/MBA (Tourism) etc. Further, the candidate did not have any academic publication, which is mandatory for the post of Professor. API score of the candidate is nil. Therefore, Dr. Solanki was not found eligible for the post.

8. The Commission extended an opportunity to Dr. Solanki to explain his case about his suitability for the post as per the advertisement. Dr. Solanki submitted that in the Advertisement for the post of Professor in the School of Tourism Hospitality Service Management, IGNOU had submitted following qualifying criteria for the post:

A.(i) An eminent scholar with PH.D. qualification (s) in the concerned /allied/relevant discipline and published work of high quality, actively engaged in research with evidence of published Work with a minimum of 10 publications as books and/or research/policy papers.


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- (ii) *A minimum of ten year of teaching experience in university/college, and /or experience in research at the University/National level institutions/industries, including experience of guiding candidates for research at doctoral level.*
- (iii) *Contribution to educational innovation, design of new curricula and courses, and technology – mediated teaching learning process.*
- (iv) *A minimum score as stipulated in the Academic Performance Indicator (API) Based Appraisal System (PBAS), given alongwith the application in Appendix III.*


OR

- B. *An outstanding professional, with established reputation in the relevant field, who has made significant contributions to the knowledge in the concerned/allied/relevant discipline, to be substantiated by credentials.*

Dr. Solanki mentioned that his candidature suits qualifying criterion at 'B' and submitted following arguments in his favour:

- i. He has done Ph.D in Management on the topic of 'Comparative Study of Air Services in India' and have more than 23 years of experience in the field of Tourism and Hospitality while working with Customer Care Section of Indian Airlines/ Air India. Further, he is also a instructor with Air India for the last 9 years. Further, he is also a co-author of 3 research papers published in international journals.
- ii. He has done Ph.D in Management. Hoever, IGNOU is now asking PHD in Tourism Management, which was not asked in the advertisement. Thus, IGNOU is now deviating from the terms of recruitment and required qualifications of the advertisement.
- iii. He has done MBA with specialization in Financial Management and Ph.D with specialization in Marketing Management. Both the degrees and his 23 years experience with Tourism industry are

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very much relevant with tourism and hospitality disciplines as stated in the advertisement.

Dr. Solanki requested that considering the position explained above, IGNOU needed to finalize the process of recruitment as per the required qualification of the advertisement and relaxation also stated in the Sitting of the Commission held on 5/10/2012.

9. Joint Secretary, NCST mentioned that certain provisions of the advertisement No. 1/ACD/2012 and No. 01/2011/ACD were not objectively defined e.g.:

Point No. 8 of General Conditions: The selection authority may consider the name of any person for appointment even if he/ she may not have applied.

Point No. 15: The University reserves the right to relax any of the qualifications/ experience in exceptional cases

The Commission noted that such provisions in the advertisement don't lead to transparency in the recruitment process as the criteria of selection needs to be clearly defined to facilitate objective interpretation.

10. Joint Secretary, NCST referred to the IGNOU report dated 21/9/2011 with regard to the preliminary screening of the application in respect of Dr. Solanki for the post which stated as under:

"The candidate does not have PG degree in Tourism i.e. MTA/MTM/MBA (Tourism) etc. Further, the candidate does not have any academic publication, which is mandatory for the post of Professor. API score of the candidate is nil."

Joint Secretary, NCST mentioned that the qualifying requirement of PG degree in Tourism i.e. MTA/MTM/MBA (Tourism) was not specifically mentioned in the advertisement and further a critical assessment of Dr. Solanki's profile was not made by the Screening Committee with reference to the qualifying criteria at 'B' as mentioned in


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para No. 8 above. The Academic Performance Indicator (API) score of Dr. Solanki has also been assessed as nil without any detailed analysis of his profile with reference to the various parameters to be considered in relation to academic report, research performance, domain knowledge and teaching skill.

11. VC, IGNOU mentioned that general conditions No. 8 were meant to facilitate placement of services of persons of high eminence in a discipline. Joint Secretary, MoHRD also noted that the selection standard/criteria included in the advertisement were needed to be reviewed for establishing a transparent and credible system of recruitment.

12. After detailed discussions, the Commission desired that the IGNOU should review their process of recruitment with reference to the contents of the advertisement as well as the screening method of evaluation of applications to establish a transparent system. The Commission also desired that IGNOU should communicate the reasons of rejection of Dr. Solanki's application for the post of Professor to him also communicating the process of evaluation of his application adopted in the case, also explaining how this has been in accordance with the guidelines issued by the UGC in the matter.

Action:
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List of Officials present in the Sitting on 19.03.2013

NCST

1. Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, Hon'ble Chairperson
2. Shri Aditya Mishra, Joint Secretary
3. KD Bhansor.Mrs., Deputy Director

Minsitry of HRD

1. Shri Anant Kumar Singh, Joint Secretary

IGNOU

1. Prof. Gopinath Pradhan, Vice-Chancellor
2. Shri U.S. Sethiya, Registrar
3. Shri Mohan Veer Gautam, Asstt. Registrar
4. Shri Ravinder Kumar, Director