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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA  
AT CHANDIGARH**

**CWP- 12470-2025**

**Date of Decision: 03.05.2025**

NEETU RANI

.... PETITIONER

VERSUS

STATE OF HARYANA AND ANOTHER

... RESPONDENTS

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA**

Present: Dr. Pankaj Nanhera, Advocate and  
Mr. Nitin Verma, Advocate  
for the petitioner.

Ms. Tanushree Gupta, Deputy Advocate General, Haryana  
for respondent no.1.

Ms. Harpriya Khaneka, Advocate  
for respondent no. 2/Commission.

**TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA, J. (ORAL)**

The petition has been filed *inter alia* seeking a writ of *certiorari* quashing the order dated 03.04.2025, Annexure P-11, passed by the second respondent/Haryana Public Service Commission rejecting the petitioner's claim for appearing in the recruitment process for the post of Assistant Professor (College cadre) against advertisement 42 to 67 of 2024, dated 02.08.2024.

2. Learned counsel for the petitioner has vehemently argued that



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the only ground of declining the petitioner's participation in the recruitment process that she did not have the essential qualification of UGC-NET on the closing date of submission of application form, i.e., 27.08.2024 extended up to 15.03.2025, cannot be considered valid and reasonable. Earlier UGC-NET exam held in June 2024 was cancelled vide public notice, dated 19.06.2024. Thereafter a fresh date of examination was notified, and the petitioner appeared for the same on 02.03.2025. Its result was declared on 17.04.2025 and she qualified the same. However, by that time the closing date had passed. However, the petitioner had already represented to the Commission, vide letter dated 08.03.2025, seeking permission to participate in the selection process on the premise that she had appeared for the test, and was likely to clear the same as well. Now she has cleared the test. The selection process is yet to commence as the screening test is scheduled for 11.05.2025, therefore, she should be permitted to participate in the selection process. In support of his contention, learned counsel has relied upon the judgment rendered in Civil Appeal No. 5065-5095 of 2021 titled *Haryana Staff Service Commission v. Priyanka and others*.

3. Per contra, learned counsel for the second respondent, appearing on advance notice, contends that as per stipulation in the advertisement, the candidates were required to possess the essential qualification, including UGC-NET, on the closing date of submission of application form. Since the petitioner did not have the same, she could not have been permitted to participate in the selection process. Identical issue already stands decided against the petitioner vide judgment dated 20.08.2024 rendered in CWP-19937-2024 titled *Suma Devi v. State of Haryana and*



*others .*

4. Heard.

5. There is no denying to the fact that for participating in the selection process, candidates are required to possess the essential qualifications on the cut-off/closing date for submission of the application forms. And the petitioner lacked the essential qualification on that date as she did not have UGT-NET certificate. It is apt to refer to the judgment rendered in *Suma Devi* case (*supra*), which is on similar facts. The petitioner therein had appeared in the same UGC-NET exam which was held in June 2024 and got cancelled; she sought participation in the instant selection process on that basis which was declined by holding as under:

8. After considering the submissions made by the learned counsel for the parties, this Court is not inclined to interfere in the matter. The UGC-NET certificate is one of the mandatory qualifications required for the advertised post, and the candidates have to be eligible on the closing date to participate in the selection process. No exception can be made by relaxing the requirement for the petitioner, much less for the reason UGC-NET June 2024 examination in which she appeared had to be cancelled. It was conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), and cancelled on receiving information that its integrity had been compromised. The petitioner cannot be declared eligible for the post only because she appeared in a cancelled examination; the argument is preposterous and deserves outright rejection. Besides, she cannot be permitted to participate in the selection process on the strength of UGC-NET examination she is going to take on 30.08.2024, since mere appearing in an examination does not guarantee that she would clear the same as well. No direction can be issued on a presumption.



9. Further, the Commission cannot be blamed for cancellation of UGC-NET June 2024 examination, nor can any wrong be attributed to it in notifying the vacancies and prescribing 27.08.2024, as the closing date for submission of application forms in response thereto. There is nothing arbitrary, irrational, or illegal about it. Whenever a cut-off date is assigned, there will always be candidates who may not be eligible on account of one or the other reason, viz., age, qualifications, certificates, etc., but that cannot be a ground to permit them to participate in the selection process despite being ineligible. It is well settled that for such eventualities last date for submission of application forms is not to be disturbed/extended. A reference can be made to the view taken by a coordinate Bench in CWP No.9972 of 2022 titled *Niharika Rawat and others v. State of Haryana and another*, which is as under:

12. Also I am in agreement with the argument canvassed by the learned counsel for the respondent-HPSC that in matters of determining the cut-off date in any competitive examination, there has to be certain inherent randomness to fix a particular date or else it would always give rise to unnecessary confusion. By each day, many of the candidates become eligible either by virtue of their age or by virtue of their academic qualification and/or obtaining degrees, as the case may be, and therefore, the ever-shifting dates would result not only in discrimination but also leave a lot of room for interplay, to make certain candidates either eligible who are younger in age or ineligible who are older in age.



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6. This Court finds no reason to take a different view in the petitioner's case only on the ground that she has made a representation to the Commission before the closing date to allow her to participate in the selection process. The fact remains she was not qualified/eligible for the post in question on the closing date. The reliance placed upon *Priyanka* case (*supra*) is misplaced, since therein the Supreme Court permitted candidates to participate in the selection process based upon the provisional/confidential result of B.Ed. examination submitted by them prior to the closing date. Accordingly, they were qualified for the post at the relevant stage, which is not the case with the present petitioner.

7. In view thereof, the petition is dismissed.

03.05.2025

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(TRIBHUVAN DAHIYA)  
JUDGE

*Whether speaking/reasoned*      *Yes/No*

*Whether reportable*              *Yes/No*