

**IN THE MAHARASHTRA ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL
MUMBAI BENCH**

ORIGINAL APPLICATIONS NO 180/2007 & 606/2008

DISTRICT : MUMBAI

1) ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO 180 OF 2007

1. Drugs Inspectors Welfare)
Association, [DIWA], through its)
General Secretary, Shri S.R Salunkhe)
Having office at Krishna Towers,)
1st floor, S.V Road,)
Thane (W) 400 607.)
List of Drug Inspectors)
1. Shri V.D Sulochane)
2. Smt Harsha Ahale)
3. Smt Aarti Kambli)
4. Shri S.K Dabhade)
5. Shri D.M Bharmaray)
6. Shri P.H Mhanvar)
7. Shri K.T More)
8. Shri D.R Gahane)
9. Shri P.B Pore)
10. Shri S.S Jain)
11. Smt L.D Pinto)
12. Shri G.B Byale)
13. Shri N.P Supe)
14. Shri D.S Aiwale)
15. Shri D.R Malpure)
16. Shri P.N Katkade)
17. Shri R.V Zadbuke)
18. Shri D.S Sid)
19. Shri S.N Kale)

20. Shri P.M Patil)
21. Shri M.M Doglikar)
22. Shri K.G Gadewar)
23. Shri J.V Yadav)
24. Shri R.P Chaudhari)
25. Shri J.B. Mantri)
26. Shri D.C Shaikh)
27. Shri U.G Bagmare)
28. Smt P.P Mhanvar)
29. Shri P.V Pawar)
30. Shri V.A Kose)
31. Shri M.K Rajpal)
32. Shri B.A Mhanwar)
33. Shri N.D Deore)
34. Shri D.A Jadhav)
35. Shri P.D Yasatwar)
36. Shri R.L. Patil)
37. Shri V.S Singhavi)
38. Shri M.R Patil)
39. Shri V.R Ravi)
40. Shri V.K Biyani)
41. Shri V.B Taskhedkar)
42. Shri V.G Hakke)
43. Shri R.N Tirupde)
44. Shri G.D Hukare)
45. Shri A.K Thakare)
46. Shri S.V Pratapwar)
47. Shri P.B Mundada)
48. Shri N.M Gandhi)
49. Shri D.A Jadhav)
50. Shri Patwardhan)
51. Shri S.M Sakrikar)
52. Shri S.B Patil)
53. Shri R.V Pongale)
54. Shri D.L Kurkute)
55. Shri D.M Khiwasara)
56. Shri D.K Jagtap)
57. Smt M.S Javanjal Patil)
58. Shri S.A Chavan)
59. Shri H.Y Metkar)
60. Shri R.P Thete)

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| 61. | Shri S.J Agarwal |) |
| 62. | Shri S.N. Kale |) |
| 63. | Shri R.M Bajaj |) |
| 64. | Shri D.A Joshi |) |
| 65. | Shri K.D Khapekar |) |
| 66. | Shri V.V Dusane |) |
| 67. | Shri K.G Chandak |) |
| 68. | Shri S.B Ghotkar |) |
| 69. | Shri P.M Ballal |) |
| 70. | Shri P.N Shende |) |
| 71. | Shri A.V Mandalekar |) |
| 72. | Shri C.K Dange |) |
| 73. | Shri S.K Nandekar |) |
| 74. | Shri N.P Bhandarkar |) |
| 75. | Shri R.R Chaudhari |) |
| 76. | Smt P.S Iyer |) |
| 77. | Shri D.B Chaudhary |) ...Applicants |

Versus

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|----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | The State of Maharashtra |) |
| | Through the Secretary / Principal |) |
| | Secretary, Finance Department, |) |
| | Mantralaya, Mumbai 400 032. |) |
| 2. | The Principal Secretary, |) |
| | Medical Education and Drugs Dept, |) |
| | Having office at Mantralaya, |) |
| | Mumbai 400 032. |) |
| 3. | The Chairman, |) |
| | Pay Anomaly Committee, |) |
| | Finance Department, Mantralaya, |) |
| | Mumbai 400 032. |) ...Respondents |

2) ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO 606 OF 2008

The Food and Drug Administration,)
 Maharashtra State, Class-I Officers')
 Association, through its Secretary,)
 Shri S.T Patil, having office at)
 Survey No. 341, Food and Drugs)
 Administraiton, Bandra Kurla Complex)
 Opp. RBI, Bandra (E), Mumbai 400 051)...**Applicants**

Versus

1. The State of Maharashtra)
 Through the Secretary / Principal)
 Secretary, Finance Department,)
 Mantralaya, Mumbai 400 032.)
2. The Principal Secretary,)
 Medical Education and Drugs Dept,)
 Having office at Mantralaya,)
 Mumbai 400 032.)
3. The Chairman,)
 Pay Anomaly Committee,)
 Finance Department, Mantralaya,)
 Mumbai 400 032.)...**Respondents**

Shri A.V Bandiwadekar, learned advocate for the Applicants.

Smt Kranti S. Gaikwad, Presenting Officer for the Respondents.

**CORAM : Shri Rajiv Agarwal (Vice-Chairman)
Shri R.B. Malik (Member) (J)**

DATE : 05.09.2014

PER : Shri Rajiv Agarwal (Vice-Chairman)

ORDER

1. Heard Shri A.V Bandiwadekar, learned advocate for the Applicants and Smt Kranti S. Gaikwad, Presenting Officer for the Respondents

2. These Original Applications have been filed by Drugs Inspectors Welfare Association (O.A no 180/2007) and the Food and Drugs Administration, Maharashtra State, Class-I Officers Association [O.A no 606/2008], respectively. In O.A no 180/2007, the Applicant Association is seeking pay scale of Rs. 7500-12000 against the existing pay scale of Rs. 6500-10500 for its members w.e.f 1.1.1996 (though actual benefits from 10.11.2005 on the same basis as Drug Inspectors in Central Government are granted the above mentioned pay scale.

In O.A no 606/2008, the Applicant is seeking pay scale of Rs. 10000-15200 for Assistant Commissioner, [Drug], as against existing pay scale of Rs. 8000-13500 on the lines of pay scale granted by the Central Government to Assistant Drug Controller w.e.f 1.1.1996

3. It appears that initially O.A no 180/2007 covered the relief sought by the Applicant in O.A no 606/2008. However, now the Applicant in O.A no 180/2007, Association of Drug Inspectors, has restricted its relief to its members and the Applicant in O.A no 606/2008 is seeking relief to the Assistant Commissioner [Drug]. Both the Original Applications are decided accordingly.

4. Learned Counsel for the Applicant in O.A no 180/2007 argued that the Drug Inspectors in the States and in the Central Government have identical eligibility requirements in terms of educational qualifications, manner of recruitment, nature of duties and responsibilities. The members of Application Association are accordingly entitled to same scale of pay which is granted to the Drug Inspectors in Government of India. Denial of the pay scale applicable to the Central Government Drug Inspectors to the State Drug Inspectors is in violation of Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India. This issue of equivalence was first examined by the Pay Equivalence Committee headed by

Justice N.B. Naik which submitted its report in October, 1987. In case of Drug Inspector, the Committee recommended that the post of Drug Inspector in the State was equivalent to the post of Drug Inspector in Government of India and pay scale of Rs. 2000-3500 was given to the State Drug Inspectors, same as the pay scale given to the Central Government Drug Inspectors by 4th Pay Commission. After the 5th Pay Commission report was considered by the State Pay Revision Committee (Sukhthankar Committee) with a view to implement it for State employees, this Committee also recommended same pay scale for State Drug Inspectors which was made applicable to Central Government Drug Inspectors, viz Rs. 6500-10500. The Applicant association made a representation to the State Government to grant a higher pay scale to Drug Inspectors in the State compared to Drug Inspectors in the Central Government as the State Drug Inspectors' educational requirement is higher and their nature of duties is also more arduous. The matter was considered by Pay Anomaly Committee headed by Shri Subodh Kumar, who rejected the demand for higher pay scale in the report dated 28.10.2005 on the ground that the pay scale equal to the pay scale granted to Drug Inspectors in Central Government was already granted to them. Later Government of India decided to upgrade the pay scale of the post of Drug Inspector from 6500-10500 to Rs. 7500-12000 w.e.f 1.1.1996 without any arrears being paid and actual benefit from 1.10.2005. This order

is dated 10.11.2005. The Applicant association made a representation on 27.3.2006 to grant the same pay scale to the Drug Inspectors in Maharashtra State also. However, no reply was received from the Government. In the meanwhile, by order dated 19.1.2007 in W.P no 2597/2006 and W.P no 2585/2006, Nagpur Bench of Bombay High Court directed the State Government to constitute Pay Anomaly Disparity Removal Committee, to consider matters which were pending in various courts and Tribunals. A two Member Committee was appointed by State Government, which submitted its report on 16.5.2007. The issue regarding upgrading the pay scale of Drug Inspector was not placed before the Committee, though the Applicant association has sent a representation on 29.1.2007 to the Secretary, Finance Department, viz the Respondent no. 1. Learned Counsel for the Applicant has relied on the judgment of Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court in W.P no 2296 of 1993. Hon'ble Allahabad High Court had issued a writ of Mandamus directing U.P Government to give parity of pay scales as regards the posts of Drug Inspectors and Deputy Drug Controller in the State Government with those incumbents, who are working on those posts under Government of India w.e.f 1.1.1986. Learned Counsel for the Applicant argued that the members of Applicant association are also entitled to be treated similarly.

5. Learned Presenting Officer (P.O) argued on behalf of the Respondents that the State Government had accepted the recommendation of Justice Naik Committee which was appointed after 4th Central Pay Commission recommendations were received. This Committee had accepted the equivalence of the posts of Drug Inspector in the State and the Centre. Accordingly, from 1.1.1986, the State Drug Inspectors were getting pay etc. in the same pay scale as the Central Drug Inspectors. The situation remained unchanged after 5th Pay Commission also. However, the Applicant association raised demand to get higher pay scale for its members as compared to the Drug Inspector under the Central Government. That demand was rejected by the Pay Anomaly Removal Committee in its report dated 28.10.2005. Learned Presenting Officer contended that as per orders Nagpur Bench of Hon. Bombay High Court in W.P no 2585/2006 and 2597/2006, another Committee was appointed and also matters regarding Pay Anomaly pending in various Courts were referred to it. Though the issue of upgradation of pay scale of Drug Inspector was not before the Committee, the demand of upgradation of the post of Food Inspector and bring it to the level of Drug Inspector was considered and rejected. Learned Presenting Officer stated that the benefit of post of 5th Pay Commission upgradation in the pay scales of equivalent cadres in Central Government have not been extended to all the State cadres. It would not be fair to consider the demand

of the Applicant association only. Learned Presenting Office further contended that during the pendency of this Original Application, the recommendations of 6th Pay Commission have been implemented and State Government has decided not to consider any demand regarding 5th Pay Commission. Learned Presenting Officer referred to various judgments of Hon. Supreme Court, where it has been held that the Tribunals should avoid giving direction regarding pay scales of a cadre, which is rightly the work of Pay Commission.

6. We find that the Applicant association has been agitating for equivalence of various posts under Food and Drugs Administration in State with posts in the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. However, in so far as Drug Inspectors are concerned, State Government has accepted the equivalence of the post with the post of Drug Inspector in Central Government from 4th Pay Commission. The Association, however, wanted a higher scale than the scale granted to Central Drug Inspector in 5th Pay Commission. This demand was rejected by Anomaly Committee in its report dated 28.10.2005. The Applicants, are now demanding parity with Central Drug Inspectors whose pay scale was upgraded by Central Government by order dated 10.11.2005 from Rs. 6500-10500 to Rs 7500-12000. By this time, the Pay Anomaly

Committee of the State Government had already submitted report on 28.10.2005. The Applicant represented to the Respondent no. 1 to place their representation before Pay Anomaly Removal Committee appointed in pursuance of orders of Hon'ble Nagpur Bench of Bombay High Court. However, the aforesaid Committee was appointed to consider matters which were pending before various Courts/Tribunals. The representation of the Applicant association was not considered by the aforesaid Committee. The question is whether the Applicant have a right to upgradation of pay scale of its members whenever the Central Government decides to do so for its Drug Inspectors. The answer has to be a categorical no. As explained by the Respondents no. 1 in its affidavit in reply dated 13.3.2013, it is not possible to consider such demands in isolation. In para 7, of the affidavit in reply, the Respondent no. 1 has stated:-

“7. It is submitted that benefits of post 5th Pay Commission upgradation in the pay scales of equivalent cadres in Central Government have not been extended to all the State cadres. Hence, it would not be fair (to) consider the demand of the applicants only.” [to is not there in the sentence].

It is difficult to find fault with this stand of the State Government. The Applicants are strongly relying on the

judgment of Allahabad High Court in W.P no 2290 (SB) of 1993 decided on 22.9.2006. From the perusal of the aforesaid judgment, it is clear that the U.P Government has not given parity between Drug Inspector in the State Government with Central Drug Inspectors. After examining the issue in great detail, Hon. High Court ordered parity from 1.1.1986. In Maharashtra, this parity already existed since 1.1.1986 on the basis of Justice Naik Committee recommendation. After 5th Pay Commission also, it continued. The recommendation of 5th Pay Commission were implemented from 1.1.1996. Only in November 2005, almost at the fag end of the terms of the Pay Commission, Central Government decided to upgrade pay scale of the post of Central Drug Inspector. The State Government decided not to do so, as it would have upset many other cadres, if this was done for the cadre of Drug Inspector only. Learned Presenting Officer has cited many judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court dealing with issue of pay scales applicable to different cadres/posts in the Government. In **STATE OF HARYANA & ANR Vs. HARYANA CIVIL SECRETARIAT PERSONNEL STAFF ASSOCIATION (2002) 6 SCC 72**, it has been held that:-

“instead of granting a particular pay scale, ordinarily the Court should direct the authority concerned to reconsider the matter. Hence, grant of parity in pay to State Civil Secretariat P.As with

Central Secretariat P.As by the High Court merely because the designation was same without comparing the nature of duties and responsibilities and qualification for recruitment and without considering the relevant rules, regulation and executive instructions, issued by the employer was held to be improper.”

From this it is clear that qualification, nature of duties and responsibilities are not the only factors which are to be considered for deciding equivalence. There are many other factors which are to be considered. In the present case till 5th Pay Commission, the pay scale given to the members of Applicant association was same as that of Central Drug Inspectors. Only the upgradation given less than two months before the recommendations of 6th Pay Commission were due, was not considered by the State Government. We are of the opinion that the reasons given by the Respondent no. 1 for the action taken by them are reasonable and we are not inclined to give any direction in this matter.

7. The Applicant in O. A no 606/2008 is the Association Class-I Officers working in the Office of the Food & Drugs Administration, Maharashtra State, who are espousing the cause of the Assistant Commissioner (Drug). The Applicant association is seeking relief that Assistant Commissioner (Drug) are entitled to pay scale

of Rs. 10000-15200 (as against the existing pay scale of Rs. 8000-13500) which is given to Assistant Drug Controller in the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization under the Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India w.e.f 1.1.1996.

8. Learned Counsel for the Applicant argued that the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) under the State Government is equivalent to the post of Assistant Drug Controller in Government of India. Government of Maharashtra has taken a policy decision to adopt the recommendations of the Central Pay Commission in respect of the equivalent posts of the Central Government. As the State Government has not granted pay scale of Rs. 10000-13500 to the Assistant Commissioner (Drug) though the post is equivalent to the Central post of Assistant Drug Controller, this amounts to violation of provisions of Article 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India. Learned Counsel for the Applicant contended that the Applicant had made a large number of representations to the Respondents. Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has also recommended to the Respondent no. 2 on 3.3.2004 for upgradation of pay scales of Assistant Commissioner (Drug). However, the Respondents have not accepted this recommendation. Other States like West Bengal has granted upgraded pay scale of Rs. 10000-15200 to the

Assistant Commissioner (Drug). Rajasthan has also given the same pay scale to the Assistant Drug Controller. Learned Counsel for the Applicant association argued that the Respondents could have referred the demand in respect of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) to the Pay Anomaly Removal Committee appointed after the judgment of Nagpur Bench of the Bombay High Court in Writ Petition no 2585/2006 and 2597/2006. However, the Respondents failed to do so. In addition to these grounds in the Original Application, during the arguments learned Counsel for the Applicant contended that Justice Naik Committee, which considered implementation of 4th Pay Commission recommendations in the State of Maharashtra did not equate the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in the State with Assistant Drug Controller in the Central Government. The decision of Justice Naik Committee was not based on correct appreciation of facts. State Government has accepted that lower posts of Drug Inspectors in the State and Central Government are equivalent. For the post of Joint Commissioner in the State Government also, pay scale applicable to Deputy Drug Controller in the Central Government is granted. However, only for the intermediate posts of Assistant Commissioner (Drug), the State Government is not accepting equivalence. Learned Counsel for the Applicant strongly relied on judgment of Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court in W.P no 2290(SB) of 1993 where such equivalence is recognized

by the High Court of Allahabad. Learned Counsel for the Applicant argued that reliance on the judgment of Aurangabad Bench of this Tribunal in O.A 609/2005 dated 8.1.2008 is misplaced as facts were totally different. Learned Counsel for the Applicant contended that the supervisory Officers of Drug Inspector in State Government (Assistant Commissioner) and Central Government (Assistant Drug Controller) implement the same law viz, Drugs and Cosmetic Act 1940 and Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, 1945. Recruitment Rules for both the posts are on similar lines. Learned Counsel for the Applicant stated that a grave mistake was made by the Justice Naik Committee which is being repeatedly continued by all subsequent Pay Anomaly Removal Committees.

9. Learned Presenting Officer argued that the State Government has appointed a Committee headed by retired High Court Judge, Justice Naik to consider application of recommendation of 4th Pay Commission to State employees. This Equivalence Committee for revision of pay scale in Maharashtra State for application of 4th Pay Commission submitted report in October 1987. Though the Committee held post of Drug Inspector in the State equivalent to the post of Drug Inspector in the Central Government, the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) was not held equivalent to the post of Assistant Drug Controller in Central

Government. After the 5th Pay Commission recommendations were received, State Government appointed a Committee headed by Shri D.M Sukhthankar. This Committee also did not accept the claim of equivalence of the Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in the State Government with the post of Assistant Drug Controller in the Central Government. The representation on behalf of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in this regard was again considered by Pay Anomaly Committee headed by Shri Subodh Kumar. This Committee submitted its report on 28.10.2005. The Committee observed that the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) was found not equivalent to the post of Assistant Drug Controller in Central Government by Justice Naik Committee. The Committee did not find any new facts and rejected the demand of Assistant Commissioner (Drug). Learned Presenting Officer stated that the Committee appointed as per the orders of Nagpur Bench of Bombay High Court in W.P nos 2585/2006 and 2597/2006, did not consider the representation of the Assistant Commissioner (Drug) as the Committee was mandated to consider only the cases pending before various Tribunals/Courts. Learned Presenting Officer argued that the recruitment rules, qualifications for the posts etc., are not identical. The judgments in respect of other States will not be applicable in Maharashtra as facts are not identical. She relied on various judgments of Hon. Supreme Court.

10. We find that the Pay Equivalence Committee headed by Justice Naik did not find the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in the State as equivalent to the post of Assistant Drug Controller in the Central Government. This decision was not changed by Sukhthankar Committee and Subodh Kumar Committee. The latter in its report dated 28.10.2005 held that:

“(२) सहाय्यक आयुक्त (औषधे): चौथ्या केंद्रीय वेतन आयोगाच्या सुधारणा राज्य शासकीय कर्मचा-याना लागू करण्या करिता शासनाने नाईक समितीची नियुक्ती केली होती. सहाय्यक आयुक्त रु ६८०-१५०० या असुधारित वेतन श्रेणीस समितीने रु २२०० - ४००० ही वेतनश्रेणी देण्याची शिफारस केली, शासनाने ती मान्य केली. ५ व्या वेतन आयोगात सदर वेतनश्रेणीस रु ८००० - १३५०० ही समरूप सुधारित वेतनश्रेणी देण्यात आलेली आहे.”

The issue of equivalence was examined by three Committees and all the Committees did not find merit in the claim of the Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in the State Government. We find that the Applicant has submitted a chart comparing the posts of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) and Assistant Drug Controller in Central Government along with written arguments submitted in November 2011. We find that the requirement of experience for the post of Assistant Drug Controller is different for the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) in Maharashtra. All posts of Assistant Drug Controllers are filled by promotion, while in Maharashtra 50% of the posts of Assistant

Commissioner (Drug) are to be filled by promotion and 50% by nomination. We do not have full recruitment rules for both the posts before us. However, it is clear that there are significant difference and it is difficult to accept the contention of the Applicant that the recruitment rules for both the posts are identical. We do not have before us recruitment rules of other States and it will be difficult to draw any conclusions.

11. Learned Counsel for the Applicant association has relied on the Supreme Court judgment in **K. JAGANNATHAN & ORS Vs. GIRIJA VAIDYANATHAN & ANR (2013) 2 SCC (L & S)**. It is held that post of Health Inspector Grade-IA is equal to that of Health Inspector Grade IB and hence there was no legal justification to continue disparity in their pay scales. Both were held entitled to the same pay scale from the date of their integration in 1997. It is clear that in this case, two cadres were merged but members continued to receive pay in different pay scale. Both the posts were in Tamil Nadu Government. Facts are entirely different and hence have no application in the present case.

12. Learned Presenting Officer relied on the following judgments:-

(i) Union of India Vs. Arun Jyoti Kundu and Ors in Appeal (Civil) 2468-2469 of 2005 decided on 27.8.2007. Hon'ble Supreme Court held that:

“As this Court has observed, neither the Central Administrative Tribunal nor the High Court, can direct merger of any cadre. This is a policy decision for the Government to take”.

Learned Presenting Officer argued that Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that Government is not even bound to accept the recommendations of the Pay Commission.

(ii) **Union of India Vs. Makhan Chandra Roy : 1997 AIR SC 2391.** Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that:

“The equation of posts or equation of pay must be left to the Executive Government. It must be determined by expert bodies like Pay Commission. They would be the best judges to evaluate the nature of duties and responsibilities of posts. If there is any such determination by a Commission or Committee, the Court should normally accept it. The Court should not try to tinker with such equivalence unless it is shown that it was made with extraneous consideration”.

Learned Presenting Officer argued that in the present case, at least three Committees have examined the question of equivalence of the post of Assistant Commissioner (Drug) with Assistant Drug Controller. There is nothing to indicate that the decision of any of the Committee was made with extraneous consideration. Learned Presenting Officer argued that the present case is fully covered by the aforesaid decision of Hon. Supreme Court.

(iii) STATE OF HARYANA & ANR Vs. HARYANA CIVIL SECRETARIAT PERSONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION : (2002) 6 SCC 72. Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that fixation of pay and determination of parity in duties is the function of the executive. Financial capacity of the Government and the priority given to different types of posts under the prevailing policies of the Government are also relevant factors. Court should interfere with administrative decision pertaining to pay fixation and pay parity only when they find such a decision to be patently irrational, unjust, and prejudicial to a section of employees and taken in ignorance of material and relevant factors.

13. We find that the judgments of Hon'ble Supreme Court in Makhan Chandra Roy's case (supra) and Haryana Civil Secretariat Personal Staff Association's case (supra) are squarely applicable in the present case.

14. This Tribunal has consistently taken a view that the task of fixation of pay scale, parity in pay scale etc. is best left to expert bodies like Pay Commission / Pay Equivalence Committee. The facts in both Original Applications are squarely covered by the decision of Hon. Supreme Court in the cases cited in the preceding paragraph. As a result, both the Original Applications stand dismissed with no order as to costs.

Sd/-
(R.B. Malik)
Member (J)

Sd/-
(Rajiv Agarwal)
Vice-Chairman

Place : Mumbai
Date : 05.09.2014
Dictation taken by : A.K. Nair.