MAHARASHTRA ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL NAGPUR BENCH NAGPUR

ORIGINAL APPLICATION No. 397 of 2019 (DB)

- Harshlata Vasantrao Burade, Aged about 45 years, Occupation service, resident of District Education and Training Institute, Maltekdi Amravati, Tahsil and District Amravati.
- Milind Ambadas Kubde, Aged about 48 years, Occupation service, Resident of District Education and Training Institute, Yavatmal.
- Vilas Ramchandra Gawande, Aged about 45 years, Occupation service, Resident of District Education and Training Institute, Akola.
- Balaji Shelke, Aged about 45 years, Occupation service, Resident of District Education and Training Institute, Washim.

Applicants.

<u>Versus</u>

- The State of Maharashtra, through its Secretary, School Education and Sports Department, Mantralaya, Mumbai-32.
- The State of Maharashtra, through its Commissioner, Education Department, Commissioner Office, Balbharti, Senapati Bapat Marg, Pune.

- The Director, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Government of Maharashtra, Shikshak Bhavan, Pune.
- The Maharashtra State Public Service Commission, through its President, 3rd Floor, Bank of India Building, Fort, Mumbai.

Respondents.

With

ORIGINAL APPLICATION No. 398 of 2019 (DB)

- Prashant Prabhakarrao Daware, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Tope Nagar, Amravati.
- Smt. Radha Shyam Atkari, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Bhandara.
- Pawan Ramesh Mankar, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Tope Nagar, Amravati.
- Rambhau R. Sonare, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Akola.
- Prashant Kashinath Gawande, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Yavatmal.
- 6. Dr. Aparna Avinash Shankdarwar, Aged Major, Occupation service,

C/o District Education and Training Institute, Nagpur.

- Dr. Hemlata Madhukar Bambal, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o Pradashik Vidhya Pradhakiran, Nagpur.
- Dr. Sarita Arun Mangesh, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o Pradashik Vidhya Pradhakiran, Nagpur.
- Deepak Shrawanji Meshram, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Yavatmal.
- Premlata Shivling Kharatmol, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Washim.
- Kavita Satish Burghate, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Akola.
- 12. Varsha Vijay More, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Wardha.
- Rajesh Kashinath Rudrakar, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Gondia.
- 14. Dr. Devanand Gunwantrao Sawarkar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Wardha.
- 15. Dr. Ratna keshavrao Gujar,

Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Nagpur.

- 16. Kalpana Tukaram Bankar, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Nagpur Nagar, Amravati.
- Dr. Vijay Vinayakrao Shinde, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Amravati.
- Rajesh Atmaram Gawai, Aged Major, Occupation service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Tope Nagar, Washim.
- Sambhaji Janku Bhojane, Aged Major, Occupation-Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Gadchiroli.
- 20. Pravin Dulsingh Rathod, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Amravati.
- 21. Gopal Kukde, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Washim.
- Shobha Sambhajirao Mokale, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Hingoli.
- 23. Nandini Sanjivan Punekar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Nanded.

- 24. Jayshree Kailasrao Athavale, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Nanded.
- 25. Tukaram Mahadeo Kumbhar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Kolhapur.
- 26. Sanjaykumar Khandu Nawale, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Kolhapur.
- 27. Kamsheety Shailappa Malappa, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Solapur.
- Bhagirathi Narayan Giri,
 Aged Major, Occupation Service,
 C/o District Education & Training Institute,
 Welapur, Kolhapur.
- 29. Dagdu Daulat Suryawanshi, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Sangamner.
- Arun Pandurang Patil, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Sindhudurg.
- Satish Babanrao Farande, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Sangli.
- 32. Sushil Suresh Shiwalkar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Ratnagiri.

- 33. Neeta Prabhakarrao Karwanje,
 Aged Major, Occupation Service,
 C/o District Education and Training Institute,
 Kolhapur.
- 34. Varsha Vasant Bansode, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Kolhapur.
- 35. Vidhya Junghurao Kadam, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Kolhapur.
- Gajendra Tukaram Jamadar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Kolhapur.
- 37. Prachi Devraj Patil,
 Aged Major, Occupation Service,
 C/o District Education and Training Institute,
 Kolhapur.
- Jyotsana Shriramrao Dhutmal, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Parbhani.
- Chandrakant Ashok Pawar, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute, Nandurbar.
- 40. Vijaykumar Adinath Gadgade, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Solapur.
- 41. Jaypal Prabhakarrao Kamble, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education and Training Institute,

Ambejogai.

42. Rajendra Vasant Kamble, Aged Major, Occupation Service, C/o District Education & Training Institute, Kolhapur.

Applicants.

<u>Versus</u>

- The State of Maharashtra, through its Secretary, School Education and Sports Department, Mantralaya, Mumbai-32.
- The State of Maharashtra, through its Commissioner, Education Department, Commissioner Office, Balbharti, Senapati Bapat Marg, Pune.
- The Director, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Government of Maharashtra, Shikshak Bhavan, Pune.
- The Maharashtra State Public Service Commission, through its President, 3rd Floor, Bank of India Building, Fort, Mumbai.

Respondents.

Shri S.N.Gaikwad, Ld. counsel for the applicants.

Shri S.A.Sainis, ld. P.O. for the respondents.

<u>Coram</u> :- Shri Shree Bhagwan, Vice-Chairman and Shri M.A. Lovekar, Member (J).

Date of Reserving for Judgment : 03rd August, 2022.

Date of Pronouncement of Judgment: 26th August, 2022.

IUDGMENT

Per :Vice Chairman.

(Delivered on this 26th day of August, 2022)

Heard Shri S.N.Gaikwad, ld. Counsel for the applicant and Shri S.A.Sainis, ld. P.O. for the respondents.

In these two O.As. identical points arise for determination.
 Hence, the same are being decided by this common Judgment.

3. Case of the applicants is as follows. The Applicants are post graduates with Degree in Education having sufficient experience. They have been duly appointed as Senior Lecturer in District Institute of Education and Training in government, subject to certain terms and conditions. The main condition incorporated in their order of appointment is that, they would be required to appear in the departmental examination prescribed by the Recruitment Rules. It is also mentioned that such examination will have to be cleared within a period of two years of probation. This rule is not applicable in case of an employee who is aged 45 years, and he or she is exempted from appearing in the said examination.

4. Applicants submit that though the Recruitment Rules are mandatory and passing of departmental examination by the employees is also mandatory, till the completion of the probationary period by applicants, they were never asked or directed to appear for any departmental examination. In this respect, Applicants submit that as per Government Resolution dated 29.11.1966 (A-A, Pg. No. 22), the employees belonging to Maharashtra Education Service, Class-I and Class-II holding teaching post in government organization are exempted from passing departmental examination. Further the government resolution dated 31.07.2008 (A-B, Pg. No. 25), shows that the regulations for conducting the departmental examination are not finalized, meaning thereby that there are no rules prescribed for conducting said examination. A copy of the government resolution dated 29.11.1966 and 31.07.2008 are annexed herewith and marked as Annexure-A and B, respectively.

5. It is submitted that taking up this issue, the similarly placed employees had approached this Hon'ble Tribunal at Aurangabad vide Original Application No.774/2009. The ld. Counsel for the applicant has relied upon this Judgment which was delivered on 06.07.2010 (A-R-2, Pg. No. 112 to 118). In the said proceedings, the Hon'ble Tribunal on 06.07.2010, cleared the probation period and also granted increments to the said applicants. The contention of the applicants is that similarly they are also not required to clear any examination.

6. In identical situation on earlier Original Application No. 438/2016 before this Hon'ble Tribunal was filed, praying therein that the Government Resolution dated 31.07.2008, prescribing the departmental examination for the employees like the applicants, is not applicable, and

they also claimed that they should be successfully declared to have completed the probation, and thus, are confirmed on their substantive posts. The Applicants also sought release of all benefits including increments which were withheld by Respondents. Few applicants like Smt. Harshalata Burhade, Shri Milind Ambadas Kubde, Shri Vikas Gawande and Shri Balaji Shelke in M.A.T., Nagpur Bench O.A. in which order was delivered on 25.04.2017 by Division Bench. Ld. Counsel for the applicant has relied on Judgment of this Original Application which is annexed at page nos. 28 to 34. The operative part of the order is reproduced below which is at page no. 34:-

- "(i) The O.A. is allowed.
- (ii) It is hereby declared that the G.R. dated 31.07.2008 prescribing the departmental examination, is not applicable to the category of employees like the applicants.
- (iii) The respondents are directed to declare that the applicants have successfully completed their probation period, if they are otherwise fit except for clearing the departmental examination and to grant all consequential benefits to them as claimed.
- (iv) The respondents shall release the benefit of increments etc.to the applicants.

(v) No order as to costs."

Consequent to this order Government issued G.R. dated 18.04.2018 (A-D, Pg. No. 35) and both the applicants along with Shri Vikas Gawande and Shri Balaji Shelke got the relief, their probation period was completed. The Government decision is at pages 36 and para 3 of the G.R. is implemented post facto.

7. Again matter was heard on 22.06.2018 and order was passed on Contempt Petition (A-F, Pg. Nos. 39 to 42) the operative part of the order is reproduced below:-

> "In view of the aforesaid order, a specific order was passed on 19.4.2018, when the learned P.O has placed on record one G.R. dated 18.4.2018 as regards departmental examination. It was also intimated to this Tribunal that the State will take steps to delete the para directing the applicant to clear the examination. Now, the learned P.O. has submitted that the said statement was made inadvertently and seeks apology. We are not inclined to accept such apology. The learned P.O. submits that the State has requested the Law and Judiciary Department to permit it to file an appeal against the order of this Tribunal in O.A. No. 430/2016. But the Law and Judiciary Department has specifically stated that there is no point in filing an appeal. Admittedly till

today, no appeal / writ petition is filed against the order of this Tribunal and, therefore, the order has become final. The State has no option, but to comply with the order dated 25.4.2017 in O.A. No. 430/2016. The Ld. P.O. submits that two weeks time be granted to comply with the order of this Tribunal. As a last chance, two weeks time is granted for compliance of the order of this Tribunal, failing which, proceedings for contempt shall be initiated."

8. Subsequently, Government issued the G.R. dated 04.07.2018 (A-G, Pg. No. 43). The matter was again heard on 25.04.2017 and order was passed which is at page no. 28. In pursuance to this order Government issued G.R. dated 04.07.2018 (A-G, Pg. No. 43) and on page no. 44 in para no. 2 it is specifically mentioned that examination prescribed as per G.R. dated 31.07.2008 is not required to be cleared by the applicants in the said O.As. which is reproduced below:-

"मा. महाराष्ट्र प्रशासकीय न्यायाधिकरण, नागपूर यांनी दिनांक २९.०४.२०१७ रोजी दिलेल्या आदेशाच्या अनुषंगाने श्रीमती हर्षलता बुराडे व इतर ३ अर्जदार यांना दिनांक ३१.०७.२००८ च्या शासन निर्णयानुसार लागू करण्यात आलेली विभागीय परीक्षा उत्तीर्ण होण्याची आवश्यकता नाही."

9. Applicants submit that on the one hand the department i.e. State Government is coming with a plea that the applicants would be

required to appear for the examination i.e. departmental examination though there is a judicial decision in their favour exempting them from appearing in such examination, compelling the applicants to run from pillar to post and having realized that some blatant error has been caused in the case of the applicants, it has issued a communication on 26.04.2019, stating therein that the applicants who are desirous to opt for promotion and are interested in further promotion, those applicants would be required to appear and clear the departmental examination framed under the Rules. However, it is also stated that the increments were to be released regularly. A copy of the said communication dated 26.04.2019 is annexed herewith and marked as Annexure-M.

10. From the above it is clear that the respondents are blowing hot and cold at one and the same time. On the one hand they are compelling the applicants to appear for the examination and on the other by issuing subsequent communication, gave them option that if they choose to have promotion in services, they would be required to appear and clear the examination, thus a condition is imposed for appearing in the examination, which is per se illegal. It is relevant to state here, that once this Hon'ble Tribunal had directed that the applicants are exempted from appearing in the examination and they should be released all emoluments due to the applicants, there was no reason for the respondent State to put such

stringent condition in total disregard and disrespect to the orders passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal.

11. It is further pertinent to note that the examination which is required to be cleared was to be cleared within two years of probation, however, 4 attempts were given to clear such examination. However, there were no rules framed for almost more than 10 years, and therefore, there was no occasion for the applicants to appear in the examination, and now when the applicants have crossed 45 years of their age, by a new amendment to said rules, the attempts are brought down to 2 from 4, and the age of exemption is raised to 55. May be so, however, the same could not be made applicable in the case of present applicants, for the aforesaid reasons. It is also submitted that most of the applicants have crossed their age of 45 years, and as per the old rules, they are exempted from passing said examination and thus, are also otherwise entitled to the benefits flowing from the same.

12. From the entire proceedings right from the orders passed by the Aurangabad Bench of this Tribunal to the orders passed in the matter of proceedings undertaken by the applicants at various stages, including those of contempt proceedings, the respondents have taken contradictory stands and every time attempted to flout the orders, and when cognizance of the same is taken they have tried to rectify their mistake. After having accepted

that the applicants are exempted from passing any departmental examination, again they have taken a stand by issuing communication dated 24.09.2018, that the applicants are required to appear for the departmental examination, which is contrary to their earlier stand. However, having realized the mistake, they have issued another communication dated 26.04.2019, wherein it is stated that though the applicants are entitled to increments, however, if they are desirous for having further promotion, they would be required to appear and pass/clear the departmental examinations. Thus, again an attempt is made to defeat the claim of the applicants which is totally contrary to their stand, and applicants having armed with the orders of this Hon'ble Tribunal cannot be forced to appear for the examinations, and therefore, an express direction is required that the applicants cannot be compelled to appear in the examination and they having been exempted are entitled for all service benefits including that of promotion etc.

13. The applicants submit that the question which arises before this Hon'ble Tribunal is that, when Applicants have succeeded in their challenge before this Hon'ble Tribunal, and when in the contempt proceedings, the respondents have accepted that the Applicants cannot be subjected to any examination, when it came to disbursing the benefits to which the Applicants were entitled, the respondents have come up with a

new communication dated 24.09.2018 and thereafter 26.04.2019, forcing the Applicants to appear and participate in the examinations which are scheduled in 11.06.2019 and thereafter, modifying the same to the extent of option for appearing in the examination, if they are intending to having further promotion. In the humble submission of the applicants there cannot be any such condition or option.

14. Respondents have filed reply on 19.11.2011. In para no. 11 they have mentioned about M.A.T. order dated 25.04.2017 and G.R. dated 04.07.2018 the same para is reproduced below:-

The Hon'ble Tribunal passed the order dated 25.04.2017 in O.A. No. 438/2016 and as per the said order the revised G.R. dated 04.07.2018 was issued in which the above para was deleted. Considering the orders dated 25.04.2017 revised G.R. was issued which is produce ad-verbatam below:-

२. मा. महाराष्ट्र प्रशासकीय न्यायाधिकरण, नागपूर यांनी दिनांक २७.०४. २०१७ रोजी दिलेल्या आदेशाच्या अनुषंगाने श्रीमती हर्षलता बुराडे व इतर ३ अर्जदार यांना दिनांक ३१.०७.२००८ च्या शासन निर्णयानुसार लागू करण्यात आलेली विभागीय परीक्षा उत्तीर्ण होण्याची आवश्यकता नाही.

15. Relevant portion of reply of the respondent nos. 1 to 3 are reproduced below:-

6] It is pertinent to note here that, As the aforesaid

rules were published after a long time after the appointments of the applicants, the service benefit is given to the applicants that their service benefits which is given to the applicants that there services will not be terminated, even if they failed to pass the departmental examination as per the rules 26-2-2018, relaxation is given to the condition which is mentioned in the appointment orders of the applicants. It is submitted that as per rule 3(i) of the said rules the applicants is required to pass the examination in accordance with the rules within a period of two years from the date of the commencement of the rules. According to these rules the respondent no.1 directed MPSC to hold the departmental examination for the applicants and for other newly appointed officer s and the **MPSC has conducted** the said examination on 11th and 12th June 2019 and the result is awaited.

7] It is submitted that, the contention of the applicant that this rule is not applicable to the employees who have attained the age of 45 years and he or she is exempted from appearing in the said examination is not mentioned in the rules. Thus the contentions of the applicants are denied in toto. It is pointed out that as there were no rules in existence earlier

which prescribed for the completion of probation period of the officers working in Teacher Training side, thus with a purpose to grant annual increment, prepare seniority list and for other administrative reasons, the State Government issued G.R dated 31-7-2008. Vide this G.R the applicants and officers working in Teacher Training side were directed to appear for the examination which was conducted for the officers in Administrative Branch. The said G.R was challenged by some officers in Education Empowerment Branch before Hon'ble MAT at Aurangabad. The Hon'ble Tribunal allowed the original applications challenging the aforesaid G.R. dated 31-7-2008. According to the direction of the Hon'ble Tribunal separate rules for completion of probation of officer working in Education Empowerment Branch previously known as Teacher Training Branch] is published on 26-2-2018 and as per the said rules the applicants are bound to pass the departmental examination within a stipulated period.

8] It is further submitted that, G.R dated 29-11-1966 is applicable for Maharashtra Educational Service, Grade II (Administrative Branch) regarding the passing of the Departmental Examination. The applicants are not working on

Administrative side hence the said G.R was not applicable to the applicants. The applicants were working in Teacher Training Branch which is now renamed as Education Empowerment Branch.

91 It is further submitted that, OA No. 774/2009 was filed before the Hon'ble Tribunal at Aurangabad, by order dated 6-7-2010 the Hon'ble Tribunal clearly stated that, G.R dated 31-7-2008 should not be made applicable to the education and training side and also directed that the probation period of the applicants and those similarly situated should be provisionally closed after an assessment of their service record, subject to their passing the departmental examination, to be prescribed within chances and period, that may be stipulated in the rules. Therefore the examination passed by the applicants which is as per G.R dated 31-7-2008 is declared as invalid by the Hon'ble Tribunal at Aurangabad. As per the provisions in the rules 26-2-2018 the applicants are required to pass the departmental examination within two year from the date of publication of rules. The probation period of the applicants are temporarily closed and the annual increments were also released to them and Ad-Hoc promotions are also granted to some of the

applicants who were found eligible for promotion.

10] The applicants in earlier O.A.No. 438/2016 did not seek relief as stated by the applicants that permanent closure of their probation and that to without requiring to pass the departmental examination. The Hon'ble Tribunal passed an order on 25-4-2017 in O.A No. 438/2016. At that time the rules namely Principal (Group-A), Senior Lecturer (Group-A) and Lecturer (Group-B) in Maharashtra Education Service [Education Empowerment Branch] departmental examination Rules 2018 were not published. It is submitted that as by the time of issuance of G.R dated 18-4-2018 the Principal (Group-Senior Lecturer (Group-A) and Lecturer (Group-B) in A), Maharashtra Education Service [Education Empowerment Branch] departmental examination Rules 2018 were published on 26-2-2018.

12] It is further submitted that the State Government has not organized any departmental examination as per G.R dated 31-7-2008 after the orders dated 6-7-2010 in OA No. 774/2009 passed by the Hon'ble Tribunal at Aurangabad is annexed herewith and marked as <u>ANNEXURE: R.2</u>. Respondent no.1 has complied with the orders of the Hon'ble

Tribunal Bench at Nagpur passed on 25-4-2017 in O.A No. 438/2016. The Hon'ble Tribunal was satisfied that the State Government issued G.R dated 4-7-2018 and the Contempt application No.22/2018 was disposed of on 6-7-2018.

13] It is submitted that the applicants are under wrong impression, the Hon'ble Tribunal has not given such orders that the applicants are not required to appear for examination or exempted from examination. It is pertinent to note that, as per prayer of the applicant in O.A No. 438/2016 the Hon'ble Tribunal has clearly mentioned in its order dated 25-4-2017 that the G.R dated 31-7-2008 prescribing the departmental examination is not applicable to the category of employees like applicant and also directed to declare that the applicants have successfully completed their probation period, if they are otherwise fit except for clearing the departmental examination and to grant all consequential benefits to them as claimed by the applicants. Accordingly, all the benefits were given to the applicants. It is pertinent to point out that the orders passed by the Hon'ble Tribunal Nagpur in OA No. 438/2016 and the order passed by the Hon'ble Tribunal in O.A No. 774/2009 at Aurangabad, requires the applicants to pass the departmental examination as per rules 26-2-2018.

14] It is further submitted that, the other similarly situated applicants has filed OA No. 578/2017 and O.A No. 684/2018 before MAT Nagpur which were transferred to principal bench, Mumbai, after hearing the case on merit, the Hon'ble MAT at Mumbai has disposed of both the original applications vide order dated 26-4-2019. The copy of the order dated 26-4-2019 is annexed herewith at **ANNEXURE:R.3**. The applicant no.1 i.e. Harshalata Burade filed contempt petition no. 13/2019 before this Hon'ble Tribunal with a view to cancel the communication dated 24-9-2018 issued by respondent no. 2. After hearing at length this Hon'ble Tribunal arrived at a decision that there is no any contempt made by the respondent authority and therefore the contempt has disposed off. The copy of said order dated 26-4-2019 is annexed herewith and marked as ANNEXURE:R.4.

16. In the order dated 06.07.2010 in O.A. No. 774/2009 clear observations were made by the M.A.T., Aurangabad giving all the reliefs. Further by issuing G.R. dated 04.07.2018 respondents have complied with the order in O.A. No.

17. The Recruitment Rules came into force in the year 2018 i.e. 26.02.2018 and applicants were already in service prior to the issuance of these Rules and as per the Hon'ble Apex Court Judgment in the case of **Commissioner of Income Tax (Central)-I, New Delhi Vs. Vatika Township Private Limited, (2015) 1 SCC 1 : 2014 SCC Online SC 712** these rules can be applied only prospectively not retrospectively. Hence, respondents are directed to extend the benefits of G.R. dated 04.07.2018 i.e. exempting the applicants from not appearing in the examination.

18. In view of discussions made hereinabove, O.A. is allowed in terms of prayer Clauses (i) and (ii) with no order as to costs.

(M.A.Lovekar) Member(J) aps Dated – 26/08/2022 (Shree Bhagwan) Vice Chairman I affirm that the contents of the PDF file order are word to word same as per original Judgment.

Name of Steno:Akhilesh Parasnath Srivastava.Court Name:CourtofHon'bleViceChairman&Hon'bleMember (J).Judgment signed:26/08/2022.on and pronounced on::

Uploaded on : 29/08/2022.