

1 week before UG NEET exam, J&K aspirants hinge hopes on 450 additional seats

Students urge Govt to take proactive steps to fulfill requisite criteria; Positive that we will get the seats: Sakina Itoo

Zehru Nissa
Srinagar, Apr 27



With just a week to go for the UG NEET exam date, thousands of MBBS aspirants in J&K have hinged their hopes on the increase of MBBS seats in J&K Government Medical Colleges. The much sought after addition they feel, may bolster their chances of selection here. J&K Minister of Health and Medical Education, Sakina Itoo said efforts had been put in place to satisfy the various criteria mandated by National Medical Commission.

Itoo, while speaking to Greater Kashmir said that concerted efforts were in place to improve the faculty

availability, libraries, laboratories and class rooms as per the requirements of NMC. She said the Health and Medical Education Department as well as the administrations of these medical colleges had been directed to take proactive steps and ensure that Letter of Permission is granted by NMC. "We are positive we will be able to get a nod for 50 additional seats in each of the nine government medical colleges of J&K," she said. The NEET UG Exam is scheduled for May 4 this year, the final selections scheduled a couple of months ahead following rounds of counseling and other procedures. There are a total of 1339, including those in AIIMS Jammu and ASCOMS Jammu, a private medical college. Of these, 50 percent are pooled into All India Quota, while 4 percent is reserved

for aspirants from UT of Ladakh. The remaining seats are divided between various categories. Many aspirants have voiced their anguish that the seats available in the unreserved pool are too little and leave a huge number of meritorious candidates out.

The gross shortage of faculty that remains unaddressed in various medical colleges of J&K may dash the hopes of MBBS aspirants to secure a seat in one of the Government Medical Colleges here. According to the administration of some medical colleges, there is an unfulfilled pre-requisite for seeking seat increase - the adequate number of faculty members in various departments. Over the past few years scores of positions in each of the older medical colleges of Jammu and Srinagar have fallen vacant due to superannuation. However, these

positions have not been filled. Many positions have been referred to J&K Public Service Commission, they said, adding that many more are yet in the process of getting referred.

In March this year, J&K Government acknowledged that more than 50 faculty positions in GMC Rajouri were vacant. "Out of 119 faculty positions, 55 are filled while the remaining have been referred to J&K Public Services Commission", the Government said in an answer to a question. The commission is yet to advertise the posts. For many other new medical colleges, like Doda, Handwara and Udhampur, similar issues persisted. For SKIMS Medical Colleges Hospital, faculty and overall infrastructure deficits were major issues that needed immediate redress, the faculty of these medical colleges said.

PAHALGAM ATTACK AFTERMATH

After 4-day closure, Bhadarwah's tourist destinations reopened

Tahir Nadeem Khan Yusufzal
Bhadarwah, Apr 27



Remaining out of bound for visitors in the aftermath of Pahalgam attack for 4 days, much to the relief of locals and delight for the tourists, famous high altitude destinations of Bhadarwah valley - Guldanda and Chattargalla located on Bhadarwah-Pathankot highway were reopened for visitors today. In an effort to win back the confidence of visitors, District administration Doda after enhancing the security grid along all the high altitude tourist destinations of Bhadarwah valley has provided foolproof safety for the tourists and welcomed them again.

Mostly remaining abuzz with the hustle and bustle of visitors for most part of the year, the famous high altitude tourist destinations of Bhadarwah valley including Chattargalla, Guldanda, Padri, Bhul Padri and Jale were reflecting a haunting look after recent Pahalgam attack as all these spots were closed for the visitors after the attack. To welcome the tourists again in these high altitude meadows, which

provide jobs to hundreds of locals, district administration Doda has enhanced and set up new security pickets to win back the faith of tourists. Tourists mostly from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and UP who were seen enjoying the mundane beauty of the adjoining glaciers and while enthusiastically playing with the snow without any fear said that they are overwhelmed with the hospitality of the locals and the humane attitude of the Army. "We were a little apprehensive about visiting Bhadarwah after Pahalgam attack, but now we are happy that we didn't returned back

and came to this beautiful valley," said Tanushree Nikus, a tourist from Maharashtra. "Here we experienced the most humane face of our army, who beside providing foolproof security, offered us roses on our arrival here, this so heartwarming and I will treasure this experience for the rest of my life," Tanushree added. According to the data issued by Bhadarwah department Authority, till 3pm on Sunday, 3700 tourists had crossed the Nalthi check post, which is a good sign keeping in view the security concern after Pahalgam terror attack, added officials.

JEE result controversy puts spotlight on guidelines for coaching centre advertisements

'Purpose of guidelines is to protect consumers from misleading advertisements in coaching sector'

Syed Rizwan Geelani
Srinagar, Apr 27

The recent controversy revolving around the JEE score of a girl from central Kashmir's Budgam district has put a spotlight on the government guidelines issued for advertisements made by the coaching centres. As already reported by this newspaper, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) last year sought public comments on draft guidelines for prevention of misleading advertisements in the coaching sector.

The initiative was taken amid various misleading advertisements made by the proprietors of the coaching centres to lure students for their admissions. Last Saturday, after the National Testing Agency (NTA) declared the result of the JEE Mains-2025 exams, a video of a girl from central Kashmir hit social media wherein she claimed to have scored 99 percentile marks in the examination. Following this revelation, the social media was flooded with her videos wherein she was seen giving credit to the coaching centre she was taking coaching for the national level competitive exams. Soon after her revelation, her parents besides other relatives also joined her celebration as well. However, the celebration and happiness proved to be short lived for the girl and her family as it was revealed that the girl

scored only 73 percentile marks.

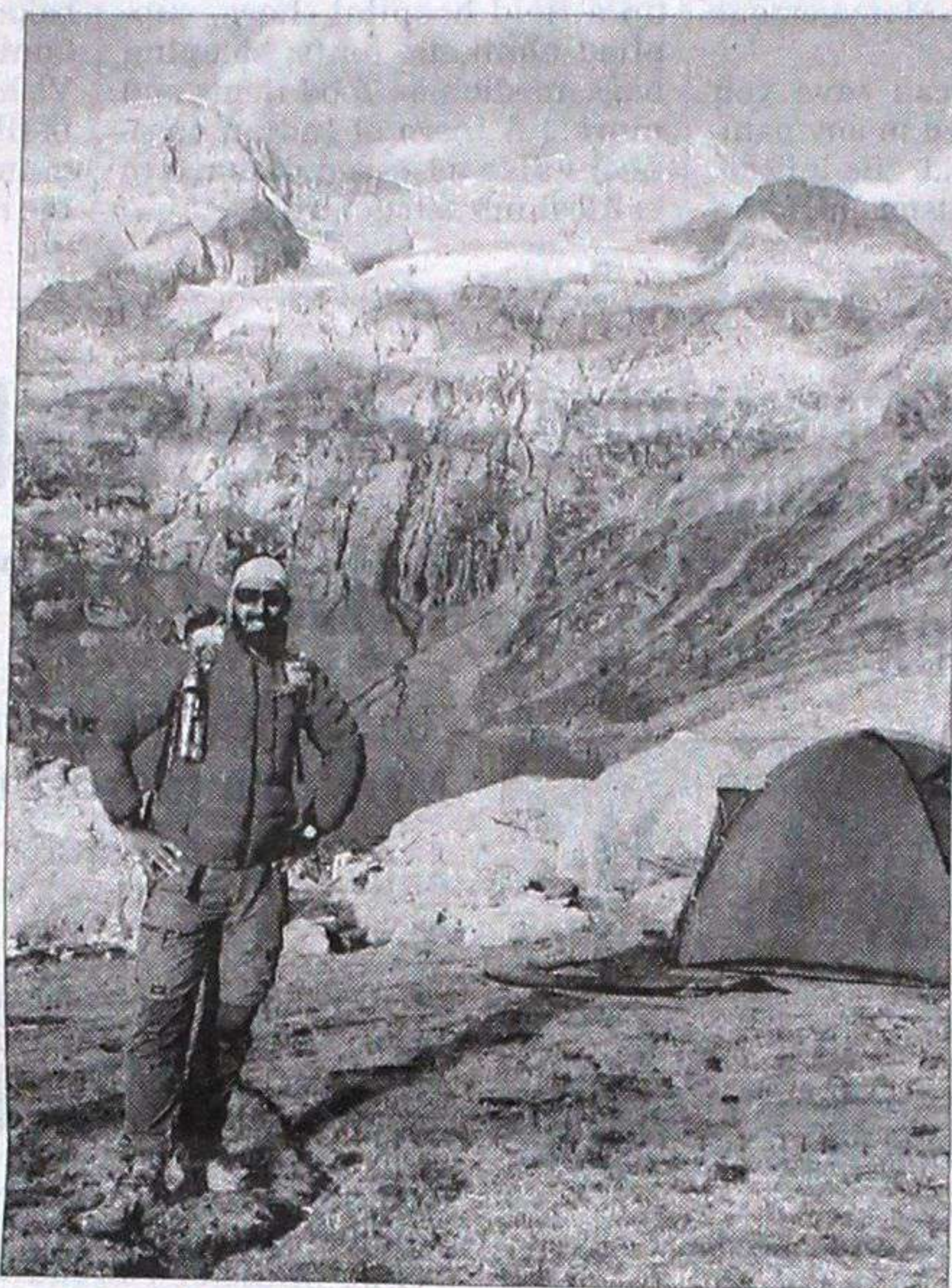
In wake of this, the candidate took to social media and attributed it to a "technical glitch" she faced while surfing the official website of NTA. "I request the media not to give this issue any hype as I am really facing a tough situation. I have mailed my grievance to the NTA and I am waiting for their response because I downloaded my scorecard from their website after following the requisite process," the girl said. However, as the news about this particular result went viral, fingers were raised on the owners of the coaching centre with stakeholders alleging them of forging the scorecard to lure students for admissions. The allegations were raised as the proprietors of the coaching centre also released a video in which they claimed that the girl who obtained a 99 percentile score in JEE was their student. Besides this video, a few people running social media pages also released their videos and tried to promote the success story of the coaching centre. Such instances were seen as giving undue promotion to the particular coaching centre. However, the owner of the coaching centre while talking to Greater Kashmir said that they asked the girl to produce the score card after her video went viral on social media wherein she claimed to be a topper.

Full Text On: www.greaterkashmir.com

Adventure tourism stakeholders recollect trekkers' tryst with Kashmir

Auqib Salam
Srinagar, Apr 27

As the adventure tourism segment in Kashmir has taken a hit, Valley's trekking trails in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack are witnessing an eerie silence as well, while tourism stakeholders say trekking had gained huge popularity over the last few years. Amid lack of interest among adventure seekers, stakeholders are hopeful that trend of cancelled bookings does not last too long. Trekking operators say that the peak season of trekking, was round the corner but has been hit by uncertainty now. "May used to be a month of this sightseeing for my guests, and there were several bookings that I was looking forward to before the start of peak trekking to the meadows and great alpine lakes of Kashmir. We have profound memories with our guests from across the country and from foreign countries, and now we are very uncertain about the future," Shahid Ahmad, an adventure tour operator said. Shahid, who also runs Gulmarg Ski Club, has guided Russian, Ukrainian, Indian, Malaysian, and adventure tourists from across the globe. He says that his guests were always taken aback by the hospitality and kind nature of Kashmiris. "For now there is total uncertainty," he added. In addition to those who were engaged in trekking and other tourism adventures, many operators in Kashmir had invested heavily in their out-



lets that rent and sell equipment related to trekking and other adventure tourism. Farhan Sangeen, who runs "Hook And Hike", and also collaborates with other tour operators for trekking tours, says: "In March, I had collaborated and organised a short trekking trip to Dumail in the Ganderbal district. The season had just picked up, and we had great expectations following the tourist flow. I also have an outlet where I sell and rent the equipment and vehicles

for adventure tourism. We had a great understanding and bond with our tourists, which will be impacted now," Sangeen said.

The operators said that with one tour operator, dozens of people were benefiting directly and indirectly. They said from ponywallas, trekking guides, drivers, chefs to small shopkeepers, everyone used to earn. They said that as they grieved for the loss of life, they feel that their bond of love with tourists has been dented.

Security review held at Gulmarg over crowd management, security deployment

Trekkers must follow guidelines: SSP Baramulla

Syed Rizwan Geelani
Baramulla, Apr 27

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Baramulla Gurinderpal Singh on Sunday visited Gulmarg to review security scenario in view of tourist footfall in the world famous tourist destination. Talking to media persons, SSP Baramulla said that Gulmarg, being one of the main tourist attractions witnesses a footfall of around 3,000 to 5,000 people on a daily basis. "Tourists are coming to Gulmarg and we provide them proper security," he said. He

said a huge deployment of Army, CRPF and Police remains around Gulmarg but considering the heightened security concerns, they have taken a thorough review of the security concerns. "As of now, we have not yet seen any security concerns here. But in case it does come over sometime or we are informed of something, we will be taking care of all of those loopholes," he said. He said wherever tourists are visiting in Gulmarg, they have armed deployment there to take care of all contingencies. "Today's review was not only from the perspective of

Pahalgam but also from the perspective of crowd management issues, fire emergency as in case there is an emergency with regard to the fire incident and the contingencies they can do," he said. He said a review was taken with the perspective of rescuing tourists in case there is electricity shutdown and tourists get stuck in Gandola. "What all skill sets we need to give to our personnel, we have taken a review of all. More or less, it is satisfactory, all the forces including Army, CRPF, JK Police are here. Full Text On: www.greaterkashmir.com

Appointment of Deputy Medical Superintendents in GMCs

Tribunal 'smells rat', says intentional delay, official lethargy prolongs decision

GK Legal Correspondent
Srinagar, Apr 27

The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) in Srinagar has held that there appeared to be an apparent intentional official delay in a case challenging the selection for the post of Deputy Medical Superintendent (DMS) in GMCs of Srinagar and Jammu, even as it said the court "smells a rat for this delay". A division bench comprising M S Latif Member (J) and Prasant Kumar Member (A) observed as "absolute lethargy" on part of the authorities not to file compliance on whether working as 'Causality Medical Officer' would include 'running a hospital' which makes eligible a candidate for the post of Deputy Medical Superintendent in GMC Srinagar and Jammu.

The court made the observation after it noted that its earlier directions besides the one issued on March 12 this year to J&K's Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department (GAD) and Commissioner Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department were not complied with in terms of the order passed on 05-11-2024 by the Tribunal. The direction was also not complied with, by the Secretary PSC as nodal officer, it said.

These authorities were required to submit a report within 10 days as to whether working as 'Causality Medical Officer' would include 'running a hospital' which makes a candidate eligible for the post of DMC in GMC Srinagar and Jammu.

"We are pained to come across the attitude of the authorities and we are not hesitant in expressing, once again, that there appears to

be an intentional delay in the case reaching to a logical and lawful end. This case is a glaring example of absolute official lethargy and non compliance, given the emergency, as hospitals are running vacant without Deputy Medical Superintendents", the tribunal said.

In its apparent dismay over the authorities' dilatory approach, the court said there should have been an endeavor by the authorities to accord proper assistance with utmost diligence and promptitude. Miffed over the non compliance of directions since November 11 when it ordered the constitution of an expert panel to find out whether working as 'Causality Medical Officer' would include 'running a hospital', the court said: "... It appears that none of the orders passed by the court have been complied with. Delay in disposal of the case is squarely attributable to the respondents as they have not complied with the directions (passed), which has made this court to smell a rat," the bench said. While the court observed that the PSC as a premier institution is supposed to know that employment is a national wealth and there should not be any sort of patronage, favoritism, bias or creating a monopoly in this national wealth, it said:

"Selection based on merit is universally accepted as a gateway to public service and every candidate participating in a recruitment process has a legitimate expectation that the process of selection will be fair and non arbitrary and the ethos of constitutional safeguards will be upheld".

On November 5, last year the tribunal had directed JK PSC's secretary to constitute the Committee of experts comprising director SKIMS, Principles of Government Medical Colleges Srinagar and Jammu, Secretary Health and Medical Education or any of his representatives not below the rank of special Secretary or any other expert which the Secretary PSC chooses, to facilitate in answering the query.

On March 12, this year, the PSC informed the tribunal that it did not have a mandate to constitute the committee saying only the GAD was competent to constitute such a committee. In the wake of this, the tribunal had observed that given the emergency involved in the matter, the PSC could have taken up the matter with the GAD of its own or could have, at least, approached court through an application seeking modification of the order.

Subsequently, the tribunal directed Commissioner Secretary GAD and Commissioner Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department to file within 10 days compliance with regard to the constitution of the committee. The Court observed that the matter came up for consideration again on April 7, the Government Advocate was directed to inform the Commissioner Secretary, GAD, regarding the compliance of the order passed by the court on March 12 with further direction to ensure that the officer would remain present before court on the next date of hearing.


The Court further observed that ordinarily, the Additional Secretary, GAD, as was ordered, should have been present but it was Waseem Ahmad, Deputy Secretary Law, GAD, who caused his presence.

"This court is not recognizing his presence as he was not ordered to be present before the court. Presence of an officer is sought so that a case is decided expeditiously as every individual has a right of speedy justice, as such presence of the above officer was of no use and his presence is marked by the court as a mere formality with no fruitful purpose"

The Court also observed that the Secretary PSC without any power to delegate, in a cursory manner, asked his Assistant Legal Remembrance to just act as a post office and to send the orders of the court to the Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department, Srinagar, when already a copy of the order was sent to the officer. "We would not like to comment, at this stage, as to what prevails between the PSC and other Departments as regards the instant case", the court said.

The Court observed that it was left with no option but to direct the personal appearance of Secretary, PSC & Additional Secretary, GAD before it and accordingly ordered so. In response to a submission by the counsel for PSC, the court permitted him that the Secretary, PSC could appear through virtual mode.

The court issued these directions in response to Dr Kulbir's plea whose contention is that working as Causality Medical Officer would include running a hospital which is a requirement for the post in terms of PSC's advertisement notice dated November 7, 2023.




ALL INDIA COUNCIL FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION
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SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR THE STUDENTS OF UNION TERRITORIES OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND LADAKH (SSSJJKL) UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI UCHCHATAR SHIKSHA PROTSAHAN (PM-USP) YOJANA: ONLINE REGISTRATION - ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-26 FOR 10+2 STUDENTS.

Online Registration for Academic Session 2025-26 under SSS J&K and Ladakh will commence from **01.05.2025**. The details regarding eligibility criteria, courses and financial help are given below:

Eligibility	Courses / Stream	Academic fee Provided	Maintenance Allowance Provided	Registration Starts From
Students passed 10+2 from JKBOSE or CBSE Schools located in UTs of J&K or Ladakh in session 2023-24 (enrolled in 2023 and passed in 2024) and 2024-25 (enrolled in 2024 and passed in 2025)	General Degree	Upto Rs. 30,000/- p.a.	Rs. 1.00 lakh per annum (in Ten equal instalments)	01.05.2025* *For details please refer the calendar of events available on the AICTE website
	Professional (Engg./ Nursing/ Pharmacy/ Hotel Management/ Architecture/ BA LLB through NLU etc.)	Upto Rs. 1.25 lakh p.a.		
	Medical/ BDS or equivalent	Upto Rs. 3.00 lakh p.a.		

Students are required to visit nearest Facilitation Center for Registration only and for Document Verification please visit nearest Facilitation-cum-Documents Verification Center (FDVC) from **06.05.2025** onwards. List of these Centers is available on AICTE Website.

For registration refer the link <https://www.aicte-jk-scholarship-gov.in> and the detailed information about the scheme guidelines is available at <https://www.aicte-india.org/SSSJJKL%202025-26>. Follow AICTE website for updates & calendar of events regularly.

For any query email: jkadmission2025@aicte-india.org

Warning: Students already enrolled in any other scholarship scheme on board with NSP or enrolling while being a beneficiary of SSSJ&K and Ladakh are not eligible for scholarship as per the guidelines of the Scheme.

Advt. No. SAG Bureau/AICTE/04(02)/2025
CBC 21300/12/0002/2526

Prof. RAJIVE KUMAR
Member Secretary, AICTE