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**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MANIPUR
AT IMPHAL**

**WP(C) No. 380 of 2026 with
MC(WP(C) No. 404 of 2026 with
MC(WP(C) No. 408 of 2026 with
WP(C) No. 387 of 2026**

Sumitra Phanjoubam

.....Petitioner/s

-Versus-

Union of India & 2 Ors.

....Respondent/s

**BEFORE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE A. GUNESHWAR SHARMA**

Order

31.07.2026

[1] Present Mr. HS. Paonam, learned senior counsel assisted by Mr. N. Bipin, learned counsel for petitioner in WP(C) No. 380 of 2026; Mr. K. Roshan, learned counsel along with Mr. Jonty Roscoe, learned counsel for petitioner in WP(C) No. 387 of 2026; Mr. Kh. Samarjit, learned DSGI assisted by Mr. N. Nongdamba, learned counsel on behalf of Ministry of Education, Government of India; and Mr. BP. Sahu, learned senior counsel assisted by Mr. Abhishek Prasad Sahu, learned counsel for Manipur University (MU).

[2] Both writ petitions are filed against appointment of private respondent, i.e, Prof. Ganga Prasad Parsain as Vice-Chancellor of Manipur University on in-charge basis vide order dated 14.05.2026 issued by Registrar, Manipur University on the recommendation of Ministry of Education, Government of India vide letter dated 14.05.2026.

[3] The main ground for challenge in both writ petitions is that in terms of Statute 2(6) of Manipur University Act, 2005 and in case of absence of regular VC (regular absence or vacant due to any other reason), the senior most professor available shall discharge function of

VC till appointment of regular VC or resumption of office by incumbent VC.

[4] It is admitted case that Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam (writ petitioner in WP(C) No. 380 of 2026) is the senior most professor in Manipur University as on date, whereas Prof. RK. Hemakumar Singh (petitioner in WP(C) No. 387 of 2026) is the second senior most professor and Prof. Ganga Prasad Parsain is the third senior most professor in Manipur University. In view of second proviso to Statute 2(6) of Manipur University Act, impugned order dated 14.05.2026 was stayed and Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam (petitioner in WP(C) No. 380 of 2026) was directed to take charge on in-charge VC of Manipur University till next date and interim order has been extended from time to time till today. It is also apparent from the case record that date of birth of Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam is 23.07.1961 and she completes the age of 65 years as on 23.07.2026. However, in view of the provisions of FR 56(a) where person attains superannuation at the end of the month of the year, that he or she completes 60 years (65 years in the present case).

[5] This Court has observed that Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam will retire on 31.07.2026 in terms of FR 56(a). She being the senior most professor till 31.07.2026, vide order dated 22.07.2026 she was permitted to continue as in-charge VC till 31.07.2026, i.e., till today by giving liberty to respondent to appoint VC on regular basis.

[6] Learned counsel for respondent submits that as on today, there is no intimation of appointment of VC on regular basis.

[7] Mr. BP. Sahu, learned senior counsel for MU, submits that if this Court does not pass any order making in-charge arrangement, there will be a vacuum in office of VC of Manipur University.

[8] Mr. Kh. Samarjit, learned DSGI, submits that pleadings are complete and matter may be heard out.

[9] Mr. HS. Paonam, learned senior counsel for petitioner in WP(C) No. 380 of 2026, submits that Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam is retiring today and WP(C) No. 380 of 2026 may be disposed of, as she is demitting office from today and matter may be closed, as the cause of the writ petition does not survive in her case.

[10] Mr. Kh. Samarjit, learned DSGI, submits that WP(C) No. 380 of 2026 may be closed as prayed for, keeping the questions left open for consideration in appropriate proceeding.

[11] Mr. K. Roshan, learned counsel for petitioner in WP(C) No. 387 of 2026, submits that from today Prof. RK. Hemakumar Singh will be the senior most professor and Prof. Ganga Prasad Parsain will be the second senior most professor and in view of the provisions of Statute 2(6), similar order dated 29.05.2026, conferring in-charge VC to Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam (the then senior most professor), may be passed in favour of Prof. RK. Hemakumar Singh, (the present senior most professor).

[12] This Court has considered the materials on record. After demitting of office by Prof. Sumitra Phanjoubam, Prof. RK. Hemakumar Singh is the senior most professor; in view of the non-appointment of VC on regular basis; and considering the fact that office of VC cannot remain vacant; an interim arrangement is made to the effect that Prof. RK. Hemakumar Singh will discharge function and duty of VC of Manipur University on in-charge basis till next date, in view of the second proviso to Statute 2(6) of Manipur University Act. It is made clear that this is without prejudice to the rights of parties in the writ petition and matter may be heard on merit on next listing.

[13] WP(C) No. 380 of 2026 is closed. Interim order is modified as per directions in para 12. MC(WP(C)) No. 404 of 2026 is accordingly disposed of.

[14] List WP(C) No. 387 of 2026 along with MC(WP(C) No. 408 of 2026 on 03.08 for final disposal.

[15] Furnish a copy of this order to learned counsel appearing for the parties by whatsapp or any available means in the course of the day.

JUDGE

Kh. Joshua Maring