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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

CNR No. DLHC010371792026

+ **W.P.(C) 11571/2026, CM APPL. 53590/2026, CM APPL. 53591/2026 & CM APPL. 53592/2026**

YASHOVARDHAN SINGH & ORS.

.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Medhanshu Tripathi, Mr. Rajeev Kumar Dubey and Ms. Arvinder Kaur, Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Nishant Gautam, CGSC with Ms. Kavya Shukla, Mr. Vineet Negi and Mr. Vibhav V. Nath, Advocates. For R-1,2 and 4.
Mr. Ravinder Agarwal, Mr. Manish Kumar Singh and Mr. Vasu Aggarwal, Advocates for R-3.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

ORDER

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12.08.2026

1. The Petitioners have approached this Court seeking, *inter alia*, disclosure of the vacancies remaining unfilled in the Indian Forest Service Examination, 2025, and consequential consideration of their request for operation of a reserve, extended or supplementary list, or such other permissible mechanism as may enable vacancies arising from non-joining, medical unfitness, cancellation of candidature or similar circumstances to be



filled by candidates next in order of merit. They also seek consideration of their representation dated 21st May, 2026. Specifically, they seek the following reliefs:

- “a) Direct the Respondents to place on record the complete category-wise vacancy position of the concerned Indian Forest Service Examination cycle, including the details of candidates who were recommended, joined, did not join, were declared medically unfit, failed the walking test, had their candidature cancelled, or were otherwise found ineligible;*
- b) Direct Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC to file a status report stating whether any vacancies are available or have remained unfilled in the concerned Indian Forest Service Examination cycle due to non-joining, medical unfitness, failed walking test, cancellation of candidature, invalid category claim or any similar reason;*
- c) Direct Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC to consider and decide the Petitioners’ representation dated 21.05.2026 and the grievances registered through CPGRAMS/PMO on merits and without treating the same as a mere suggestion, for operating a reserve list, extended list, supplementary recommendation list, replacement panel or next-in-merit mechanism for filling vacancies arising within the IFoS Examination 2025 cycle;*
- d) In the alternative, and without prejudice to prayer (c) above, direct Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC to pass a reasoned, speaking order on the Petitioners' representation dated 21.05.2026 within a period of 8 weeks from the date of this Hon'ble Court's order, irrespective of whether such mechanism is ultimately adopted or rejected;*
- e) Direct Respondent No. 1 MoEFCC to consider the Petitioners grievance in light of the DoPT Office Memorandum dated 13.06.2000 and the reserve extended list mechanism introduced in the Civil Services Examination Rules, 2025*
- f) Direct Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC, if vacancies are found available in the same recruitment cycle, to send an appropriate requisition to Respondent No. 3/UPSC for recommendation of eligible next-in-merit candidates strictly as per merit, category and law;*
- g) Direct Respondent No. 3 UPSC to act in accordance with law upon any such requisition sent by Respondent No. 1 MoEFCC:*
- h) Direct the Respondents not to treat the vacancies arising in the concerned Indian Forest Service Examination cycle due to non- joining, medical unfitness, failed walking test, cancellation of candidature, invalid category claim or similar reason as lapsed, surrendered or carried forward, during the pendency of the present Petition*
- i) Pass any other or further order(s) which this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of the present case.”*



2. At the outset, counsel appearing for the Respondents raises a preliminary objection to the maintainability of the present proceedings. It is pointed out that the Indian Forest Service is an All India Service and that Section 14(1)(a) of the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985 specifically confers upon the Central Administrative Tribunal¹ jurisdiction over recruitment and matters concerning recruitment to any All India Service. The present dispute, which concerns the manner in which vacancies arising in the Indian Forest Service Examination, 2025 are to be dealt with, therefore falls within the field assigned to the Tribunal.

3. The objection is also consistent with the principle laid down in *L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India & Ors.*², that, in matters entrusted to administrative tribunals, the Tribunal is to act as the forum of first instance. Judicial review by the High Court remains available against the decision of the Tribunal, but the statutory forum cannot ordinarily be bypassed at the initial stage.

4. In view of the above, counsel for the Petitioners seeks leave to withdraw the present petition, with liberty to approach the CAT and seek such reliefs as may be available in law.

5. Leave and liberty as prayed for are granted.

6. Before parting, counsel for the Petitioners points out that their representation dated 21st May, 2026 remains pending before Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC and requests that a decision thereon be taken. This limited request does not require the Court to examine the Petitioners' entitlement to operation of a reserve or supplementary list, or any other issue touching the

¹ "CAT"

² (1997) 3 SCC 261



merits of the recruitment process. A decision on the representation may, on the other hand, resolve or at least narrow the controversy which may thereafter survive for consideration before the appropriate forum.

7. Respondent No. 1/MoEFCC is, accordingly, directed to consider the representation dated 21st May, 2026 and communicate a reasoned decision to the Petitioners within four weeks from today. It is made clear that this direction shall not be understood as expressing any view on the merits of the representation or on the availability in law of any of the mechanisms sought by the Petitioners.

8. If the Petitioners remain aggrieved by the decision so taken, it will be open to them to pursue their remedies before the CAT, including in respect of the grievances raised in the present petition, in accordance with law.

9. The Court has expressed no opinion on the merits of the claims of either side. All rights and contentions are left open.

10. The writ petition is dismissed as withdrawn in the above terms. Pending application(s), if any, also stand disposed of.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

AUGUST 12, 2026/ar