

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

CWP-29127 of 2023 (O&M)
Date of decision : 22.12.2023

PRIYANKA NAIN

...Petitioner

Versus

PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH

...Respondent

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE HARSH BUNGER

Present : Mr. L.K. Gollen, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Shubham Thakur, Advocate
for the respondent.

HARSH BUNGER, J. (ORAL)

1. Petitioner (Priyanka Nain) has filed the instant writ petition under Articles 226/227 of the Constitution of India, seeking a writ in the nature of *mandamus*, for directing the respondent (Panjab University) for considering her candidature qua advertisement dated 15.11.2023 (Annexure P-2) for the post of Assistant Professor, on the plea that the online display board on website of the respondent-University shows the last date as 22.12.2023; whereas, the application for the post in question, could be filled upto 15.12.2023.

2. Briefly, the petitioner is stated to be working as Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty) with respondent-University in the Department of Economics. On 15.11.2023, respondent-University published an advertisement (advertisement No.1/2023) for the regular posts of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor. As per the petitioner, this information was seen on the online display board of the official website of the

respondent-University. It is the case of the petitioner that Advertisement No.1/2023 was published on 15.11.2023 and the last date to submit the application was shown as 22.12.2023 and she was hopeful that before the said date i.e. 22.12.2023, she would complete her Ph.D in Economics and would submit the application form with Ph.D as her qualification, in order to get extra weightage of 30 marks for the post of Assistant Professor as she has already submitted her thesis in July, 2023. It is also the case of the petitioner that somehow her viva could not take place and ultimately, she chose to fill the application form with M.A. and M.Phil as her qualification; however, she found that she could not fill the application form.

3. Petitioner claims that as per the online display board, 22.12.2023 was shown as the last date to submit the application for the afore-said post but when she went to the Office of Deputy Registrar of Establishment Branch of respondent-University, she was told that 22.12.2023 has been wrongly mentioned as the last date and that 15.12.2023 was the actual last date to submit the application form and the detailed advertisement was handed over to the petitioner. Accordingly, the petitioner claims that as the detailed advertisement runs into 28 pages, it is on the last page where the actual last date to submit the online application is stated to be 15.12.2023. Therefore, it had led to confusion to many candidates, such as petitioner, who could not fill the application form prior to cut-off date. Petitioner alleges that there is a mis-representation on the part of the respondent-University and once, a wrong date has been mentioned on the display board then the candidates should not suffer and they deserve a chance to fill the application form. It is stated that the petitioner had raised a

grievance by way of an *e-mail* (Annexure P-3) dated 19.12.2023 to the respondent-University; however, no response was forthcoming; accordingly, the instant writ petition has been filed before this Court.

4. Notice of motion in this case was issued on 21.12.2023, going by the averments made in the writ petition and the matter was kept for today.

5. Today, Mr. Shubham Thakur, Advocate had appeared on behalf of the respondent-University and has opposed the prayer made by learned counsel for the petitioner by submitting that the petitioner has made false averments in the writ petition that the last date to apply was 22.12.2023 as per the online display board. It is submitted that the petitioner was very well aware of the fact that the last date for submitting an application in pursuance to Advertisement No.1/2023 was 15.12.2023 and not 22.12.2023, as sought to be contended by the petitioner. Learned counsel for the respondent-University further submits that as per the petitioner's own case, she is working as Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty) with the respondent-University itself in the Department of Economics and hence, it cannot be accepted that she was not aware of the last date for submitting the online application form, which was 15.12.2023. He further submits that in fact, the petitioner was waiting for her Ph.D in Economics to be completed so as to get extra weightage of 30 marks for the post of Assistant Professor. Learned counsel for the respondent-University has demonstrated by opening the official website of the Panjab University by going to the link "University Jobs" where under the head "Centrally Managed Jobs", there is a link for "online applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the post of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor" and below the said link, it is

clearly mentioned as Advertisement No. and Date as 01/2023, 15.11.2023. It is submitted that when the afore-said link of on-line application for the post of Assistant Professor is opened, then it takes to the page, which reads as under :-

“PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH

ADVERTISEMENT NO.01/2023

Online Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the posts of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in various subjects in the P.U. Departments/Institutes/Centres in the pay-scale Rs.57,700-1,82,400/- and Rs.1,31,400-2,17,100/- respectively upto 15.12.2023. Four sets of Print out of online application along with supporting documents should also reach the office of the Deputy Registrar (Estt.), Panjab University, Chandigarh by 22.12.2023 up to 4:00 P.M.

The details of advertisement consisting of subject-wise break-up of posts, qualifications, reservation, application form and detailed instructions are available on website: <https://onlinejobs.puchd.ac.in> The candidates are also requested to visit University website regularly for updates.”

6. A perusal of the said page would clearly indicate that the online applications were invited from the eligible candidates for the posts of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor up to 15.12.2023 and four sets of Print out of online application along with the supporting documents were to reach the office of Deputy Registrar (Estt.), Panjab University, Chandigarh by 22.12.2023 upto 4:00 P.M. Learned counsel for the respondent-University has further submitted that when the link provided on the aforesaid page i.e. <https://onlinejobs.puchd.ac.in> is opened, the same takes one to the Panjab University Recruitment page under Advertisement

No.1/2023; wherein steps to fill up the application form have been stated as under :-

“Advertisement No.1/2023

Online Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the posts of Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in various subjects in the P.U. Departments/Institutes/Centres in the pay-scale Rs.57,700 – 1,82,400/- and Rs.1,31,400 – 2,17,100/- respectively upto 15.12.2003. Four sets of Print out of online application along with supporting documents should also reach the office of the Deputy Registrar (Estt.), Panjab University, Chandigarh by 22.12.2023 up to 4:00 P.M.

- *Corrigendum to Advertisement No.1/2023*
- *Advertisement No.1/2023*
- *Post detail*
- *General guidelines*
- *UGC Regulations – 2018*
- *Format of Experience Certificate*

SIMPLE STEPS TO FILL APPLICATION FORM

- **STEP 1:** Visit Website <https://onlinejobs.puchd.ac.in>
Click on **Click here to Start Registration** button available at the bottom of Home Page and proceed as per the instructions. A link shall be sent to your Registered E-mail ID for Validation. Use only the latest Email received to access that link.
- **STEP 2:** Click on the link sent to your E-mail ID. It may take some time to validate your details and generate the Login ID. Password will be same as submitted by you at the time of Registration. Login details will be sent to your Registered E-mail ID also.
- **STEP 3:** Login to your account using your Login ID and Password. Through the Left Panel of your

*Dashboard, complete Personal Information and Save it. Then fill in the Educational Qualifications, Employment Experience (if any) and Save them too. The preview of the details added by you shall be available at the bottom of the screen. Now Confirm the Details. **CONFIRMATION WOULD MEAN NO FURTHER MODIFICATION SHALL BE ALLOWED.***

- ***STEP 4:** Choose Post, Specialization, Department and Category to apply.*
- ***STEP 5:** Add your Research, Academic and Other Details to complete the form. Save data to the table using **SAVE/SAVE AND ADD MORE** Button. The Preview of all details added by you in all sections shall be available on the Left Panel too.*
- ***STEP 6:** Once the form has been filled completely by you. You need to Confirm the details. **CONFIRMATION WOULD MEAN NO FURTHER MODIFICATION SHALL BE ALLOWED.** After that, Proceed to Pay the Fees for the Post Applied.*
- ***STEP 7:** Take the Printout of the Completed Application Form and attach all Supporting Documents related to Educational Qualifications, Employment Experience (if any), Research, Academics etc. and submit the Complete Sets (Application Form and Supporting Documents) to the address mentioned on the Printout. The **pdf** of the Online Filled Application Form shall exist on the Dashboard of your Account. However, you are advised to keep a Printout of the Application Form submitted Online for further reference too.*

***NOTE:** Within your Login Account, you can add more Posts for which Personal Information, Educational Qualification & Experience Sections*

will remain same OR you may Register again to Apply for New Post.”

7. A bare perusal of the afore-said steps would clearly indicate that one has to firstly register and generate the login ID/password by clicking on the **Start Registration** button. However, at present, it is clearly mentioned in this page that “*the registration is closed*”.

8. Learned counsel for the respondent has further submitted that on the same page of Panjab University Recruitment under Advertisement No.1/2023, there are links pertaining to posts detail, general guidelines as well as UGC Regulations, 2018. It is submitted that the details of posts available to be filled up cannot be known without opening the said link under post details; wherein, it is provided against Serial No.2 that there is one post of Assistant Professor in the Economics subject. Accordingly, it is submitted that the ground stated in the petition for claiming relief, is wholly incorrect.

9. Learned counsel for the respondent-University submits that once the registration has already closed on 15.12.2023, no indulgence can be given to the petitioner as no special circumstances have been shown by her and in case, the candidature of the petitioner is to be accepted, as claimed by her, then the same will have to be opened for everyone and the entire process which has taken place till date, would be rendered futile. Accordingly, prayer has been made for dismissal of the writ petition.

10. I have heard learned counsel for the parties and perused the paper-book with their able assistance and also considered the submissions made by learned counsel for the respective parties.

11. Learned counsel for the respondent-University has clearly demonstrated in Court by opening various links as indicated in the preceding

paras to show that there is no ambiguity or misleading information on the web-site of the Panjab University. It is clearly mentioned on the online display board/web-site of the University that the online application for the post of Assistant Professor was to be filled up by 15.12.2023 and thereafter, the four sets of print out of the said application along with supporting documents were to be physically submitted in the concerned department by 22.12.2023 upto 4:00 P.M. Once, it has been clearly provided on the official web-site of the Panjab University that the last date for submission of the online application form was 15.12.2023 and it is only the hard copies of the said online application along with supporting documents, which were to be submitted by 22.12.2023, the petitioner cannot be permitted to take a self-serving stand that there is a confusion regarding the date upto which the application for the post of Assistant Professor was to be submitted.

12. Apart from the above, it is the petitioner's own case that she is already working as Assistant Professor (Guest Faculty) with the respondent-University in the Department of Economics; accordingly, it cannot be countenanced that she was not aware of the process/procedure as well as the last date for submission of the online application form for the posts of Assistant Professor. It is apparent from the petition that the petitioner was waiting for her Ph.D. to be completed as the same would have given her an edge by way of extra weightage of 30 marks for the post of Assistant Professor. However, since she could not get the said Ph.D. Degree upto the last date of submission of the application form i.e. 15.12.2023; accordingly, the instant writ petition has been filed as an afterthought.

13. I find sufficient credence in the stand taken by the counsel for the respondent-University that once the online registration has been closed

then the completed on-line application forms, which were required to be submitted physically upto 22.12.2023, cannot be acquired by the petitioner in any form and therefore, no indulgence can be granted to the petitioner on the basis of her manufactured ground that there was a confusion regarding the last date of submission of the application form for the post of Assistant Professor. Furthermore, in my considered view, if the prayer of the petitioner is to be accepted then it shall have to be opened for everyone and in that process, the entire exercise which has already been carried out by the University, would be rendered futile apart from wastage of time/manpower and also delay the process.

14. Accordingly, I do not find any merit in the instant writ petition and the same is hereby dismissed.

15. All pending application/s, if any, shall stand closed.

December 22, 2023
gurpreet

(HARSH BUNGER)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned:	Yes/No
Whether reportable:	Yes/No