PRAJAKTA SAGAR VARTAK
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Prajakta Vartak

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION NO. 7076 OF 2026

Ramakant Ambadas Choudhari & Ors. ...Petitioners
Vs
The State of Maharashtra & Ors. ...Respondents

AND
WRIT PETITION NO. 6107 OF 2026

Mangala Ramesh Hindurao & Ors. ...Petitioners
Vs
The State of Maharashtra & Ors. ...Respondents

AND
WRIT PETITION NO. 13813 OF 2026

Pramod Manik Sogale & Ors. ...Petitioners
Vs
The State of Maharashtra & Ors. ...Respondents

Mr. Ashwin Kapadnis and Mr. Balaji Shinde for Petitioners.
Mr. A. K. Naik, AGP for State in WP No. 7076/26.
Ms. N. M. Mehra, AGP, for State in WP No. 13813/26.
Ms. D. B. Chavan for State in WP No. 6107/26.

CORAM: G. S. KULKARNI &
Dr. NEELA GOKHALE, JJ.

DATE: 14 OCTOBER 2026.

P.C.

1. This is a batch of petitions filed by the petitioners praying for the similar reliefs. For convenience, the substantive reliefs as prayed for in Writ Petition No.7076 of 2026 are required to be noted which read thus:

> "[A] This writ petition may kindly be allowed.
>
> [B] This Honorable court, by issuing writ of mandamus or appropriate writ, order, directions in the like nature, kindly direct the respondents, to grant the benefit of promotional scale/One-step pay scale (Ekstar) from the date of postings in tribal area till the petitioners working in the

> Tribal/PESA, G. R. dated 06.08.2002, 29.02.2024 and G.R dated 04.06.2025 and as per judgments of this court, and also directed to pay arrears of salaries as per One-step pay scale.
>
> AND/OR
>
> [C] This Honorable court, by issuing appropriate writ, order, directions in the like nature, kindly issue similar directions issued in judgments annexed at Exhibit-D for making scrutiny and verification against respondent Education Officer for grant of benefits of one step pay scale to the petitioners as per G. R. dated 06.08.2002, 29.02.2024 and G.R dated 04.06.2025."

2. Thus, the reliefs, which the petitioners seek, are that the respondents be directed to release and grant the benefit of 'एकस्तर' (one-step pay scale) as per the Government Resolutions dated 6 August 2002 and 29 February 2024 for the period during which the petitioners worked in tribal area, and accordingly, directions be issued to the respondents to pay the arrears of salary and revise the pension of the petitioners, including the benefit of one-step pay scale, i.e. 'एकस्तर', for the entire period during which they worked in such area.

3. Our attention is drawn to a similar proceeding considered by a co-ordinate Bench of this Court at Aurangabad, in Writ Petition No.10930 of 2024 (Ganesh Gangadhar Shimpi & Ors. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors) along with other connected matters, wherein the co-ordinate Bench of this Court has passed the following order:-

> "4. In view of the above, all these Writ Petitions are allowed in the following terms:-
>
> (i) The Education Officer of the Zilla Parishad shall scrutinize the records of all these Petitioners and the places at which they are deployed for performing their duties, within a period of 30 days.,
>
> (ii) Those cases, which are without any legal impediment after verification, shall be cleared by the Education Officer and the salary benefits, to which the Petitioners are entitled to, in the light of the one-step pay-scale, made available to the employees working in the Tribal and PESA areas, shall be paid along with arrears as well as their current salaries, within a period of 45 days thereafter.

(iii) After scrutiny, if any of these Petitioners, on the basis of their records, are found to be ineligible, the Education Officer, Zilla Parishad, would issue notices to each of such Petitioners, so as to enable them to appear before the said authority and address the Education Officer.

(iv) After such hearing, which shall be completed within 90 days, the Zilla Parishad shall pass appropriate orders and grant benefits of one-step pay-scale to those candidates, who are found to be eligible.

(v) Those Petitioners, who suffer adverse orders after the above stated exercise is completed, would be at liberty to avail of a statutory remedy, as is permissible in law.

(vi) If any of these petitioners have superannuated from service, their pensionary benefits would be recalculated if they are held to be eligible for the one step increment.

5. We make it clear that, if the Model Code of Conduct is introduced, that would not be an impediment for the compliance of this order."

4. We are informed that there is an another order passed by a co-ordinate Bench of this Court dated 7 May 2025 in **Baban s/o. Ramdas Gunjal & Ors. vs. State of Maharashtra & Ors.** (Writ Petition No.6229 of 2025 & connected matters) which was also disposed of in terms of the orders similar to the orders passed in the proceedings of **Ganesh Gangadhar Shimpi & Ors. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors.** (Writ Petition No.10930 of 2024 (supra)).

5. In this view of the matter, we are inclined to dispose of this petition in terms of the order dated 4 October 2024 passed by the co-ordinate Bench of this Court in the proceedings of **Ganesh Gangadhar Shimpi & Ors. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors.** [Writ Petition No.10930 of 2024 (supra)].

6. Let appropriate steps be taken as directed in paragraph 4 of the said order within a period of sixty days from the date of this order. All contentions of the parties in that regard are expressly kept open.

7. Disposed of in the aforesaid terms. No costs.

(Dr. NEELA GOKHALE, J.) **(G. S. KULKARNI, J.)**