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

ARB-258-2025

Date of decision: 25.03.2026

ANUJ SHUKLA

...Applicant(s)

VERSUS

**THE CHAIRMAN, ELECTION COMMITTEE, STATE BANK OF INDIA
OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (SBIOA) AND ORS.**

...Respondent(s)

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JASGURPREET SINGH PURI

Present:- Mr. Naman Jain, Advocate and
Ms. Vaishali Jain, Advocate for the applicant.

Mr. Yogesh Goel, Advocate and
Mr. Vishal Mittal, Advocate for respondent No.1.

Ms. Jyotsana Saini, Advocate for
Mr. Ashish Yadav, Advocate for respondent No.2.

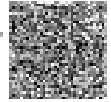
JASGURPREET SINGH PURI, J. (Oral)

1. The present application has been filed under Section 11(6-A) of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (hereinafter referred to as 'the Act') seeking appointment of an independent Arbitrator to adjudicate the disputes and differences which have arisen between the parties.

2. Learned counsel for the applicant has prayed for deletion of respondents No.3 and 4 from the array of parties.

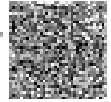
3. The prayer of the learned counsel for the applicant is accepted.

4. It is directed that respondents No.3 and 4 be deleted from the array of parties. Registry is directed to carry out the necessary corrections.



5. Learned counsel for the applicant submitted that the applicant is an employee of the State Bank of India (SBI) and also a member of the respondent-State Bank of India Officers' Association (SBIOA) and he along with other members, is governed by the by-laws and rules of the respondent-State Bank of India Officers' Association (SBIOA), which have been annexed as Annexure P-1 and in the aforesaid by-laws, there is a provision for arbitration at Clause 98, which provides that the member(s) of the Association shall not resort to any proceedings in any Court of Law against the Association or its elected office bearer(s) without exhausting the remedy of arbitration. The Arbitrator is to be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Association on an application made by such member(s), setting out the cause of grouse against the Association or its elected office bearer(s). The Committee will constitute two arbitrators, one of whom shall be appointed at the instance of the aggrieved members out of three members nominated by them. The arbitration proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 and the decision of the Arbitrators shall be binding on both the parties.

6. He further submitted that a dispute had arisen between the parties pertaining to the election and therefore, a notice was sent to the respondents to propose an Arbitrator/panel of Arbitrators in accordance with the law laid down by Hon'ble Supreme Court in **Central Organisation for Railway Electrification versus M/s ECI SPIC SMO MCML (JV) A Joint Venture Company, 2024 SCC Online SC 3219** but no such action was taken by the respondents and thereafter, vide Annexure P-8, the respondents wrote a letter to the applicant stating that he may propose three Arbitrators, provided that they

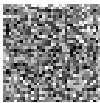


are serving Officers of SBI. He further submitted that such a proposal was not permissible as the proposed persons were interested persons and in this way, the arbitration mechanism had failed. He also submitted that although there is a provision for appointment of an Arbitral Tribunal but considering the fact that no amount has been ascertained at this stage, it will be in the interest of justice in case any independent Sole Arbitrator is appointed by this Court.

7. On the other hand, learned counsel for respondent No.1 and learned counsel for respondent No.2 have submitted that there is no dispute with regard to the existence of the arbitration clause in the by-laws, which have been attached as Annexure P-1. They further submitted that considering the fact that non-monetary claim is involved and the dispute pertains only to the election, it will be just and proper that instead of constituting an Arbitral Tribunal, any independent Sole Arbitrator may be appointed by this Court so that the matter can be adjudicated between the parties.

8. After hearing the learned counsels for the parties and considering the aforesaid statements made by the learned counsel for respondent No.1 as well as learned counsel for respondent No.2 that any independent Sole Arbitrator may be appointed by this Court, the present application deserves to be allowed.

9. Consequently, the present application is allowed. Dr. Sarita Gupta, District & Sessions Judge (Retd.), resident of Tower 12-A, Flat No.202, Suncity Parikrama, Sector-20, Panchkula, mobile No.-9671819333, is nominated as the Sole Arbitrator to adjudicate the dispute between the parties, subject to compliance of statutory provisions including Section 12 of the Act.



10. Parties are directed to appear before the learned Arbitrator on date, time and place to be fixed and communicated by the learned Arbitrator at her convenience.
11. As per the learned counsels for parties, the claim in the present arbitration case is non-monetary in nature, the relief sought for has to be quantified in terms of the facts of the dispute and the fee of the Arbitrator shall depend upon such amount. Therefore, the Arbitrator shall fix his fee in view of Section 31A of the Act.
12. Learned Arbitrator is also requested to complete the proceedings as per the time limit prescribed under Section 29-A of the Act.
13. A request letter alongwith a copy of the order be sent to Dr. Sarita Gupta, District & Sessions Judge (Retd.).

25.03.2026
Chetan Thakur

(JASGURPREET SINGH PURI)
JUDGE

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