SL. No.	Date	Office Notes, reports, orders or proceedings or directions and Registrar's order with Signatures	COURT'S OR JUDGE'S ORDERS
			WPSB/714/2026 Dr. Pramod Mall --Petitioner **Versus** State of Uttarakhand and others --Respondents **Hon'ble Manoj Kumar Tiwari, A.C.J.** **Hon'ble Subhash Upadhyay, J.** Mr. Satyendra Singh Lingwal, learned Senior Counsel assisted by Mr. Suryakant Maithani, learned counsel for the petitioner. 2. Mr. Rajeev Singh Bisht, learned Deputy Advocate General for the State/respondent nos.1 and 2. 3. Mr. Vipul Sharma and Mr. Maneesh Bisht, learned counsel for respondent nos.3 and 4. 4. According to petitioner, process for selection for appointment as Deans, Director Research and Director Extension Education was initiated by G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology in the month of June, 2026 and last date of submission of application was 25.06.2026. 5. He submits that the State Government, thereafter, had issued a Government Order on 24.09.2026, whereby certain new conditions of eligibility have been added, which were not part of original advertisement issued in month of June, 2026. Thus, it is contended that rules of game are being attempted to be changed in midway, which is not permissible in view of law laid down by Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of ***Tej***

Prakash Pathak and others Vs. Rajasthan High Court and others reported in ***(2025) 2 SCC 1.*** Paragraph nos.14, 16 and 22 of the said judgment are reproduced below:-

> "**14.** In various judicial pronouncements, the law governing recruitment to public services has been colloquially termed as "the rules of the game". The "game" is the process of selection and appointment. Courts have consistently frowned upon tinkering with the rules of the game once the recruitment process commences. This has crystallised into an oft-quoted legal phrase that "the rules of the game must not be changed midway, or after the game has been played". Broadly speaking these rules fall in two categories. One which prescribes the eligibility criteria (i.e. essential qualifications) of the candidates seeking employment; and the other which stipulates the method and manner of making the selection from amongst the eligible candidates.
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> **16.** The law is settled that after commencement of the recruitment process the eligibility criteria is not to be altered because candidates even if eligible under the altered criteria might not apply by the last date under the belief that they are not eligible as per the advertised criteria. Such alteration/change, therefore, deprives a person of the guarantee of equal opportunity in matters of public employment provided by Article 16 of the Constitution. The reference order therefore acknowledges this legal position and in clear terms accepts that "the rules of the game" cannot be changed after commencement of the recruitment process insofar as the eligibility criteria is concerned.
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> **(A)** ***Commencement/end of the recruitment process***
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> **22.** The process of recruitment begins with the issuance of advertisement and ends with the filling up of notified vacancies. It consists of various steps like inviting applications, scrutiny of applications, rejection of defective applications or elimination of ineligible candidates, conducting examinations, calling for interview or viva voce and preparation of list of successful candidates for appointment."

6. Learned counsel for respondents, however, submit that petitioner does not have any cause of action available to maintain this writ petition, as petitioner is serving as Professor since 2009, therefore, this writ petition deserves to be dismissed on this ground alone.

7. We find substance in submissions made by learned counsel for petitioner.

8. Law is well settled that once selection process is initiated, then rules of the game cannot be changed midway.

9. Thus, we dispose of the writ petition by providing that changed eligibility conditions, as mentioned in Government Order dated 24.09.2026, shall not be made applicable to ongoing selection, in absence of any corrigendum issued by the University.

(Subhash Upadhyay, J.) **(Manoj Kumar Tiwari, A.C.J.)**

19.11.2026 19.11.2026

SS/PP