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

+ **W.P.(C) 1004/2026 & CM APPL. 4875/2026**

MOTI LAL MEENA

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Jaivardhan Jeph & Mr. Jai Brata
Singh, Advocates.

versus

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

.....Respondent

Through: Mrs. Anjana Gosain & Ms. Shreya
Manjari, Advocates for AAI.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

ORDER

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04.02.2026

1. The Respondent, Airports Authority of India,¹ issued a circular dated 20th June, 2011 bearing no. A.60011/20/2011-EH/1173 inviting applications for the post of Junior Executive (Human Resource) under 25% departmental promotion quota thereby initiating the test for the selection process. The record indicates that the Petitioner applied on 11th July, 2011, appeared in the written examination held on 29th July, 2012, and was declared successful. A list of successful candidates was notified on 17th December, 2012, and the Petitioner asserts that his name featured in the said list.
2. The Petitioner states that he reported at the interview venue on 23rd January, 2013; however, his interview was not conducted. He claims that the interview was orally deferred without any written order or recorded reasons, following which he submitted representations seeking clarification.
3. Thereafter, by communication dated 14th May, 2013, the selection process came to be cancelled. The cancellation was challenged by certain

¹ "AAI"



candidates in W.P.(C) 3398/2013. By judgment dated 28th November, 2013, the cancellation was set aside and AAI was directed to finalise the select/merit list in continuation of the selection process. The said judgment ultimately attained finality and a revised select list was issued on 15th June, 2023.

4. The Petitioner is aggrieved by the omission of his name from the revised list. He lodged a complaint before the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes² alleging denial of opportunity and discrimination in public employment. In the interregnum, AAI responded to the Petitioner's representation dated 25th February, 2025, by communication dated 10th March, 2025 stating that the Petitioner did not appear before the interview committee since the evaluation sheet carried no marks. However, the Petitioner contends that during the hearing before the NCST, AAI took a different position stating that the Petitioner was found ineligible at the stage of document verification and was therefore not permitted to participate in the interview. By communication dated 9th September, 2025, the NCST directed AAI to furnish an explanation and compliance report. The proceedings before the NCST are stated to be pending.

5. In this background, the Petitioner has now filed the instant petition seeking the following prayers:

'a) A writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order, directing the Respondent to grant the Petitioner an opportunity of interview for the post of Junior Executive (Human Resources) pursuant to the Departmental Examination held on 29.07.2012, in terms of Circular No. A.60011/20/2011-EH dated 20.06.2011.

b) A writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order, to consider the Petitioner for promotion to the post of Junior Executive (Human

² "NCST"



Resources) by treating him as having been duly interviewed, and to grant him all consequential benefits, including notional seniority, pay fixation, arrears, and further promotions, at par with similarly situated candidates;

c) A writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order, restraining the Respondent from transferring the Petitioner except in accordance with due process of law, during the pendency of the present writ petition.

d) Any other order this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of the present case, in the interest of justice.'

6. The Petitioner emphasizes that although he reported for the interview on 23rd January, 2013, he was not interviewed and was informed that the process stood deferred. He was orally assured that he would be recalled and given appropriate weightage in a future selection.

7. On this footing, it is submitted that he thereafter pursued grievance representations seeking clarification since 28th February, 2013, and, upon being informed that the vacancies stood cancelled, he believed that the selection process itself had come to an end and did not pursue the matter further at that stage.

8. Relying on the subsequent revival of the selection process pursuant to judicial directions and the issuance of the revised list in June 2023, the Petitioner contends that his candidature ought to have been considered. He invokes the doctrine of legitimate expectation, asserting that the Respondent's conduct created a reasonable assurance that he would be interviewed and assessed on merits, and that a public authority is bound to act fairly and consistently in matters of selection.

9. In addition, the Petitioner attempts to draw support from the revised list itself. The Petitioner contends that pursuant to the interview results of the earlier selection process, 22 candidates were declared successful,



however, four of those candidates, namely G. Aparna, Ganesan E., W. Morris Romel Roy and M. Sugeertha, either did not join service or their appointments were subsequently cancelled, as their names did not figure in the second list issued by the Respondent. He further asserts that in the revised list dated 15th June, 2023, issued in compliance with the decision in W.P.(C) 3398/2013, three new candidates, namely Anita Rana, Md. Samtullah Ansari and Damodaran, were added, while the name of M. Sugeertha was deleted.

10. The Court has considered the aforesaid contention and finds no ground to entertain the present petition, which is *ex facie* barred by delay and laches. The asserted wrong is of 23rd January, 2013. Even on the Petitioner's own showing, he was aware in 2013 that the process stood cancelled, yet no legal remedy was pursued. The subsequent litigation in W.P.(C) 3398/2013 was pursued by other candidates, and the Petitioner did not seek intervention at any stage. A writ remedy under Article 226 is discretionary. In service matters, courts have consistently declined to revive claims that have been allowed to lie dormant for years, particularly where the challenge is to a selection process and the consequences would spill over onto others.

11. The issuance of the revised select list on 15th June, 2023 also did not prompt timely judicial action. Instead, the Petitioner pursued representations and proceedings before the NCST. That course does not supply a legal explanation for laches. Repeated representations, or their consideration, do not generate a fresh cause of action, nor do they resuscitate stale claims that ought to have been pursued in time.

12. The second impediment is equally fatal. The material placed shows



that appointments against the promotional posts have already been made and, as the Petitioner himself pleads, the consequences now run into seniority and further promotions. The prayer to treat the Petitioner as interviewed, or to reopen the process for a solitary interview after more than a decade, is not merely impracticable, it would also unsettle a completed selection and the service positions of those already appointed and promoted. In challenges to selections and select lists, selected candidates whose rights stand to be affected are necessary parties, and non-impleadment is a serious defect.

13. The alleged inconsistency in AAI's responses, even if assumed, cannot by itself overcome these threshold bars. After a long lapse of time, disputed questions as to what transpired at an interview venue, what documents were verified, and why a candidature was not processed, are not suited for adjudication in writ proceedings, particularly when the relief would operate to the prejudice of persons who are not before the Court and whose appointments have long since solidified into finality.

14. For these reasons, the petition is dismissed on the ground of delay and laches, and for non-joinder of necessary parties. Pending application(s), if any, also stand disposed of.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

FEBRUARY 4, 2026/hc