

Quota row: HCS selection process under HC lens

CHANDIGARH: The ongoing selection process of Haryana Civil Services (HCS) has come under the scanner of Punjab and Haryana high court, which on Thursday issued notice to the Haryana Public Service Commission (HPSC) and the state on the plea of a candidate against cancellation of his candidature.

Justice Tejinder Singh Dhindsa of the HC has issued the notice after hearing a petition filed by Yashvir Singh, a resident of Hisar.

The petitioner had applied against the advertisement issued by the HPSC on February 20, 2014 for 22 posts of HCS (executive) and allied services under the SBC category.

He was issued roll number by the HPSC and appeared and qualified the preliminary examination held on August 3, 2014.

In the meantime, the SBC category was challenged before the HC, which on July 27, 2015, stayed the reservation in government jobs under SBC category in the state.

On August 21, 2015, the HPSC, however, allowed the candidates of SBC category to appear in main examination and issued admit cards subject to the condition that their candidature would depend on the outcome of the petition that has challenged SBC quota.

The main examination for HCS was held between April 14 to 20, 2016 and final result was declared on July 5 by the HPSC. However, the candidature of the petitioner has been held null and void by the commission.

Aggrieved by the HPSC decision to cancel his candidature, he has challenged the HPSC's decision before the HC.

Counsel for the petitioner SK Malik argued before the court that once the SBC category has been replaced by the state with newly created economically backward persons (EBP) category, the decision to invalidate petitioner's candidature was against the constitutional provisions.

"Without giving any consideration on this aspect and without giving any opportunity of option or opportunity of hearing to the petitioner as in the changed circumstances it is settled law of land that candidature cannot be

withdrawn for any reason, once the candidate is allowed to take examination," Malik argued.

The petitioner has sought directions to the government to restore his candidature and to consider him and similarly placed other candidates under EBP category as he fulfils the criteria for EBP category. Hearing the petition, the court has issued notice to chief secretary Haryana and the HPSC seeking their replies on petitioner's contentions by October 8.