

Candidates allege 'irregularity' in online tests for Mahatransco jobs

Nashik: Candidates who took the 150-mark online examinations held between July 1 and 4 for the posts of assistant engineer at Mahatransco have alleged "irregularities" in the test .

They claimed that the question paper was repeated for the online examinations held in two sessions for three days. According to the students, the repeat of the paper benefitted the candidates who took the examination in the second session.

"The timings were from 9 am to 11 am for the first session and 12.30 pm to 2.30 pm for the second session. The set of questions in the first session was repeated in the second session. The students who had appeared for the examination in the first session must have shared the questions with those appearing for the second one. In a way, this amounts to a question paper leak," said Sachin Kakde, a student from Nashik who appeared from Aurangabad.

The examination for the 550 posts of assistant engineers at Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Co. Ltd (Mahatransco) was held in two sessions at 14 centres across Maharashtra. More than 40,000 candidates had taken the examination.

"It's a matter of our career. We have discussed the issue with more than 1,000 students state-wise and received their feedbacks. More than 300 students have moved the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay High Court, seeking cancellation of the test and an immediate re-examination," Kakde added.

According to the complainants, the one-and-a-half-hour gap was sufficient for many candidates to search the correct answers in the web and solve the online questions. Moreover, it continued to happen for three days. With support of 300-plus engineers across the state, Kakde and his friends have formed a social networking forum on the issue. They are raising funds to fight the case in court as well. The HC has decided to hear the case date on June 20.

When contacted, Sandeep Nardele, the head of corporate communications department of Mahatransco, admitted that he was being questioned on various forums by the candidates. "But conducting examination is completely a third party issue. The MSETCL appointed IBPS, an agency specialising in recruitment, to conduct all departmental examinations. Questions are selected randomly in the online format. There are always

chances of repetition of some questions, but I don't think an entire set of 50 questions could have been repeated. Still, I have forwarded the correspondence to the authorities," he said.

In his response to the students' claim, energy minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule said he would gather information from the authorities and ensure that the deserving candidates did not suffer. "I would not comment on the issue, as it is in court. But I will ensure that no candidate suffers due to any technical snag. If the court orders, the company will conduct the re-examination," he told TOI.

In the meantime, the aggrieved candidates are busy contacting political leaders in every possible manner. "We have contacted Solapur MLA Pranoti Shinde, who has vowed to speak with chief minister Devendra Fadnavis. We have also sent letters and emails to MSETCL CMD Rajiv Kumar Mital and other senior officials," said Utkash Jagtap from Nashik.