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Recruitment 'overdrive': Over 10k aspiring safai karamcharis take 'practical' exam in streets, clean up city

AGRA: A recruitment 'overdrive' has cleaned up almost all the residential areas in Etah city. It began with the district administration putting up an advertisement for 120 vacant posts of sanitation workers, for which a whopping 10,500 applicants, many of them graduates and even postgraduates, turned up. After verification of their degrees, the candidates were asked to appear for an interview before a panel headed by the additional district magistrate (ADM), which asked them to take a 'practical' exam and show their cleaning skills. As a result, every nook and cranny of the city colonies has now been cleaned up, ADM Satish Pal told TOI.

"Since we received 10,500 applications, including those from graduates and postgraduates, for 120 posts of contractual sanitation workers, it has become a Herculean task for us to select the candidates without any bias. We have formed a committee and have decided to test the physical ability of the candidates," the ADM said.

Every day, a batch of nearly 500 candidates with proofs of their educational qualifications present themselves before a four-member selection committee. They are then given certain tools and asked to clean drains and gutters in some specific areas. "An area or a colony is assigned to the candidates to clean it up. We want to see if the candidates are physically fit and have the skills to carry out the cleaning work," Pal said.

As a result, most residential areas within the city have been cleaned up. "The meticulousness of these aspirants is just amazing. Our colony has never been cleaned up the way they have done it. I wish these youngsters luck, and more importantly, wish that they retain this dexterity in their work forever," Sarita Devi, a resident of Kidwainagar, told TOI. Residents of Katra Mohalla, Kidwainagar, Sainik Padav and various other city localities are both surprised and pleased with the recruitment drive.

"Preference is given to those with experience as sanitation worker or whose parents have served in the capacity with Nagar Palika. We look for physical fitness, check their aptitude to find out whether a candidate has genuinely applied for the job or he is here just for the sake of government perks," the ADM said.

In recent months, recruitment for the contractual job, which promises a monthly salary of Rs 17,000 and for which a candidate must be above 18 years of age and must have passed high school, has seen overwhelming response from candidates, many of them highly qualified, all over the state. Agra received over 80,000 applications for posts of sanitation workers while Kanpur Municipal Corporation received nearly five lakh applications for 3, 275 such posts this year. Surprisingly, many of the applicants were MBA, MCA degree holders.