Jolt to SGPC, victory of state Sikhs: Jhinda

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TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has suffered a significant legal setback after losing its case against the Haryana Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (HSGMC) over the control of the prestigious Miri Piri Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (MPIMSR) in Shahbad, Kurukshetra district.

HSGMC president Jagdish Singh Jhinda termed it as a "historic decision" as, according to him, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has ordered that the administrative charge of the institute be transferred to the HSGMC.

"The HSGMC has been authorised to look after the MPIMSR solely. It is the victory of each Sikh from Haryana who supported and fought for his/her rights. The copy of the order is awaited. We will be taking legal recourse to claim management of the institute. I hope the SGPC would cooperate," he said.

The petition was filed by the MPIMSR Charitable Trust, headed by SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami in 2024, alleging that the members of the Haryana Sikh Management Committee were trying to forcibly take over its property.

The High Court rejected the petition, clearing the air over the long-standing dispute between the two Sikh bodies over the ownership of the institution.

HSGMC ad hoc member Baljit Singh Daduwal welcomed the ruling, stating that the Trust, influenced by the Badal faction, had been dissolved. The MPIMSR has been a flashpoint between the SGPC and HSGMC. A month ago, tensions escalated when the SGPC leadership protested against Daduwal and some HSGMC members over an alleged attempt to take control of the institute. The situation was brought under control following the intervention by local authorities.

SGPC reacts cautiously

The SGPC's senior vice-president and chairman of the Working Group of the MPIMSR, Raghujit Singh Virk, said a decision on the next course of action would be taken after reviewing the judgment. "We are yet to get the copy of the court orders. As and when we receive it, we will decide the next course," he said.

Background of dispute

The legal battle stems from a petition filed in 2024 by the MPIMSR Trust. The petition alleged that members of the HSGMC were attempting to forcibly take control of the institute's property. The HSGMC, however, has consistently asserted its claim over the institute following its formation, while the SGPC contested this claim, citing internal disputes within the HSGMC leadership and raising questions about its administrative and financial capability. The HSGMC's annual budget of Rs 104 crore too was entangled under dispute.

HC dismisses plea by Miri Piri Trust against Haryana panel

Declines to restrain HSGMC from interfering in affairs of Trust

SAURABH MALIK
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has dismissed a petition filed by the Miri Piri Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Charitable Trust, challenging a communication dated September 4, 2024, by which the Haryana Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee (HSGMC) constituted a medical board for the improvement and functioning of its institute. The 500-bed hospital and medical college, constructed by the Trust, commenced working from March 2006, the Bench was told.

Justice Jagmohan Bansal observed that the petition was "sans merit and deserves to be dismissed," thereby declining to restrain the HSGMC and other respondents from interfering in the affairs of the Trust.

The court observed in its order that the petitioner-Trust's stand was that it was an independent legal entity, not governed by the Sikh Gurudwara Act, 1925. As such, it was beyond the regulatory reach of the Haryana Sikh Gurudwara (Management) Act, 2014.

The Bench, during the course of hearing, was told that the 2014 Act, extending to the entire state of Haryana, came into force from July 18, 2014. The executive board and committee constituted under its provisions had the power to manage gurdwara and gurdwara property situated within the jurisdiction of Haryana.

The court said the SGPC, in December, 2005, constituted the Miri Piri Institute of Medical Sciences & Charitable Trust at Shahabad (Kurukshetra) for establishing a medical college and hospital. "The SGPC, till the filing of the writ petition, extended a grant of Rs 111.30 crore to the petitioner. Shri Mastgarh Sahib Gurdwara as well as Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, gave on lease land to the Trust where the medical college has been set up," said the court, adding that the construction cost was borne by the SGPC.

It added that the Trust was created to comply with mandatory statutory provisions and a Supreme Court judgment governing the setting up of the medical college and hospital. "These factors collectively indicate that SGPC has wide and pervasive control over the Trust. In the sense of Companies Act, it can be called a limited company whose 100 per cent share capital and composition of Board of Directors is controlled by one person or a family," the court asserted.

The Haryana SGPC was represented by senior advocate Gaurav Chopra, along with counsel Rashpinder Singh Sohi, Himanshu Bindal and Darika Sikka. Before parting with the judgment, the court stated: "The petitioner-Trust was created by the SGPC and all Trustees were/are appointed by the SGPC. Property held by petitioner was given by the SGPC as grant or lease. The head office of the Trust is in the office of the SGPC, Amritsar. The president of the SGPC is ex-officio Chairman of the Trust. If at any stage, the Trust is closed, as per a clause of the Trust deed, all properties of the Trust would go to Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. The SGPC created the Trust because as per statutory provisions and judgment of the Supreme Court, it could not set up a medical college and hospital. All these factors collectively establish that the property of the petitioner is actually the property of the SGPC."

HC quashes recruitment of Asst Professors of English

CHANDIGARH, MAY 12

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has set aside both the recruitment advertisement for Assistant Professor (English) and the underlying selection process. Allowing 10 petitions, Justice Tribhuvan Dahiya directed the state, Haryana Public Service Commission (HPSC) and other respondents to undertake the selection process afresh, in accordance with UGC regulations.

The petitioners had challenged advertisement "48 of 2024" through which posts of Assistant Professors (English) in the Higher Education Department were notified.

Among other things, the petitioners sought the quashing of the advertisement on the ground that the recruitment framework stemmed from a state memorandum that allegedly diluted the mandatory UGC regulations.

The petitioner contended that the memorandum dated November 11, 2022, issued by the government was violative of the UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2018. — TNS

NEET 'paper leak' trail leads to G'gram, local doctor under lens

SUMEDHA SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

GURUGRAM, MAY 12

Gurugram has surfaced as a crucial transit point in the alleged NEET-UG 2026 paper leak case, with central agencies probing the suspected role of a local doctor as investigations expand across several states.

The development follows the National Testing Agency's (NTA) decision to cancel the May 3 NEET-UG examination over allegations of a large-scale paper leak. The case has since been handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

According to investigation inputs accessed by agencies, the leaked paper trail is believed to have moved through Gurugram before reaching parts of Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. Officials suspect duplicate copies of the question paper were allegedly prepared in and around Gurugram after a physical copy was leaked from a printing press in Nashik, Maharashtra.

Sources said investigators are examining the possible involvement of intermediaries, including medical students, coaching-linked operators and local contacts. A Gurugram-based doctor has also come under scrutiny, although no official arrest or confirmation has been made so far.

CBI examines interstate network after NTA cancels exam

Indian Medical Association (IMA) Gurugram president Dr Rajesh Kataria said reports regarding a "doctor from Gurugram" were circulating, but no investigating agency had formally contacted the local medical body yet.

The Rajasthan Special Operations Group (SOG), which first detected irregularities in the examination process, has identified Sikar as the epicentre of the suspected leak network. Investigators found that a so-called "question bank" or "guess paper" circulated before the exam allegedly matched more than 100 questions from the actual NEET-UG paper.

The probe has traced the circulation trail to an MBBS student from Churu studying in Kerala, who allegedly shared the material with an associate in Sikar on May 1. Investigators believe the paper then spread rapidly through PG accommodations, coaching-linked groups, counsellors and aspirants across Rajasthan and neighbouring states.

Agencies suspect the leaked material was circulated through WhatsApp and Telegram channels shortly before the examination. Reports indicate that nearly 150 of the 300 questions in the circulated material allegedly appeared in the actual paper.

Investigators are also examining a "vacation bank" allegedly prepared in Sikar through handwritten compilation methods.

The NTA stated that more than 22 lakh candidates had appeared for the examination and clarified that affected students would not need to register again for the re-test. Fresh admit cards will be issued, while existing examination centres are likely to remain unchanged.

The controversy has revived memories of the 2024 NEET row, when allegations of paper leaks and irregularities had triggered nationwide protests and hearings in the Supreme Court. At the time, the apex court had declined to cancel the entire examination and restricted re-tests to select centres involving 1,563 candidates.

Class XII results: Girls bag top three positions

HISAR, MAY 12

Girls outperformed boys once again, with their pass percentage standing at 87.97 — 6.52 percentage points higher than that of boys in the Class XII exams conducted by the Board of School Education Haryana, Bhiwani. The results were declared today.

All top three positions were also bagged by the girls. Deepika from Vivekanand Vidya Mandir Senior Secondary School at Chhilar village in Rewari district has topped the state by scoring 499 of 500 marks. Udita from Kanya Gurukul secured the second position with 498 marks, and the third spot was bagged jointly by Yogita and Muskan from Jind district with 497 marks each. All toppers are from the arts stream. — TNS