

Chandigarh

PU teaching staff to retire at 60: HC

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The Panjab University teaching staff will leave service at 60. Justice Amol Rattan Singh of the Punjab and Haryana High Court today dismissed a bunch of writ petitions filed by professors and lecturers in Panjab University and its affiliated colleges for permitting them to continue till 65.

Their claim was based on a Panjab University Senate decision, UGC regulations and a circular coupled with the recommendations by a task force committee. Their stand was that Panjab University was a centrally funded institution, as more than 90 per cent grant was coming from the Union of India. The retirement age had to be 65 as per the UGC regulations, their counsel had all along been contending.

The detailed judgment, running into 115 pages, was not yet available. Justice Singh made it clear that during the period the writ petitions remained pending, the salaries paid to the petitioners could be refunded, subject to necessary orders to be passed by the competent authority. The direction was based on two judgments. Certain directions were also issued to fill the vacancies within three months.

The Central Government, through the Ministry of Human Resource Development, had taken a specific stand that Panjab University was not a centrally funded institution. In affidavits filed from time to time through Assistant Solicitor General Chetan Mittal, it was claimed that Panjab University was an inter-state body corporate as defined under the Punjab Reorganisation Act.

The decision to change the status of the university as a centrally funded institution required concurrence from the state of Punjab for the purpose of enhancing the retirement age. The state of Punjab had already refused to give its concurrence and the same was placed on record during the proceedings before the High Court.

The petitioners, during the course of the hearing, placed reliance on recommendations in their favour by a task force committee constituted by the PMO. The Ministry of HRD, on the other hand, produced records and a noting to say that the same were only recommendations. Opinions were taken and the same could not be implemented.

The court, in one of the petitions, was told that Panjab University had failed to implement the Central

Petitions dismissed

- Justice Amol Rattan Singh of the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Tuesday dismissed a bunch of writ petitions filed by professors and lecturers in Panjab University and its affiliated colleges for permitting them to continue till 65.

Government's composite scheme of 2008, enhancing the retirement age from 60 to 65. This, despite the fact that the university was funded by the Centre to the extent of 92 per cent. Their counsel had told the court that the petitioners would be retired from service by the university by wrongly taking the superannuation age as 60, instead of 65, as mandated under the UGC regulations, 2010. The same, he had claimed, were binding on the university.

The court was also told that on December 20, 2011, the university amended a regulation raising the age of superannuation of teachers to 65. Amended regulations had been sent to the HRD Ministry for approval. The same, however, was not even required as the UGC regulations had been framed by the Centre itself and a mere compliance report of implementation was required to be sent.

