

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION**

CIVIL APPEAL NO.12069 OF 2024

REETESH KUMAR SINGH & ORS.

APPELLANT(S)

VERSUS

THE STATE OF UTTAR PRADESH & ORS.

RESPONDENT(S)

WITH

CIVIL APPEAL Nos.12070-12074 OF 2024

CIVIL APPEAL NO.12076 OF 2024

CIVIL APPEAL No.12075 OF 2024

AND

CIVIL APPEAL NO.5503 OF 2025

O R D E R

- 1) Delay condoned.
- 2) Defects ignored.
- 3) All the applications seeking intervention/impleadment, which are

listed as on date, are allowed. We make it clear that the Registry shall not entertain any such further application(s).

4) Registry to carry out necessary amendments.

5) These appeals pertain to the selection to the posts of Revenue Lekhpal in the State of Uttar Pradesh. The examination with which we are presently concerned was conducted by the Uttar Pradesh Subordinate Services Selection Commission (hereinafter referred to as “the Commission”) during the year 2021–2022. The vacancies advertised for the post of Revenue Lekhpal as on 07.01.2022 were 8085.

6) Subsequent to the conduct of the examination, the Commission published the answer key. One of the candidates, who had allegedly marked the correct answer but was not selected, filed a Writ Petition before the High Court. The same was dismissed. Aggrieved thereby, another candidate preferred a Letters Patent Appeal before the Division Bench of the High Court. Subsequently, several other candidates, who were not party to the Writ Petition, joined the Letters Patent Appeal affray and have now come before us.

7) There are certain orders of significance passed by this Court in chronological sequence as follows:

a) Vide order dated 21st November, 2023, in SLP (C) No.25828

of 2023, this Court passed the following:-

“Heard learned counsel for the parties.

2. Application seeking permission to file the Petition for Special Leave to Appeal in Diary No. 24736/2023 is allowed.

3. The short issue for consideration is whether in question no. 88 of Booklet Series ‘F’ in the examination for appointment of Revenue Lekhpal in the State of Uttar Pradesh, the correct answer would be option ‘A’ or ‘D’. The said question 88 and options are reproduced below:

“88. Which of the following schemes is for Prevention of Trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation?

- (A) Ujjwala Scheme*
- (B) Aajeevika Scheme*
- (C) Usttad Scheme*
- (D) None of these”*

4. According to learned counsel for the petitioners, the only correct answer would be option ‘D’ as the scheme, which is the subject matter of the instant case, is ‘Ujjawala’ and not ‘Ujjwala’, which is the answer reflected in option ‘A’. It was submitted that ‘Ujjawala’ and ‘Ujjwala’ are two different schemes and thus, there cannot be any confusion that the only answer is ‘D’ - None of these.

5. Learned counsel appearing for respondents no.2 and 3 – Uttar Pradesh Subordinate Service Selection Commission, took a stand that as per the expert, the answer was option ‘A’. Though the learned Single Judge had opined that both option ‘A’ and ‘D’ should be given one mark, but in view of the expert saying that option ‘A’ would be the correct answer, the Division Bench has directed that steps be taken for accepting option ‘A’ as the correct answer. However, it was submitted that in view of the fact, which he also admits, that there are two different and distinct schemes by the name of ‘Ujjawala’ and ‘Ujjwala’, it was acceptable to the Commission that they would take only option ‘D’ as the correct answer.

6. Learned counsel for the State points out that in Hindi

version it is the same name for both schemes and that is why it may lead to confusion. Learned counsel for the caveator submits that there are other questions also, especially, question no. 86, which will show that the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is only one.

7. Learned counsel for the petitioners submit that the issue with regard to there being a common Hindi name which covers 'Ujjawala' and 'Ujjwala', the instructions in the same booklet were that if there is any sort of ambiguity/mistake either of printing or factual nature in Hindi and English version of the question, the English version will be treated as standard.

8. Having considered the matter, the Court finds that the suggestion of the learned counsel for the Commission is most reasonable and appropriate in the present facts and circumstances of the case. Accordingly, the Commission shall proceed with treating option 'D' of Booklet Series 'F' with regard to question 88 as the correct answer.

9. It goes without saying that the entire result has to be re-evaluated by the Commission in terms of the present order.

10. It is made clear that neither the High Court of Allahabad nor the subordinate Courts thereto shall entertain any petition with regard to the examination in question, which shall be taken to its logical conclusion by the Commission.

11. The petitions for Special Leave to Appeal stand disposed of in the aforementioned terms.

12. All pending applications are also disposed of."

b) Vide order dated 19.02.2024, in M.A.No.276 of 2024 in S.L.P.

(C) No.25828 of 2023, this Court made the following:-

"1. This application has been moved by the applicant-one of the participants of the subject examination, seeking clarification of the order passed by this Court on 21st November, 2023.

2. Vide order dated 13th February, 2024, learned counsel for the respondent-State of Uttar Pradesh was directed to

file an affidavit furnishing the details of the number of petitions pending in respect of the subject recruitment on the aspect of incorrect answers in the booklets, besides question No.88 which has already been decided vide order dated 21st November, 2023. In the meantime, it was directed that no further action shall be taken by the respondents upon declaring the results to the post of Lekhpal on 31st December, 2023.

3. Pursuant thereto, on the mentioning of Mr. Tushar Mehta, learned Solicitor General, the date in the present application was advanced to today. Learned Solicitor General submits that the respondent has no objection to a clarification being issued by this Court as requested. He states that the Court must keep in mind the fact that the careers of 8000 applicants will get stalled on account of the pendency of some matters before the High Court relating to alleged wrong answer keys to questions, besides question No. 88 of Booklet Series No. F. In other words, the State Government has no objection if such of the petitions filed by other applicants laying a challenge to the answers key to some questions in different Booklets in respect of the subject examination are decided by the High Court on merits, except for the one that stands decided by this Court vide order dated 21st November, 2023, as long as the same were filed on or before 21st November, 2023.

4. Ms. Vibha Dutta Makhija, learned Senior counsel appearing for the petitioners states that she has no objection to the suggestion coming from the other side.

5. Accordingly, the following orders are passed:

I. The issue relating to the answer to question No.88 of Booklet Series F stands decided by this Court and the same shall not be dealt with by the High Court or any other Court.

II. Other petitions that have been filed challenging the answers keys to any other question in any other Booklet, if filed on or before 21st November, 2023, shall be taken to their logical conclusion by the High Court within four weeks from today and the judgment passed shall be placed by the State Government before this Court before the next date of hearing.

III. Any petition filed after 21st November, 2023,

questioning any of the answers keys to the questions in any of the Booklet Series or any other issue related to the subject examination, shall not be entertained by the High Court.

6. The State Government is at liberty to approach the High Court to request expeditious disposal of the petitions pending on the above aspects.

7. List on 22nd March, 2024.”

c) Vide order dated 23.07.2024, in S.L.P.(C).Diary No.18469 of 2024, this Court passed the following:-

“Permission to file SLPs is granted.

The petitioners’ case is covered by the order of this Court dated 19.02.2024 wherein it was categorically held that such petitioners will not get any benefit who have approached the High Court after 21.11.2023.

Admittedly, the petitioners have approached the High Court after 21.11.2023 and hence are not liable to be given any benefit of the order of 19.02.2024.

Considering the facts and circumstances of the case, we are not inclined to take a different view what has been taken by the High Court.

The Special Leave Petitions are dismissed accordingly.

Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.”

8) In the meanwhile, many of the unsuccessful candidates have also approached this Court by moving impleadment applications. The issue essentially remains the same. It is contended that there are four questions for which the answers provided in the official answer key were incorrect.

9) In order to give quietus to the whole issue we dispose of the matter as under :-

We have carefully perused these questions and must observe at the outset that there were no clear-cut answers to the questions asked, i.e. the questions and their answers which are presently in dispute. Rather in some cases, more than one option could reasonably be considered correct. Who are the candidates and what is the nature of the posts for which recruitment is being made could be some of the relevant considerations here.

10) The questions in issue are Question Nos. 10, 58, 63, and 90, all belonging to Booklet Series "B". Question No. 10 need not be reproduced here as we agree that the answer key is correct for this question.

Question No.58:-

Where did Mahatma Gandhi start the Salt Satyagrah?

- (A) Dandi
- (B) Surat
- (C) Sabarmati
- (D) Pavnar

Although the march commenced from Sabarmati, the actual act of defiance, the violation of the salt law, took place at Dandi. Thus, from

a purely technical perspective, (A) Dandi should be treated as correct, as was the official position. All the same, (C) Sabarmati may be correct as well, as Dandi march started from Sabarmati, may not be technically correct but it is close. We also have to consider that it is an examination for Lekhpal. We therefore direct that candidates who opted for either of these two options be awarded full marks.

Question No.63:-

Which is the longest National Highway that passes through Uttar Pradesh?

- (A) NH4
- (B) NH8
- (C) NH2
- (D) None of these

On review, both Option (C) and Option (D) are acceptable, since earlier it was NH2, not now. The candidates who marked either should be awarded full marks.

Question No.90:-

Under the Solar Photovoltaic Irrigation Pump Scheme, small and marginal farmers are eligible for how much grant for an 1800 watt (2 HP) surface solar pump, besides Central Government subsidy?

- (A) 15%
- (B) 30%

- (C) 45%
- (D) None of these

Earlier it was 45% but recently it was reduced to 30%. So both these answers i.e. 'B' and 'C' should be given marks.

11) We note with some concern that the deficiency in this case lies at the Commission's end as well for the kind of questions framed which were ambiguous or having more than one answers as correct.

12) Accordingly, we direct the Commission to re-evaluate the answer scripts in light of the above findings and award marks only to the candidates/appellants herein, and continue the selection process without disturbing the candidates who have already been selected.

13) Accordingly, the Civil Appeals are disposed of.

14) Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

15) We make it clear that this shall not be treated as a precedent.

16) We also make it clear that no court should now entertain any petition relating to the present dispute. The Registry shall not entertain any further application(s).

.....**J.**
(SUDHANSHU DHULIA)

.....**J.**
(K. VINOD CHANDRAN)

**NEW DELHI;
24th APRIL, 2025.**

**S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S**

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SPARE COPIES**

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IA No. 80607/2024 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.

IA No. 142193/2024 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.

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**IA No. 34770/2025 - WITHDRAWAL OF CASE / APPLICATION
WITH
C.A. No. 12070-12074/2024 (III-A)**

**IA No. 269949/2024 - AMENDMENT OF APPEAL / PETITION / I.A.
IA No. 142172/2024 - APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION
IA No. 141799/2024 - APPLICATION FOR VACATION OF INTERIM
ORDER
IA No. 141978/2024 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS
IA No. 50473/2025 - EARLY HEARING APPLICATION
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IA No. 141979/2024 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.
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FACTS AND GROUNDS

C.A. No. 12076/2024 (III-A)

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IA No. 117535/2024 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES

C.A. No.5503/2025

Date : 24-04-2025 These matters were called on for hearing today.

CORAM :

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SUDHANSHU DHULIA

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE K. VINOD CHANDRAN

For Appellant(s) :

Mr. Niranjana Sahu, AOR

Ms. Shivangi Gupta, Adv.

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Mr. Amit Pawan, AOR

Ms. Anwesha Saha , AOR

Ms. Sunita Sharma, AOR
Mr. Nitin Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Harjot Singh R., Adv.
Mr. Anurag Agarwal, Adv.
Mr. D. Vidhyanandan, Adv.
Dr. Ravinder Kumar Singh, Adv.
Mr. Vivek Kumar, Adv.

Mr. Sanjeet Kumar Trivedi, Adv.
Mr. Mohammad Faiz Aalam, Adv.
Mr. Zohra Bano, Adv.

Mr. Sunit Kumar, AOR
Mr. Rajesh P., Adv.
Mr. Ishank Gupta, Adv.

Mr. Ajay Kr. Singh, Adv.
Mr. Yatharth Singh, Adv.
Mr. Dinesh Kr., Adv.
Mr. Shiv Sagar Tiwari, AOR

Mr. Sudhasu Chowdhury, Sr. Adv.
Ms. Anwesha Saha , AOR
Mr. Salim Ansari, Adv.

Mr. Dr. B.T.Kaul, Adv.
Ms. Anwesha Saha , AOR
Mr. Salim Ansari, Adv.
Mr. Pranjal Jaiswal, Adv.

Ms. Chandrika Prasad Mishra, AOR
Mr. Bhupendra Singh, Adv.
Mr. Ankit Pandey, Adv.

For Respondent(s) :

Mr. Piyush Dwivedi, AOR
Mr. Harish Pandey, AOR

Mr. Talha Abdul Rahman, AOR
Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General

Mr. M Shaz Khan, Adv.
Mr. M R Shamshad, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Sudhanshu Tewari, Adv.
Mr. Rafid Akhter, Adv.
Mr. Faizan Ahmad, Adv.

Ms. Pallavi Pratap, AOR
Mr. Akshat Srivastava, AOR
Mr. Praveen Kumar Jha , AOR

Mr. Arvind Kumar Shukla, Adv.
Mrs. Neena Shukla, Adv.
Mr. Nihal Ahmad, AOR
Mr. Siddharth Sarup, Adv.
Ms. Surbhi Khanna, Adv.
Mr. Sanskar Krishnan, Adv.
Mr. Vishal Maurya, Adv.

Mr. Anand Nandan, Adv.
Mr. Shiv Sagar Tiwari, AOR

Mr. Vikas Singh, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Sanjeet Kumar Trivedi, AOR
Mr. Hemant Gupta, Adv.
Ms. Deepika Kalia, Adv.
Ms. Vasudha Singh, Adv.
Mr. Sudip Chandra, Adv.

Ms. Mandavi Pandey, Adv.
Mr. Vikas Tripathi, Adv.
Mr. Girraj Singh Yadav, Adv.
Mr. Sanjeet Kumar Mishra, Adv.
Mr. Gaurav Patel, Adv.
Ms. Shreya Pandey, Adv.
Mr. Gourav Patel, Adv.
Mr. Abhishek Singh, Adv.
Ms. Anamika Singh, Adv.
Ms. Ekta Upadhyay, Adv.
Ms. Neha Malik, AOR

**Upon hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R**

1. Delay condoned.
2. Defects ignored.
3. All the applications seeking intervention/impleadment, which are listed as on date, are allowed. We make it clear that the Registry shall not entertain any such further application(s).
4. The Civil Appeals are disposed of in terms of the signed order, which is placed on the file.
5. Pending application(s), if any, shall stand disposed of.

(D. NAVEEN)
COURT MASTER (SH)

(RENU BALA GAMBHIR)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

ITEM NO.120 + 123

COURT NO.12

SECTION III-A

**S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S**

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Ms. Shivangi Gupta, Adv.

Ms. Mallika Yadav, Adv.

Mr. Amit Pawan, AOR

Ms. Anwesha Saha , AOR

**For Respondent(s) :Mr. Piyush Dwivedi, AOR
Mr. Harish Pandey, AOR**

**Mr. Talha Abdul Rahman, AOR
Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
Mr. M Shaz Khan, Adv.
Mr. M R Shamshad, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Sudhanshu Tewari, Adv.
Mr. Rafid Akhter, Adv.
Mr. Faizan Ahmad, Adv.**

**Mr. Anand Nandan, Adv.
Mr. Shiv Sagar Tiwari, AOR**

**Ms. Anwesha Saha , AOR
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Mr. Akshat Srivastava, AOR
Mr. Praveen Kumar Jha , AOR**

**Mr. Arvind Kumar Shukla, Adv.
Mrs. Neena Shukla, Adv.
Mr. Nihal Ahmad, AOR
Mr. Siddharth Sarup, Adv.
Ms. Surbhi Khanna, Adv.
Mr. Sanskar Krishnan, Adv.
Mr. Vishal Maurya, Adv.**

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Ms. Deepika Kalia, Adv.
Ms. Vasudha Singh, Adv.
Mr. Sudip Chandra, Adv.**

Ms. Mandavi Pandey, Adv.

Mr. Vikas Tripathi, Adv.
Mr. Girraj Singh Yadav, Adv.
Mr. Sanjeet Kumar Mishra, Adv.
Mr. Gaurav Patel, Adv.
Ms. Shreya Pandey, Adv.
Mr. Gourav Patel, Adv.
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ASSISTANT REGISTRAR