9th October, 2026
(D/L No.37)
Ct. No.4
(SKB)

M.A.T. 71 of 2026
With
CAN 1 of 2026

Pratap Kumar Saha
Versus
The State of West Bengal and others

Mr. Samim Ul Bari,
Mr. Husen Mustafi,
Ms. Rimi Sil
… for the appellant.

1. Heard the learned advocate for the appellant/writ petitioner.
2. The appellant/writ petitioner participated in the 2nd SLST, 2025 wherein result of his performance was short of one mark of the qualifying marks, for being declared qualified.
3. It was the appellant's/writ petitioner's case that he was not awarded marks for one question in the 'D' series question booklet for question no.4. The appellant/petitioner had selected the correct answer 'C'. However, as per the model answer key, the correct answer was 'B'.
4. According to the writ petitioner "C" was the correct answer and the model answer key, insofar as it specified option "B" as the correct answer was unsustainable. On such complain made by the writ petitioner, the same was considered by the experts. The experts also

conquered with the model answer key and found the option 'B' to be the correct answer.

5. Considering this aspect of the matter, the writ court did not entertain the writ petitioner's plea.

6. It is submitted by the learned advocate for the appellant that the learned Single Judge failed to consider that as per the text books relied upon by the appellant/writ petitioner, the correct answer was option 'C'. Therefore, even though the material relied up by the experts sustained their conclusion that option "B" was the correct answer, the petitioner/appellant should have been awarded marks since he was also relying upon a text book according to which the correct answer was option "C".

7. We find no force in such submission. The answer key was relied upon uniformly to evaluate the answer to question 4 in "D" series booklet of all the participating candidates. The same cannot be departed from, merely because the petitioner/appellant relies on some materials based on which he claims to sustain another answer option for the same question no.4.

8. The law in this regard by now is well settled by the Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of ***Ran Vijay Singh and Others vs. State of Uttar Pradesh and Others*** reported in ***(2018) 2 SCC 357*** which was later considered by the Hon'ble

Supreme Court of India in the case of ***Vikesh Kumar Gupta and Another Vs. State of Rajasthan and others*** reported in ***(2021) 2 SCC 309*** in the following terms:

> *"15. Examining the scope of judicial review with regards to re-evaluation of answer sheets, this Court in Ran Vijay Singh v. State of U.P. [Ran Vijay Singh v. State of U.P., (2018) 2 SCC 357 : (2018) 1 SCC (L&S) 297] held that the court should not re-evaluate or scrutinise the answer sheets of a candidate as it has no expertise in the matters and the academic matters are best left to academics. This Court in the said judgment further held as follows : (Ran Vijay Singh case [Ran Vijay Singh v. State of U.P., (2018) 2 SCC 357 : (2018) 1 SCC (L&S) 297] , SCC pp. 369-70, paras 31-32)*
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> *"31. On our part we may add that sympathy or compassion does not play any role in the matter of directing or not directing re-evaluation of an answer sheet. If an error is committed by the examination authority, the complete body of candidates suffers. The entire examination process does not deserve to be derailed only because some candidates are disappointed or dissatisfied or perceive some injustice having been caused to them by an erroneous question or an erroneous answer. All candidates suffer equally, though some might suffer more but that cannot be helped since mathematical precision is not always possible. This Court has shown one way out of an impasse—exclude the suspect or offending question.*

32. It is rather unfortunate that despite several decisions of this Court, some of which have been discussed above, there is interference by the courts in the result of examinations. This places the examination authorities in an unenviable position where they are under scrutiny and not the candidates. Additionally, a massive and sometimes prolonged examination exercise concludes with an air of uncertainty. While there is no doubt that candidates put in a tremendous effort in preparing for an examination, it must not be forgotten that even the examination authorities put in equally great efforts to successfully conduct an examination. The enormity of the task might reveal some lapse at a later stage, but the court must consider the internal checks and balances put in place by the examination authorities before interfering with the efforts put in by the candidates who have successfully participated in the examination and the examination authorities. The present appeals are a classic example of the consequence of such interference where there is no finality to the result of the examinations even after a lapse of eight years. Apart from the examination authorities even the candidates are left wondering about the certainty or otherwise of the result of the examination—whether they have passed or not; whether their result will be approved or disapproved by the court; whether they will get admission in a college or university or not; and whether they will get recruited or not. This unsatisfactory situation does not work to anybody's advantage and such a state of uncertainty results in confusion being worse confounded. The overall and larger impact of all this is that public interest suffers."

> *16. In view of the above law laid down by this Court, it was not open to the Division Bench to have examined the correctness of the questions and the answer key to come to a conclusion different from that of the expert committee in its judgment dated 12-3-2019 [Bhunda Ram v. State of Rajasthan, 2019 SCC OnLine Raj 7416] . Reliance was placed by the appellants on Richal v. Rajasthan Public Service Commission [Richal v. Rajasthan Public Service Commission, (2018) 8 SCC 81 : (2018) 2 SCC (L&S) 456] . In the said judgment, this Court interfered with the selection process only after obtaining the opinion of an expert committee but did not enter into the correctness of the questions and answers by itself. Therefore, the said judgment is not relevant for adjudication of the dispute in this case."*

9. We, therefore, find no infirmity in the decision of the learned Single Judge in rejecting the writ petition.

10. The appeal is, thus, dismissed. The application being CAN 1 of 2026 is also disposed of.

(Madhuresh Prasad, J.)

(Prasenjit Biswas, J.)