

RAJ BHAVAN, TAMIL NADU – PRESS RELEASE

The Hon'ble Governor, as the Chancellor of the State Universities of Tamil Nadu has constituted the Search Committee for identification of the candidate for appointment as Vice-Chancellor of the Anna University (Chennai), Bharathidasan University (Tiruchirappalli), and Periyar University (Salem). The Search Committee of Anna University includes nominees of the Chancellor, Government of Tamil Nadu, Syndicate of the University and UGC Chairman's nominee, as per provision of Anna University Act and as per prevailing regulations of UGC, 2018. The Search Committees of Bharathidasan University and Periyar University includes nominees of the Government, Senate & Syndicate of the University and UGC Chairman's nominee, as per provisions of respective Universities Act and as per prevailing regulations of UGC, 2018. The inclusion of UGC Chairman's nominee in the Search Committee of these Universities are held to be mandatory by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

The Chancellor, acting within the ambit of constitutional and legal provisions, has constituted the search committee to ensure a fair and impartial selection process for the Vice Chancellor. This decision aligns with the ethos of academic independence which is critical for fostering excellence and innovation in higher education

Hon'ble Governor-Chancellor has directed the Government of Tamil Nadu, to notify the constitution of the Search Committee of Anna University (Chennai) and Bharathidasan University (Tiruchirappalli) vide letters dated 11th November, 2024, and for Periyar University (Salem)

vide letter dated 5th December 2024, consisting of the above four members, including UGC Chairman's nominee.

The Higher Education Department has issued the following Government Orders: -

(i) G.O (D) No.271, Higher Education Dept. dated 9th December 2024 notifying the Search Committee of Bharathidasan University (Tiruchirappalli);

(ii) G.O (D) No.276, Higher Education Dept. dated 13th December 2024, notifying the Search Committee of Periyar University, Salem;

(iii) G.O (D) No.277, Higher Education Dept. dated 13th December 2024 notifying the Search Committee of Anna University (Chennai),

and the above G.Os were published in the Official Gazette. The said Notifications purposefully excluded the UGC Chairman's nominee, in violation of the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

The Press Release No.52 dated: 19.12.2024, issued by the Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education, Government of Tamil Nadu, is a distortion of facts and misleading. He has mentioned Hon'ble Supreme Court's judgement in the case of Jagdish Prasad Sharma and others vs. State of Bihar and others (Civil appeal Nos.5527-5543 of 2013, SLP (c) Nos.18766-18782/2010) dated 17th July,2013. Whereas, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its latest judgement dated:21st October 2022, in the case of Prof. (Dr) Sreejith P.S. Vs. Dr.Rajasree M.S. & Others (Civil Appeal numbers 7634-7635 of 2022, SLP(c) Nos, 21108-21109 of 2021) has held that any appointment as a Vice Chancellor made on the recommendation of the Search Committee, which is constituted contrary to the provisions of the UGC Regulations shall be void ab initio and the Hon'ble Court has rejected the submission that the State Legislation

shall prevail, unless UGC regulations are specifically adopted by the State.

The said notifications issued by the Government is in difference to the Search Committees constituted by the Chancellor, and is void ab initio, being contrary to the existing UGC regulations and the latest prevailing orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

It is to be noted that, any selection by the Search Committee constituted without UGC Chairman's nominee is bound to be quashed by the Hon'ble Courts. The role of the Vice Chancellor is pivotal in shaping the future of our universities and our students and it is not in the interest of our students to keep the post of Vice-Chancellor vacant.

The Chancellor has called upon the Government of Tamil Nadu, to recall the said notifications, which is in difference to the Search Committees, constituted and sent for issuing notification and directed to notify the Search Committees for appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Anna University (Chennai), Bharathidasan University, (Tiruchirappalli) and Periyar University, (Salem) as constituted by the Chancellor, which includes the UGC Chairman's nominee.

Raj Bhavan, Chennai - 22.
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