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The venue, the largest IT
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NET: court declines stay

Special Correspondent

KOCHI: A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Tuesday declined to stay a single judge's order quashing the University Grants Commission's (UGC)'s new eligibility criteria for the National Eligibility Test.

The Bench comprising Chief Justice Manjula Chellur and Justice K. Vinod Chandran posted an appeal filed by the UGC to February 5 for final hearing.

The Single Judge had also directed the UGC to grant certificates to candidates who had obtained the minimum mark prescribed earlier.

UGC's contention

The UGC contended that the court had no right to make a declaration regarding the result of a test. The original notification had clearly stated that the candidates should obtain minimum required marks in each paper separately.

It had also been said that the qualifying criteria for Junior Research Fellowship and eligibility for lectureship would be decided by the UGC before the declaration of re-

- Single judge had quashed new criteria

- UGC has filed appeal

sults. It was a moderation committee appointed by the UGC and consisting of senior academicians that had recommended that the general, OBC (non-creamy layer) and the SC/ST candidates would be required to obtain an aggregate percentage of 65, 60 and 55 respectively in addition to the paper-wise minimum percentage as qualifying criteria, the UGC said.

Within powers

The appeal said that in order to maintain high standard in education, prescription of an aggregate percentage in an examination was well within the powers of the UGC.

Prescribing the qualifying criteria by fixing an aggregate percentage could not be called change of rules in the middle of the test. No new criterion was introduced by the UGC.

Retired engineer was killed: police

Special Correspondent

COIMBATORE: Confirming fears that P. Thomas, a retired engineer from Kerala, found dead in his apartment on Avannashi Road here on December 12, may have been murdered, the Coimbatore police have altered what was initially a case of suspicious death into one of murder.

The first information report was altered following conclusive medical opinion in the autopsy report and a final certificate from the Forensic and Chemical Sciences Laboratory.

The reports ruled out any history of cardiac problems

confirmed the suspicion, the police said.

Initially, cardiac problems or suicide were suspected. Thomas was employed as a team leader with a project consultancy firm, which is collaborating with the National Highways Authority of India on road projects in the Coimbatore region.

Suraj Thomas, son of the deceased, had raised suspicions over the death. The police treated the case as death under suspicious circumstances under Section 174 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Dr. Suraj Thomas had told *The Hindu* soon after the death that his father never