

WEST BENGAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

Bikash Bhavan, Salt Lake, Kolkata – 700 091.

Present-

The Hon'ble Sayeed Ahmed Baba, Officiating Chairperson & Member (A)

Case No. –OA-136 of 2025

Dr. Aniruddha Banerjee. -- VERSUS – The State of West Bengal & Others.

Serial No. and
Date of order

For the Applicant

: Mr. A. Nandi,
Mr. R. Basu,
Learned counsels.

02
15.05.2025

For the State Respondents

: Mr. S. N. Ray,
Learned counsel.

The matter is taken up by the Single Bench pursuant to the order contained in the Notification No. 638-WBAT/2J-15/2016 (Pt.-II) dated 23rd November, 2022 issued in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 5(6) of the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985.

The applicant, a Veterinary Officer under the Directorate of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, West Bengal has filed this application praying for setting aside the reasoned order no. 520 dated 07.02.2025. In terms of a direction of this Tribunal in O.A.-572 of 2024, the Director of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services, West Bengal passed this reasoned order. The applicant had applied for study leave for a period of two years to complete his Ph.D from West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences. The Director after making an assessment came to the conclusion the due to severe shortage of Veterinary Officers in the districts and moreover, Dr. Aniruddha Banerjee being a Veterinary Officer responsible for executing various vaccination programmes, his request for study leave was not possible to be granted.

Mr. Nandi, learned counsel drew my attention to two copies of documents in this application and has submitted that the applicant is a brilliant student and the University itself has been looking forward to complete his research. Secondly, Mr. Nandi, disagrees with the reasoned order that there is an acute shortage of manpower. He points out that, besides the applicant, who is a Veterinary Officer, Sk. Akib Javed is also a Veterinary Officer posted at the same place, Kalchini, Dist. Alipurduar.

Form No.

Case No. **OA-136 of 2025.**

Vs.

The State of West Bengal & Ors.

Therefore, effectively there is no shortage of Veterinary Officers in the Block. Mr. Nandi also pointed out that the reasoned order had wrongly determined the length of his study leave to 3 years. Such a study leave prayed by the applicant will be only for 2 years.

Mr. Ray, learned counsel refers to the reasoned order passed by the Director on 07.02.2025 and had submitted that, as evident, the applicant being a Veterinary Officer has been entrusted to execute several important Veterinary programmes. Therefore, in the larger interest of the State, such study leave for 2 years will create serious difficulties.

Having heard the learned counsels and after examinations of the records in this application, the Tribunal is of the view that given the shortage of Veterinary Officers in the fields, the respondent authority was correct in declining such a request at present. As a Veterinary Officer under the Department, it is his primary responsibility to carry out his duties and responsibilities. As pointed out in the reasoned order, he has been entrusted with the responsibility of vaccination under several important projects. His personal interest to complete his Ph.D can wait. The Tribunal, therefore, does not find any infirmity on part of the Director in regretting his prayer for study leave. It is to be appreciated by the applicant that as an officer his first and foremost responsibility lies with the Department.

In view of the above observations, the prayer in this application for setting aside the impugned reasoned order cannot be accepted by this Tribunal. Therefore, it is disposed of without passing any orders.

SAYEED AHMED BABA
Officiating Chairperson & Member (A)

S.M.