

IPA urges govt to include Pharmacy a subject for Civil Services exams & exam for recruiting patent examiners

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The Regulatory Affairs Division (RAD) of the Indian Pharmaceutical Association (IPA) wants all pharmaceutical professional organisations in the country to join together and lend support to its move for putting a strong demand before the Union government and to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) urging them to allow pharmacy graduates take part in the civil service examinations and also in the examination for recruiting patent examiners.

In a telephonic discussion with Pharmabiz, Dr. Subhash C Mandal, chairman of IPA-RAD from Kolkata said it seems quite strange when we look into the matter that among the total number of patent applications received by the authority, a major portion of them is for pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. He said these two burning issues have been put before the government several times, but no favourable decision has come from the government so far. Mandal expressed the hope that IPA-RAD has full confidence in the present prime minister, so the association will try all the ways to submit a memorandum in person to the PM in this regard.

The examination conducted by UPSC for selection of patent examiners embraces the subjects chemistry, chemical engineering, electrical engineering, etc among the thirteen subjects. But it does not include the subject of pharmacy as one among them. Mandal says that the policy makers do not allow persons with education in pharmacy to decide on granting patent rights to pharmaceutical products.

Similarly, there is the long pending demand by the pharmacy graduates that they should be permitted to write the civil services examinations conducted by UPSC for selecting IAS, IPS and IFS officers. Exclusion of pharmacy from the list of subjects for the examinations has created dissent among the pharmacy community in the country. It is learnt that pharmacy graduates, post graduates, Pharm D and PhD holders are planning to hold a nationwide agitation raising this demand.

He points out that when students pursuing professional courses like medical, engineering, agriculture, veterinary, etc are getting advantage in the examination to be qualified for IAS, IPS and IFS, why are the students of pharmacy denied the same advantage. He said strong resolutions were passed in several IPCs raising this demand and communicated the messages to the authorities all the time. But so far, no positive result has come from the government.

“In India most of the decisions are taken and executed by the bureaucrats, where the opinions of the technocrats are mostly ignored. Absence of bureaucrats with pharmaceutical background is a grave disadvantage in taking decision in the matter of pharmaceuticals,” he added.

In most of the states, the posts of commissioner/director general of FDA are held by IAS or IPS officers with no educational background in pharmacy. Even though they are capable of administration, they know little about drugs, pharmacy and allied subjects. The drugs control officers association in the national level also demands that the head of the drugs control administration in every state should be an officer with pharmacy background. So the best option before the government is to include pharmacy as a subject for the civil services examination to create bureaucrats of pharmacy.