

**HIGH COURT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND LADAKH
AT JAMMU**

WP(C) No.271/2026

Date of order:- 11.02.2026

Uploaded on:- 12.02.2026

Nipun Gandhi (Age 26 years)

S/O Sh. J.P. Gandhi,

R/O House No.45, Sector No.5

JDA Housing Colony, Upper Roop Nagar

Jammu.

....Petitioners

Through :- Mr. J. P. Gandhi, Advocate

Versus

- 1. University of Jammu** through
Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu,
Jammu.
- 2. Registrar,**
University of Jammu, Jammu.
- 3. Dean, Law Faculty,**
University of Jammu, Jammu.
- 4. Head of Department, Department of Law,**
University of Jammu.

....Respondent(s)

Through :- Mr. Ajay Abrol, Advocate.

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE M A CHOWDHARY, JUDGE

ORDER
11.02.2026

1. Petitioner, through the medium of this petition, asserting that after having been graduated in B.A., LL.B. from University of Jammu, he qualified Masters Degree from Indian Law Institute, New Delhi in the Session 2024-25 and scored distinction in the Graduation and became the only person in the year 2024-25 batch, having scored O+ grade in the dissertation under the guidance of Prof. S. Sivakumar (21st Law Commission Member, National Legal Services Authority Member, and Senior Prof., Indian Law Institute), as this grade is given to the person after an explanation given to Hon'ble the

Chief Justice of India, who acts as President at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi; and that he has been undergoing Post Graduate Diploma in Alternate Dispute Resolution from the Indian Law Institute and during the Masters of the petitioner, he had also qualified for the UGC-NET examination test in the year 2025.

2. Petitioner further next pleaded that the University of Jammu through its Dean, Research Studies had issued a notification on 01.04.2025 for admission in Ph.D. in different subjects, wherein, the vacancies were shown including Discipline/ Department of Law and the petitioner, as an aspiring candidate to undertake further studies in law, pursuant to the notification, applied online for Ph.D. admission notification dated 26.11.2024 for the session March-2025; that the usual process in the aforementioned notification was that two categories of students were specified who were aspiring to be Ph.D. scholar – one with the exempted category and the others without any exemption, stipulating that the exempted category students are those who have qualified NET or similar other examinations having an advantage of directly appearing in the interview, whereas the non-exempted students were those who have not qualified the NET and had to undergo Entrance Test for appearing in the interview, in order to qualify for the Ph.D. admission.

3. It has been further pleaded that the entrance test is held prior to the interview and the same was notified by the University in a notification dated 01.08.2025, notifying the date of commencement of filling of application form online and date of Entrance Test for the non exempted category students and until this time, the applicant got no intimation from the University regarding the call for interview despite the application form having been filed; that the

University of Jammu issued another notification for the category of exempted category quoting it as Session October-2025 admission for the same Session of the Ph. D. whereas the fact of the matter is that the notification of April 2025 had shown 13 seats for unreserved category and in notification of August 2025 had shown 10 seats for unreserved category and the notification of November 2025 had specified 5 seats for unreserved category. The University has, thus, issued notices in three phases, first for the exempted category, second for the entrance exam and, lastly and thirdly, for the exempted category and that the petitioner has been waiting for interview.

4. It is alleged that on 26.01.2026, the petitioner was astonished to see the list of short-listed candidates for appearance in the interview in an offline mode, whereas, whole of the process has been undertaken in an online mode and the distressful situation arrived when the petitioner saw that the name of the petitioner was missing in the said notification, despite the fact that he falls within the exempted category and should have been included in the list either in the unreserved category or under OBC Category; that the petitioner raised the objection, as required through e-mail, before the date fixed in the matter i.e. 28.01.2026, however, he has not received any reply from the concerned department; that aggrieved of the said notification, he approached HoD for requesting to entertain the objection raised by him and include his name in the supplementary list, as the petitioner would lose one academic year causing an irreparable loss.

5. Heard petitioner-in-person as well as his counsel and perused the file.

6. The petitioner, as an exempted candidate described as UGC-NET qualified and also belonging to an OBC category, had to be interviewed directly being exempted from the entrance test and it appears that University had issued various notifications for the purpose of selection of candidates for Ph.D. course and has not finalized any of the list so far.

7. Mr. Ajay Abrol, Advocate who is present on behalf of the respondents submits on receiving instructions, that the University had issued three notifications for finalizing the select list for the course of Ph.D. in April 2025, August 2025, and November 2025. He has further stated that the petitioner, if found eligible with the qualification of NET and under the OBC category, for the advertized seats under the Discipline/Department of Law, would be considered to be interviewed. His statement in support of his contention is taken on record.

8. This court deems it appropriate in the face of the statement of the counsel for the respondent-University of Jammu, to dispose of this petition, at this stage, with a direction to the respondents to consider to interview the petitioner, in case, he is found eligible being exempted of entrance test for the stream that he had applied for. The respondents shall consider the case of the petitioner before the exercise and schedule of the interview is notified by them.

9. With the aforesaid direction, this petition is disposed of, at this motion stage, in the above terms.

Jammu:
11.02.2026
Raj Kumar

(M.A. Chowdhary)
Judge