

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION
WRIT PETITION NO. 9568 OF 2025**

Zarqa Raees Ansari & Ors. ... Petitioners

V/s.

Union of India & Ors. ... Respondents

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Mr. Vaibhav Kulkarni for the Petitioners.

Mr. Anil C. Singh, Addl. Solicitor General (ASG) a/w. Mr. Rui Rodrigues, Adv. D.P. Singh, Adarsh Vyas, Ruchita Verma, Adv. Jainendra Seth, Adv. Rama Gupta and Adv. Sarika (consultant Legal NTA) for the Respondents.

Ms Sunita Koundal, Jt. Director, National Testing Agency present.

**CORAM : M.S. KARNIK &
N.R. BORKAR, J.J.**
DATE : 23rd JULY, 2025.

P.C.

1. By this petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, the petitioners seek directions to respondent No.2 - National Testing Agency to conduct an evaluation of the answers to question Nos.15 and 51 of Physics and Chemistry (Booklet No.48) by Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai to decide only one correct answer.

2. The petitioners appeared for the National Eligibility-Cum-Entrance Test ("NEET-UG 2025" for short) Examination, which was conducted by respondent No.2 on 4th May 2025. The answer-sheet for the said examination was released by respondent No.2 and the petitioners' scorecard was published on 14th June 2025. The provisional answer-sheet was released

by respondent No.2 on 3rd June 2025. With regard to Question No.51, the answers were indicated as options '3' and '4'. Insofar as Question No.15 is concerned, the answer was indicated as option '4'. When the final answer key for NEET (UG)-2025 was released on 13th June 2025, for Question No.15 the answers were indicated as option '3' and '4'.

3. Heard learned counsel for the petitioners and learned Additional Solicitor General for the respondents.

4. Learned counsel for the petitioners submitted that the final answer key differs from what was provided in the provisional answer key. In the submission of learned counsel for the petitioners that the petitioners who had correctly answered as option '4' for Question No. 15 would be seriously prejudiced by inclusion of correct answer as option '3' as an additional correct answer. It is further submitted that having two correct answers for the same question raises a doubt about the manner in which the final answer key for Question No.15 has been published.

5. In support of his submissions, learned counsel for the petitioners relied upon the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of ***Vanshika Yadav vs. Union of India & ors.***¹. It is therefore, submitted that in light of the decision in the case of *Vanshika Yadav (supra)*, it is incumbent upon the respondent No.2 to refer the Question No.15 to experts to find out what is the correct answer.

1 Writ Petition (Civil) No. 335 of 2024 decided on 23.7.2024

6. Learned ASG appeared on behalf of respondent No.2 and referred to the affidavit-in-reply filed on behalf of respondent No.2.

7 Learned ASG for respondent No.2 has invited our attention to the Information Bulletin NEET (UG)-2025 in support of his submission. He pointed out that Chapter-3 therein provides that, while every effort will be made to ensure that each question has one unique answer, in case, it is found that a question has more than one option, it will be dealt in the following manner:

- (i) If more than one option is found to be correct, then Four marks (+4) will be awarded to only those who have marked any of the correct options.
- (ii)
- (iii)

This was already within the knowledge of the students. The submission of learned counsel for the petitioners that one question cannot have more than two answers is without merit.

8. It is pertinent to note that after the provisional answer key was published on 3rd June 2025, between the period from 3rd June 2025 to 5th June 2025, as many as 188 candidates have objected to the answer to Question No.15 and stated that option '3' is also correct answer. Accordingly, the challenged question had been evaluated by an Expert

Committee comprising three senior professors from the IIT system (Specializing in Physics and Chemistry). After deliberation on this issue, the experts have unanimously opined that both answers are correct. If this procedure is adopted, we do not find any justification to interfere with the process which was adopted by the Experts. The scope of interference in such matters has been spelt out by the Division Bench of this Court in the case of ***Pruthviraj B. Dhavale and Anr. Vs. The Union of India and ors***². We therefore, do not find any merits in this petition. The petition is dismissed.

(N.R. BORKAR, J.)

(M.S. KARNIK, J.)

² Writ Petition No. 4371 of 2024 decided on 5th April 2024