



2025:DHC:4473



* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

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Date of Decision: 22.05.2025

+ **W.P.(C) 6414/2018**

ANURADHA VERMA

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Harsh Tikoo and Mr. Namit
Dixit, Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA

.....Respondent

Through: Mr. Jivesh Kumar Tiwari, Senior
Panel Counsel with Ms. Samiksha,
Advocate.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE MANOJ KUMAR OHRI

JUDGMENT (ORAL)

1. By way of present petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, the petitioner seeks directions to the respondent to consider the petitioner's case to furnish the requisite documents to avail the 'INSPIRE' Scholarship.
2. The facts in nutshell are that the Department of Science and Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology came out with 'INSPIRE Scholarship' under the Scholarship for Higher Education ('SHE') component of Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research ('INSPIRE Scheme'). In December, 2015, the respondent called applications from the eligible candidates for a total of 10,000 scholarships that were available annually. As per the Eligibility & Selection Criteria, the scholarship was limited to the candidates who had passed Class XII in the



year 2015 from various recognized Indian State and Central Boards and studying certain courses in Natural/Basic Science in any UGC recognized college/university/National Institution in India. The criteria further required that the eligibility will be assessed on the basis of: (a) Performance in Board Examination within the cut-off threshold (top 1%) for each State or Central Examination in the year 2015 at Class-XII level and/or (b) Performance in any of specified competitive examination within stipulated cut-off ranks and recipients of various scholarships and medals.

3. Under the INSPIRE Scholarship, the selected candidates were to be supported for a maximum period of five years starting from first year course. The continuation of scholarship for selected candidates beyond the first year was based on the performance in examinations conducted and certified by the institution imparting education. The instructions stipulated in the advertisement further required the eligible candidates to submit the online applications between 01.11.2015 (10-00 hours) to 15.12.2015 (17-00 hours) at <http://www.online-inspire.gov.in>. The instructions specifically asked the candidates not to submit the application or any other document by post, other than submitting online.

4. The controversy arising in the present case is that though that though the petitioner was found eligible for the scholarship and a provisional offer was uploaded on the respondent's portal, however the petitioner did not timely furnish the requisite documents i.e. (i) details of her bank account (ii) performance report and (iii) copy of mark-sheets duly certified. The petitioner contends that as per the instructions under the advertisement, the respondent was duty bound to inform the petitioner about the status of her application i.e, the provisional offer through email, which the petitioner



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received only on 07.06.2017, a copy of which has been placed on record. The petitioner claims that the said email was received after the link for uploading the documents had expired. Notably, the status of applications by the candidates was made available on the portal on 17.01.2017 with outer limit of 120 days for uploading the requisite documents.

5. The respondent, on the other hand, would contend that the petitioner failed to furnish the requisite information within the stipulated time and for which reason, her application remained unsuccessful for the scholarship to be granted. The respondent, however, concedes that had the requisite documents been furnished, the benefit under the scheme would have been available to the petitioner.

6. Insofar as the alleged delay in informing the petitioner of the status of her application, it is contended that automated mails were sent to all selected candidates on 17.01.2017 and the email received by the petitioner on 07.06.2017 was sent by mistake as on that date, the emails for 2016 batch were issued.

7. Pertinently, keeping in view the aforesaid contention of the respondent, this Court vide order dated 12.07.2023 directed the respondent to file a technical status report on the aspect of whether the earlier automated email dated 17.01.2017, was even sent to the petitioner. A technical status report has been placed on record, as per which the respondent claimed to have contacted NIC, which has responded by stating that it does not maintain data older than two years. As a result, the respondent has not been able to categorically confirm if it ever sent any prior email on 17.01.2017.

8. A perusal of the advertisement would show that all postal communications were prohibited and the onus was upon the respondent to



communicate to the petitioner about status of her application. The relevant extract of the notification reads as under:-

“...The applicants are advised to obtain a print out of the submitted online application for his/her records. Please do not send the application or any other documents by Post submitted online The following points may be observed by the applicant very carefully.

(i) Incomplete or wrongly filled up application or application with lack of essential documents will summarily be rejected.

*(ii) The applicant's own valid and functional email address must be used for submission of the On-line application **The status of the application will be informed to the applicant's email that is registered in the On-line portal.***

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*One can view the status of the application by entering the Application Reference Number in the portal. **After due evaluation of your application, you shall be informed about its status through an Email notification that will be sent to the registered Email address.***

(Emphasis added)

9. It further provided that after the online submission of application, the applicant must obtain a print out of the submitted application for his/her records.

10. Pertinently, the time gap between the last date for submission of applications i.e. 15.12.2015 and the alleged uploading of the provisional offer on the respondent's portal to selected candidates on 17.01.2017 is about 13 months. As per the instructions in the advertisement, the respondent was duty bound to inform the petitioner about her being provisionally selected through an email, which in light of the aforementioned facts was received after the time period specified.



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11. It is also to be noted that on receipt of the email, the petitioner, realizing the unavailability of the link to upload documents, immediately communicated her grievance to the concerned ministry vide request letter dated 20.09.2017.

12. During the pendency of the proceedings, the petitioner has supplied the copies of her mark sheet for all the semesters to the respondent. Learned counsel for the respondent, upon instructions, fairly states that in terms of the mark sheets supplied for the all the semesters, the petitioner was eligible for the INSPIRE Scholarship for the entire term of three years.

13. In the peculiar facts and circumstances of this case, this Court deems it apposite to direct that the respondent will consider the case of the petitioner for the 'INSPIRE Scholarship' and grant the requisite scholarship, subject to due verification and without any unnecessary delay, not later than six weeks from today.

14. The petition is disposed of in above terms.

MANOJ KUMAR OHRI
(JUDGE)

MAY 22, 2025/rd