

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA
AT CHANDIGARH

2026:PHHC:015100-DB



CWP-15246-2025 (O&M)
Date of Decision: 02.02.2026

Ustat Kaur Randhawa and another ...Petitioners

Vs.

State of Punjab and others ...Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ASHWANI KUMAR MISHRA
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ROHIT KAPOOR**

Present: Mr. A.S. Walia, Advocate for the petitioners.

Mr. A.K. Goyal, Addl. AG, Punjab.

Mr. Nitin Kaushal, Advocate for respondent No.3.

ASHWANI KUMAR MISHRA, J. (Oral)

1. Petitioners applied for admission pursuant to notice dated 09.08.2024, in Undergraduate Medical/Dental Course in Government/Private Colleges of the State of Punjab.
2. The petitioners applied in the general category against the aforesaid advertisement. It transpires that a corrigendum was issued by the Government of Punjab on 20.08.2024, thereby creating a new category of 'NRI Sponsored Candidates'. Pursuant to corrigendum dated 20.08.2024, the petitioners applied and deposited application fee of Rs.1,70,000/- (approximately). The corrigendum dated 20.08.2024, came to be challenged in a bunch of writ petitions with leading writ petition No.20041 of 2024. In the writ petitions, the effect and operation of corrigendum dated 20.08.2024,

was stayed. Ultimately, the Division Bench of this Court allowed the writ petitions and quashed the corrigendum dated 20.08.2024 and consequently a direction was issued to complete the process of admissions under NRI category in the State quota as per the original and un-amended prospectus.

3. The petitioners contend that they had applied under the general category and it is only pursuant to corrigendum dated 20.08.2024 that they submitted application in the NRI Sponsored Category by depositing Rs.1,70,000/- (approximately) each. It is submitted that once the corrigendum itself stood quashed, there is no justification for the respondents to withhold the fees deposited by each of the petitioners. Submission is that once the corrigendum itself stood quashed, any amount deposited towards application fee by the petitioners ought to be refunded to them.

4. Learned counsel for the respondent – University as well as State of Punjab opposed the prayer made in the writ petition on the ground that the applications submitted by the petitioners were processed and, therefore, the fee deposited by them ought not to be directed to be refunded. It is also submitted that it was only an application fee and various steps were taken by the respondents towards processing, therefore, the claim of refund is liable to be rejected.

5. Ordinarily, any deposit made by a candidate towards application fee for seeking admission would not be ordered to be refunded even though such candidate is not able to secure any admission. However, the facts of the present case are distinct. In this case, the petitioners had applied as general category candidate by depositing the requisite application fee. It was only by virtue of corrigendum that a new category of ‘NRI Sponsored Candidate’ was envisioned by the State of Punjab against which the petitioners had applied.

Before any consideration in this category could be made, writ petitions were filed and the corrigendum so issued by the State of Punjab dated 20.08.2024, was quashed by the Division Bench of this Court. It would, thus, be seen that the category in which the petitioners had applied for admission did not exist in the eyes of law. Once that be so, the respondents cannot be permitted to withhold the amount under a category which was not recognized in the eyes of law. The general principle that refund of application fee would not be allowed, would thus not be attracted in the facts of the present case.

6. In such view of the matter, we find substance in the petitioners' contentions and accordingly the writ petition succeeds and is allowed. Mandamus is issued to the respondents to refund the amount of application fee received from the petitioners pursuant to corrigendum dated 20.08.2024, which already stood quashed under orders of the Division Bench of this Court. In the facts of the present case, we permit the respondents to deduct 10% on the total amount deposited by the petitioner towards their processing charges etc. and the balance amount would be refunded to the petitioners within a period of six week from today, failing which, the petitioners would also be entitled to interest @ 6% per annum.

7. All pending misc. application(s), if any, also stand disposed of.

(ASHWANI KUMAR MISHRA)
JUDGE

(ROHIT KAPOOR)
JUDGE

02.02.2026
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1. Whether speaking/reasoned?	:	Yes/No
2. Whether reportable?	:	Yes/No