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IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI

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W.P.(C) 18321/2025 & C.M. No. 686/2026

FIRST GENERATION LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (FGLA)

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr.Rudra Vikram Singh,
Mr.Ashirvad Kumar Yadav,
Ms.Neetu Rani, Ms.Rashmi,
Mr.Tarshith Bhardwaj, Mr.Nitish
Banka, Mr.Shanshank Shukla,
Mr.Anirudh Tyagi, Mr.Abhishek
Sharma, Ms.Vansmani Tripathi,
Ms.Kanchan, Mr.Anit Pal Yadav,
Mr.Akhil Jindal, Ms.Megna
Srivastva, Ms.Tanu Mittal,
Mr.Abhishek Singh Parmar, Mr.Sahil
Ms.Reema Chauhan, Advs.

versus

UNION OF INDIA AND ORS.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr.Chetan Sharma, ASG with
Ms.Radhika Bishwajit Dubey, CGSC,
Ms.Gurleen Kaur Waraich,
Mr.Kritarth Upadhyay, Mr.Amit
Gupta, Mr.Shubham Sharma,
Mr.Vikram Adiya Singh, Advs &
Ms.Samiksha, GP for UOI.

Mr.Mangesh Naik, Adv for
Ms.Mamta Sharma.

CORAM:

HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE TEJAS KARIA

ORDER

06.01.2026

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1. This public interest litigation has been filed with the following prayers:-

“a) Issue a writ of Mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order or direction thereby directing the Respondent Union of India to forthwith place before this Hon’ble Court the complete record of the empanelment process, including the criteria adopted, marking sheets, evaluation mechanism, objections (if any), and the material considered for preparing the impugned panel list dated 21.11.2025;

b) Issue a writ of Mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order or direction thereby quashing the impugned panel/empanelment list dated 21.11.2025 to the extent it includes persons who are ineligible and who do not fulfil the notified, statutory, or policy-based eligibility criteria;

c) Issue a writ of Mandamus directing the Respondent Union of India to frame and notify a transparent, objective and uniform set of eligibility criteria for appointment /engagement of Central Government Counsel before the Hon’ble Supreme Court, including minimum experience, case-handling exposure, AIBE qualification, domain knowledge, and demonstrable competence;

d) Issue a writ of Mandamus directing that all future empanelment exercises be conducted through a fair, transparent, merit-based process, including: (i) publication of vacancies and eligibility criteria, (ii) open invitations for applications, (iii) a uniform marking/screening system, and (iv) publication of a reasoned list of selected and rejected candidates to ensure accountability;

e) Direct the Respondent Union of India to place before this Hon’ble Court the list of all advocates who applied for panel positions, the evaluation applied to each, and the minutes/notings that led to the selection of the 654 advocates under Group A panel, so that the arbitrariness and deviation from uniform standards may be examined by this Hon’ble Court;

f) Issue a writ or order directing the constitution of an Independent Screening Committee comprising retired judges/independent legal experts for supervising future empanelment processes of Central



Government Counsel before the Supreme Court, so as to remove arbitrariness, nepotism, lack of transparency, and ensure equal opportunity to first-generation advocates and meritorious candidates;

g) Pass such other and further order(s) as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of the case, in the interest of justice.

2. Essentially the petitioner, which is said to be an Association of Lawyers, challenges the panel of lawyers prepared by the Government of India, which is embodied in the list dated 21.11.2025. Various grounds have been taken in the writ petition pointing out as to how a particular individual included in the said panel is ineligible.

3. Apart from seeking a prayer for quashing the names of those who are ineligible, from the panel dated 21.11.2025, the petitioner has also prayed for issuing direction to the respondents to frame guidelines/take appropriate decision for putting in place a transparent/uniform procedure for empanelment of lawyers to represent the Union of India before various Courts/*fora* and other Government Bodies. Certain suggestions have also been given in the writ petition.

4. Our attention has been drawn by Mr.Chetan Sharma, learned ASG to an order dated 17.12.2025 passed by this Court whereby W.P.(C) 19141/2025 was disposed of in terms of the statement made by the learned Solicitor General on behalf of the Union of India to the effect that the entire matter should be left to the Union of India for consideration of the issues raised in the writ petition. The assurance of learned Solicitor General has also been recorded that all the grievances raised in the said writ petition shall be looked into by the appropriate authority of the Central Government and



decision, which may be warranted under law shall also be taken. Learned Solicitor General also assured, in the said matter, that appropriate decision for framing guidelines for engagement of learned counsel to represent various departments of Government of India shall also be taken. On the said assurance extended by the learned Solicitor General, the Court disposed of the said writ petition on 17.12.2025 by providing that the said writ petition shall be treated as a representation, which shall be considered and appropriate decision thereon shall be taken by the competent authority of the Central Government.

5. The order dated 17.12.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 19141/2025 is extracted hereinbelow:-

“1. Heard the learned counsel for the petitioner, Sh. Mehta, learned Solicitor General and Sh. Sharma, learned Additional Solicitor General along with Ms.Radhika Bishwajit Dubey, learned CGSC, representing the respondent nos.1 and 2.

2. Learned Solicitor General, at the outset, has stated that some of the facts narrated in the writ petition may be correct, however, some may not be correct and therefore, it ought to be left to the respondent no.1 and 2 to consider the issues raised in this writ petition. He has assured the Court that all the grievances raised in this writ petition shall be looked into by the appropriate authority in the Central Government and decision which may be warranted under law in respect of such grievances shall also be taken. Learned Solicitor General has also assured the Court that appropriate decision for framing guidelines for engagement of learned counsel to represent the various departments of Government of India shall also be taken into consideration.

3. On the aforesaid assurance given to the Court by the learned Solicitor General, we provide that this petition itself shall be treated as a representation, which shall be considered and appropriate decision thereon shall be taken by the competent authority of the Central Government with expedition, say within a



period of six weeks.

4. *We further direct that while considering the representation in terms of this order, the individual facts raised by the petitioner in the writ petition, shall also be considered and the representation shall be appropriately attended to. As far as the decision in relation to framing of the guidelines is concerned, we grant three months time to the Central Government to take a decision and issue appropriate guidelines for engagement of counsel to represent its various departments.*

5. *We make it clear that we have not made any observation as to the merit of the claim of the respective parties.*

6. *The writ petition along with pending application stands disposed of in the aforesaid terms.*

6. Our attention has also been drawn to an order dated 10.12.2025 passed by Hon'ble Supreme Court in W.P.(C) 1226/2025 filed by one Ms.Mamta Sharma. Hon'ble Supreme Court in the said order has noted the pendency of the instant writ petition and has further observed that Ms.Mamta Sharma may join the proceedings of the instant petition. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has also permitted Ms.Mamta Sharma to assist the Court as an intervener if such an application is made. An application has been filed by Ms.Mamta Sharma pursuant to the said order by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, however, the same remains defective and, therefore, we have permitted Mr.Mangesh Naik, learned counsel representing Ms.Mamta Sharma to tender a physical copy of the said application to the Court. The said application is taken on record and the Registry is directed to number the same.

7. We have heard, Mr.Rudra Vikram Singh, learned counsel for the petitioner, Mr.Chetan Sharma, learned ASG assisting by Ms.Radhika Bishwajit Dubey, learned CGSC and Ms.Mangesh Naik representing



Ms.Mamta Sharma.

8. Having regard to the order dated 17.12.2025 passed by this Court in W.P.(C) 19141/2025, we are of the opinion that once we have already relegated the petitioner of the said writ petition to approach the Union of India with a further direction to treat the said writ petition as a representation and take decision thereon, we find it appropriate to direct that the instant writ petition shall also be treated as a representation and appropriate decision thereon shall be taken by the competent authority of Central Government within a period of six weeks. We direct that the grievances raised by the petitioner in this petition in respect of individuals, who have been empanelled, shall be considered and decision thereon shall be taken in accordance with law within a period of eight weeks from today.

9. So far as the decision regarding policy for engaging lawyers to represent the Central Government and its various departments is concerned, in our order dated 17.12.2025 passed in W.P.(C) 19141/2025 three months time was already given and accordingly we provided that while taking the decision in respect of the policy pursuant to the order dated 17.12.2025 the issues raised and suggestions made in this writ petition shall also be taken into consideration by the competent authority of the Union of India. The decision regarding framing of policy/guidelines shall precipitate within three months.

10. Mr.Chetan Sharma, learned ASG has also raised certain objections about the institution of the instant PIL petition by the petitioner. He has stated that in the petition no disclosure has been made as to whether the petitioner is registered under the relevant law, say, for that matter, under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 or any other law. He has also submitted

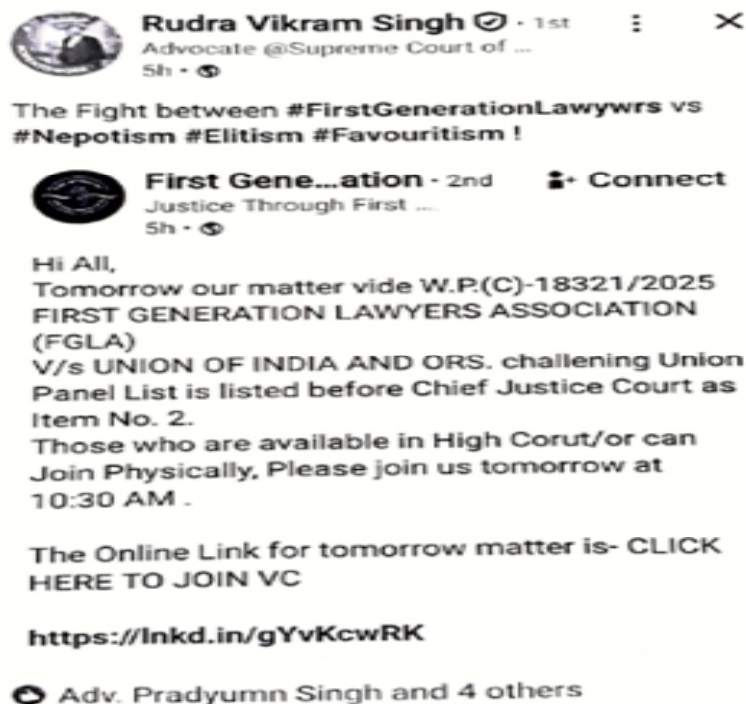


that, as a matter of fact, the President of the petitioner is using filing of this petition as an instrument for promoting his candidature in the ensuing elections of the Bar Council of Delhi.

11. In support of the said submissions certain screenshots of the messages on 'LinkedIn and 'X' account have been tendered. The same are taken on record.

12. Mr.Rudra Vikram Singh, learned counsel for the petitioner, however, states that the petitioner is registered with the Society Registration Act, 1860 whose registration number is District East/Society/3380/2024. He has further stated that the petitioner has been working to safeguard the interest of the lawyers. He also admits that President of the petitioner is contemplating to contest election for the Bar Council of Delhi, however, he has no intention to use institution of this writ petition for campaigning. We record the statement made by the learned counsel for the petitioner.

13. However, Mr.Chetan Sharma has specifically pointed out to a message posted on the 'LinkedIn' account of the petitioner, which is extracted hereinbelow:-





He has stated that a call has, thus, been given to the lawyers to join the proceedings of this petition through video conferencing with the details of the link given in the said post.

14. Posting of such message on social media account *prima facie* appears to be violation of Electronic Evidence and Video Conferencing Rules, 2025 notified by this Court on 04.07.2025.

15. Learned counsel for the petitioner, however, states that any such posts shall be deleted from the respective social media accounts of the petitioner. He further assures the Court that institution of the instant PIL petition shall not be used in any manner as a material for campaigning in the election of Bar Council of Delhi.

16. We also permit Ms.Mamta Sharma to make a representation to Secretary, Law and Justice, Government of India raising grievances and giving suggestions within a week. In case any such representation is made, the same shall also be considered while taking decision in terms of this order.

17. The writ petition along with pending application is, accordingly, disposed of in the aforesaid terms.

DEVENDRA KUMAR UPADHYAYA, CJ

TEJAS KARIA, J

JANUARY 6, 2026

S.Rawat