VERDICTUM.IN

2026:DHC:10098

$~86-90

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

\# **CNR No. DLHC010449472026**

Date of decision: 05.11.2026

\+ W.P.(C) 13805/2026 & CM APPL. 64631/2026

NASIR RASHEED

.....Petitioner

Through: Adv. Mr Sidhant Goel; Adv. Mr. Deepankar Mishra; Adv. Ms. Kratvi Kawdia; Adv. Ms. Manasvi Kaushik

versus

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION AND ANR

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Parmanand Gaur, SC, for the UGC with Mr. Vibhav Mishra and Ms. Megha Gaur, Advs.

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\# **CNR No. DLHC010466842026**

\+ W.P.(C) 14324/2026 & CM APPL. 67190/2026, CM APPL. 76219/2026

ASHFAQUE ALAM

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Nishant Nain , Ms. Charu Sharma, Mr. Chanderjeet yadav ,Mr. Vasu Kumar & Ria Gupta, Advs.

versus

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Parmanand Gaur, SC, for the UGC with Mr. Vibhav Mishra and Ms. Megha Gaur, Advs.

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\# **CNR No. DLHC010466912026**

\+ W.P.(C) 14331/2026 & CM APPL. 67200/2026

SAPNA SHARMA & ORS.

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.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Nishant Nain , Ms. Charu Sharma, Mr. Chanderjeet yadav ,Mr. Vasu Kumar & Ria Gupta, Advs.

versus

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Parmanand Gaur, SC, for the UGC with Mr. Vibhav Mishra and Ms. Megha Gaur, Advs.

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CNR No. DLHC010467132026

\+ W.P.(C) 14352/2026 & CM APPL. 67241/2026

KANGKANA BASUMATARY

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Nishant Nain , Ms. Charu Sharma, Mr. Chanderjeet yadav ,Mr. Vasu Kumar & Ria Gupta, Advs.

versus

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Parmanand Gaur, SC, for the UGC with Mr. Vibhav Mishra and Ms. Megha Gaur, Advs.

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CNR No. DLHC010478882026

\+ W.P.(C) 14712/2026 & CM APPL. 68822/2026

ABHINAV YADAV & ORS

.....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Nishant Nain , Ms. Charu Sharma, Mr. Chanderjeet yadav ,Mr. Vasu Kumar & Ria Gupta, Advs.

versus

VERDICTUM.IN

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION & ANR.

.....Respondents

Through: Mr. Parmanand Gaur, SC, for the UGC with Mr. Vibhav Mishra and Ms. Megha Gaur, Advs.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JASMEET SINGH

: **JASMEET SINGH, J (*ORAL*)**

1. These are writ petitions filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India challenging certain discrepancies in the provisional and final answer keys published by the respondents in the UGC-NET June 2026.

2. Mr. Khanna, learned counsel for the respondent No. 2/NTA, has handed over counter affidavits in all the petitions which are taken on record.

3. In the entire batch, the following questions are challenged:-

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	Challenged Qn. ID	Answer Petitioners	Provisional Answer Key	Challenged window	Final Answer Key	Petitioner's Contention	Reply in Counter
W.P(C)-13806/2026 NASIR RASHEED V UGC & ANR. **Education-009**	4818042982	48180411624 (Option 4)	48180411624 (Option 4)	Not Challenged	48180411624 (Option 2)	Option 4 correct Centres of Education	Subject Expert (p.8)
	4818042974	48180411592 (Option 4)	48180411589 (Option 1)	Not Challenged	48180411589 (Option 1)	Option 4 correct Rousseau Philosophy	Subject Expert No challenge in window (p.4, 5)
	4818042904	48180411310 (Option 2)	48180411310 (Option 2)	Not Challenged	48180411311 (Option 3)	Option 2 correct Stratified random sample	Subject Expert (p.7,8)
W.P(C)-14331/2026 SAPNA & ORS. V UGC & ANR. **Education-009**	4818042904	48180411310 (Option 2)	48180411310 (Option 2)	Not Challenged	48180411311 (Option 3)	Option 2 correct Stratified random sample	Subject Expert (p.7,10)
	4818042982	48180411624 (Option 4)	48180411624 (Option 4)	Not Challenged	48180411624 (Option 2)	Option 4 correct Centres of Education	Subject Expert (p.7,10)
W.P.(C)-14352/2026	Qn ID 4818042904	Option 2 48180411310	Option 2	Not challenged	Option 3 48180411311	Option 2 correct Stratified sample	Subject expert (p.10)

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KANGKANA BASUMATARY V/s UGC & ANR **Education-009**	Qn ID 4818042982	Option 4 48180411624	Option 4	Not challenged	Option 2 48180411622	Option 4 correct Centres of Education	Subject expert (p.10)
	Qn ID 4818042962	Option 2 48180411542	Option 2	Not challenged	Option 3 48180411543	Option 2 correct BuddhistEdu Centre	Key Not changed. Subject experts (p.10)
	Qn ID 4818042871	Option 3 48180411183	Option 2	Not Challenged	Option 2	Math Qn wrong and erroneous	Subject expert (p.8)
W.P.(C)-14324/2026 ASHFAQUE ALAM V/s UGC & ANR **Urdu-028**	Question ID 4818048438	Option 3, ID 48180432855	Option 3, ID 48180432855	Not challenged	Option 2, ID 48180432854 (Revised)	Option 3 is right	Human error in Prov. Key (Annex-9, p38)
	Question ID 4818048369	Option 3, ID 48180432583	Option 2, ID 48180432582	Not challenged	Option 2, ID 48180432582	Math Question, wrong Qn challenge	
W.P.(C)-14324/2026 ABHINAV YADAV & ORS. V UGC **Geography–080**	Qn ID 4818041051		Option 2	Challenged only by Abhinav	Option 2	None of the options correct	Subject Expert (p.9,11,13)
	Qn ID 4818041048		Option 2	Not Challenged	Option 1 (Revised)	None of the options correct	Portal claim- Opt 1, Writ claim-NOTA Estopped (p.5)

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	Qn ID 481804963		Option 3	Challenged only by Abhinav	Option 3	None of the options correct	Subject Expert (p.9,11,13)
	Qn ID 481804978		Option 3	Challenged only by Abhinav	Option 3	Lava plateau, all option are correct	Expert Opinion A-11 ‘Can retain option 3’

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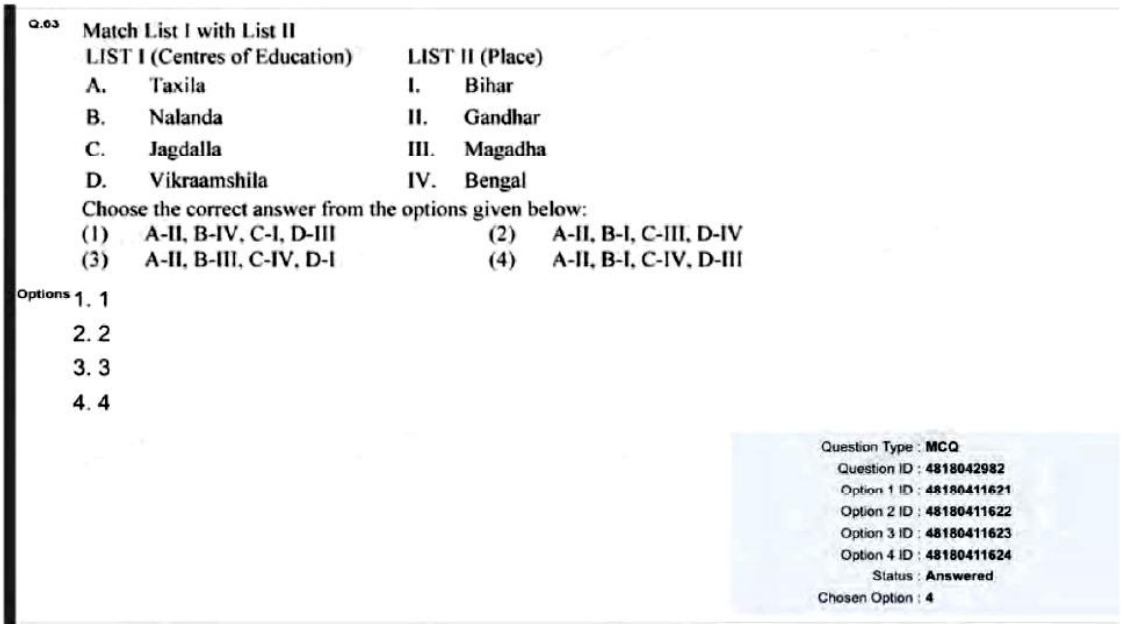
4. The law in writ jurisdictions with regard to the Court's interference with the opinion of the expert is well settled. The Hon'ble Division Bench of this Court in LPA 782/2024 titled ***Nandita v. National Testing Agency & Ors.*** *vide* Order dated 13.08.2024, held as under:-

> *"8. While examining such matters, the jurisdiction of this Court is circumscribed by the law which is well-settled in this regard, in a catena of pronouncements by the Supreme Court. It is a well-settled position of law that the scope of judicial adjudication and jurisdiction in such matters is limited. The Supreme Court in the case of Kanpur University v. Samir Gupta (1983) 4 SCC 309 has held that "...the key answer should be assumed to be correct unless it is proved to be wrong and that it should not be held to be wrong by an inferential process of reasoning or by a process of rationalisation. It must be clearly demonstrated to be wrong, that is to say, it must be such as no reasonable body of men well-versed in the particular subject would regard as correct.*
>
> *9. In the present case, NTA had both the issues examined by subject experts consequent to the receipt of objections. This Court cannot sit as an appellate authority over the decision of the experts regarding the correct answers to the questions. Further, just because NTA has consulted experts does not mean that the said experts cease to be neutral or independent persons."*

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5. As regards Question ID Nos. 4818042974, 4818042904, 4818048369, 4818041051, 4818041048 and 481804963, the dispute is one of academic opinion and are inferential in nature. The respondents have stated in their counter affidavits that these questions were examined by subject experts. No patent error has been shown in respect of them. In exercise of its writ jurisdiction, this Court cannot sit in appeal over the view of the experts or substitute its own, and no interference is called for with these questions.

6. However, there are four questions which seem to be patently erroneous and are not inferential in nature. The same read as under:-



Q.63 Match List I with List II

LIST I (Centres of Education)		LIST II (Place)	
A.	Taxila	I.	Bihar
B.	Nalanda	II.	Gandhar
C.	Jagdalla	III.	Magadha
D.	Vikraamshila	IV.	Bengal

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

(1) A-II, B-IV, C-I, D-III (2) A-II, B-I, C-III, D-IV

(3) A-II, B-III, C-IV, D-I (4) A-II, B-I, C-IV, D-III

Options 1. 1

2. 2

3. 3

4. 4

Question Type : MCQ
Question ID : 4818042982
Option 1 ID : 48180411621
Option 2 ID : 48180411622
Option 3 ID : 48180411623
Option 4 ID : 48180411624
Status : Answered
Chosen Option : 4

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Q.78 These were the centers of Education during Buddhist period :

A. Nadia
B. Odantpuri
C. Ballabhi
D. Vikramshila
E. Varanasi

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

(1) A, B, C only (2) C, D, E only
(3) A, B, C, D only (4) A, C, D, E only

Options 1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

Question Type : MCQ
Question ID : 4818042962
Option 1 ID : 48180411541
Option 2 ID : 48180411542
Option 3 ID : 48180411543
Option 4 ID : 48180411544
Status : Answered
Chosen Option : 2

Q.75 سر سید احمد خاں نے جس زمانے میں ایم اے او کالج قائم کیا اس وقت وہ کس شہر میں تعینات تھے؟

.1 غازی پور
.2 علی گڑھ
.3 بنارس
.4 میرٹھ

Options 1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

Question Type : MCQ
Question ID : 4818048438
Option 1 ID : 48180432853
Option 2 ID : 48180432854
Option 3 ID : 48180432855
Option 4 ID : 48180432856
Status : Answered
Chosen Option : 3

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Q.82 Which of the following are example of lava plateau ?

A. Snake River Region, USA.
B. Drakenberg Plateau, South Africa
C. Parana Plateau, Brazil
D. Deccan Plateau, India

Choose the correct answer from the options given below :

(1) B, C & D only (2) A, B & C only
(3) D, C & A only (4) A, B & D only

Options 1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

Question Type : MCQ
Question ID : 481804978
Option 1 ID : 4818043805
Option 2 ID : 4818043806
Option 3 ID : 4818043807
Option 4 ID : 4818043808
Status : Answered
Chosen Option : 1

7. The aforesaid four questions stand on a different footing. They are not matters of academic opinion or inferential in nature on which experts may reasonably differ. Each has only one correct answer, which can be verified objectively from material available in the public domain and from the standard source texts.

8. The restraint laid down in ***Nandita (supra)*** is not an absolute bar. The same decision recognises that a key answer may be interfered with where it is clearly demonstrated to be wrong, that is, where no reasonable body of persons well versed in the subject would regard it as correct. That test is met where the error is apparent without any inferential process or rationalisation. The four questions fall within that narrow category.

9. An error of this kind should not be suffered by the candidates. A wrong key in a competitive examination affects ranking and eligibility, since the marks awarded on the basis of the key determine a candidate's merit position and whether the candidate crosses the qualifying cut-off, and even a single mark may decide whether a candidate is considered. However, this Court will neither substitute its own view nor fix the answer key itself. The

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proper course is to have the experts determine the matter afresh.

10. For the said reasons, I am of the view that the four questions bearing Question IDs 4818042982, 4818042962, 4818048438 and 481804978, should be referred to the respective subject experts for determination.

11. For the said reasons, the petitions are disposed of, referring the aforesaid four questions to subject experts. The petition is treated as a representation, and it is directed that the expert committee shall look into the petitions, hear the petitioners and pass a speaking order within 3 weeks from today.

12. The petition, along with any pending applications, is disposed of.

JASMEET SINGH, J

NOVEMBER 5, 2026/AS

(Corrected and released on 06.11.2026)