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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**
+ **W.P.(C) 1981/2026**
AYAAN CHOPRAPetitioner

Through: Mr. Kishore, Adv.
(Appearance not given)

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ANR.Respondents

Through: Mr. Shekhar Kumar SPC with Mr.
Vivek Nagar, GP, for R1
Mr. Sanjay Khanna SC, Ms. Pragya Bhushan, Ms.
Vilakshana Dayma, Ms. Anshu Kumari, Mr.
Saurabh Pandey, Advs. for NTA

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JASMEET SINGH

ORDER

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23.03.2026

1. This is a writ petition filed under Article 226 of the Constitution of India seeking the following prayers:

“a. Issue an appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondents not to count the Petitioner’s attempt at the JEE Main – 2026 Session 1 Examination on 28.1.2026 and to treat the same as non-est;

b. Issue an appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondents to permit the Petitioner to take an additional attempt at the JEE Main – 2026 during the Session – 2 Examination to be held in April, 2026.

c. Issue an appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondents to treat the Petitioner as a verified candidate for the JEE Main -2026 Session 2 Examination to be held in April, 2026 and to ensure that the Petitioner is not made to



suffer any procedural impediment or delay on account of his being treated as a non-verified candidate ...”

2. The brief facts of the case are that the petitioner applied for JEE (Main) 2026 and opted for DigiLocker-based identity verification (non-Aadhaar mode), for which he was issued a provisional admit card.
3. The case of the petitioner is that the scheduled time for reporting at the exam centre was 1:00 PM but the petitioner reported well in advance at 11:45 AM and no identity verification was done prior to that stage.
4. At the entry of the examination building of the centre, the petitioner was subjected to bio-metric procedures and a handwritten endorsement of “Not Verified” was made on his admit card.
5. Pursuant thereto, before the commencement of the examination, the petitioner was required to sign a declaration stating that the candidature of the petitioner was subject to verification and could be cancelled.
6. Even while answering the questions, the petitioner was interrupted by the staff/invigilators to ask for the signatures of the petitioner and other details on the declaration signed by him. It is for this reason of uncertainty regarding his candidature that resulted in a mentally stressed state for the petitioner and consequently he was not able to attempt the exam under normal conditions. Hence, the present petition has been filed.
7. Mr. Kishore, learned counsel for the petitioner, states that due to the endorsement “Not Verified”, the signing of the declaration and interruption during the exam, the petitioner was not in a complete stress-free mental state to participate in the examination. He further relies on an Order dated 27.01.2026, passed by this Court in **W.P.(C) 981/2026** titled as ***Shlok Bhardwaj v. Union of India*** to support his arguments.



8. In the present case, the counter affidavit filed by the respondent No. 2 is important and paragraph Nos. 8, 13, 14 and 15 of the same read as under:

“8. It is submitted that the Respondent No. 2 sent a link through bulk email to all the candidates, including the petitioner through NIC server who have registered using identity proof documents other than the Aadhaar Card and those whose live photographs captured during the application process did not match with the photographs as per records available with UIDAI were required to upload a signed and attested certificate duly certified by their School/College Principal or Headmaster/ Class-I Gazetted Officer such as Tehsildar, Revenue Officer, SDM, DM I Class-I Gazetted Officer of the Indian Embassy (for NRI candidates). Additionally, a printed copy for the same was required to be produced at the examination centre for physical verification on the day of the examination. As claimed in the petition that the Petitioner did not receive any e-mail from Respondent No. 2 regarding the link sent by Respondent No. 2 and allegedly became aware of the requirement of the certificate upon checking the official website of the Respondent, it is submitted that Respondent No. 2 had clearly mentioned in the Public Notice dated 02 January 2026 that in case any candidate faces difficulty regarding uploading a signed and attested certificate, he/she may contact the Respondent through the telephone numbers or e-mail addresses mentioned in the said notice. It is submitted that Respondent No. 2 never received any call or grievance from



the Petitioner in this regard.

It is further submitted that the Petitioner submitted an attested copy of the certificate duly certified by the Vice-Principal of the school, despite the fact that it was clearly mentioned in the e-mail as well as in the Public Notice dated 02 January 2026 that the certificate should be certified by the School/College Principal or Headmaster or a Class-I Gazetted Officer such as a Tehsildar, Revenue Officer, SDM, DM, or a Class-I Gazetted Officer of the Indian Embassy (for NRI candidates). It is further submitted that Respondent No. 2 allowed the Petitioner to appear in the JEE (Main) 2026 Session 1 examination despite being aware that the Petitioner's certificate had not been certified by the School Principal or Headmaster.

The Petitioner registered himself for the JEE (Main) 2026 examination through Digi Locker and his photograph was not verified. The Respondent No. 2 forwarded the certificate to approximately 1,25,000 such candidates out of a total of 13,63,900 candidates whose live photographs captured during the application process did not match with the photographs available as per the records of UIDAI.

It is further submitted that on 28 January 2026, Respondent No. 2 conducted the trials of face authentication of all the candidates appearing for JEE (Main), Session-I Examination for verifying that the genuine candidates are reporting at the examination centre. This was followed by Aadhar Biometric verification also.



A true copy of the Public Notice dated 02.01.2026 is annexed herewith as Annexure R-2/2.

13. The Petitioner registered himself for the JEE (Main) 2026 examination through Digi Locker. Thus, the bio metric of the petitioner did not match with records of the UIDAI, consequently, the concerned examination functionary accordingly recorded the remark "Not Verified" on the admit card. Thereafter, upon due verification of the Petitioner's identity by the exam functionaries, the biometric authentication was conducted at the registration desk of the CBT lab. Pursuant thereto, the Petitioner's status was marked as "Verified" and a seat was accordingly allotted to him. The Petitioner was seated at his assigned seat at 1:52:50 p.m.

14. It is submitted that Respondent No. 2 obtained the declaration forms from those candidates who had not registered through Aadhaar or whose live photographs in the application form did not match during face authentication at the time of entry into the Examination Centre. The said declaration was obtained to ensure that only a genuine candidate is appearing for the examination.

15. The statement of the petitioner is wrong and denied. In order to complete the examination formalities, the exam functionary approached the Petitioner for a very short duration i.e. for few seconds. Through this process, the invigilator randomly verifies the identity of the candidate by entering the candidate's details and capturing a photograph



through the device without disturbing the candidate to ensure that the candidate seated at the allotted seat is indeed the same candidate to whom the said seat has been allotted before the start of the exam. It is submitted that there were no issues at the end of Respondent No. 2 related to the petitioner's verification. The petitioner commenced his examination at 15:00:18 without facing any issue. The petitioner viewed all 75 questions, answered 49 questions and finally submitted the examination at 18:00:18.

A true copy of the Audit Log of the Petitioner is annexed herewith as Annexure R -2/3."

9. From a perusal of the counter affidavit it is clear that the Certificate required as per the public notice dated 02.01.2026, was to be certified by the school/college principal or headmaster or Class-I Gazetted Officer and the same was not so provided by the petitioner. The petitioner had, in fact, submitted and attested copy of the certificate duly certified by the Vice Principal of his school. Hence, the endorsement "Not Verified" was put on petitioner's Admit Card.

10. However, it is also stated that subsequently the bio-metrics of the petitioner were matched and the status "Verified" was duly endorsed on petitioner's Admit Card and he was assigned his seat at 1:52:50 PM (examination commenced at 3:00 PM).

11. As regards the declaration is concerned, the writ petition along with the counter affidavit clearly shows that the declaration was filled prior to the starting of the examination and the petitioner was seated at 1:52 PM.

12. As regards the third objection, from the counter affidavit it appears that



the invigilator randomly verified the identity of the candidates by entering candidates details and capturing a photograph through a device.

13. The same is a procedural requirement and from a perusal of the facts as narrated above it cannot be said that there existed any procedural uncertainty which undermined the mental equilibrium of the petitioner or subjected the petitioner to mental stress.

14. From the counter affidavit, it is clear that the petitioner viewed all 75 questions, answered 49 questions and was completing his paper from 15:00:18 to 18:00:18.

15. In view of the aforesaid findings, I am not inclined to entertain the said petition and accordingly the present petition is dismissed.

JASMEET SINGH, J

MARCH 23, 2026/AS