

News

Rajasthan High Court denies appeal against 'malicious' question on Ayodhya verdict in LL.B. exam paper



According to the petitioner, a law paper's chapter about the Supreme Court's ruling in the Ayodhya case contained offensive language.

A first-year law student filed a writ case to get an allegedly biased and divisive subject about the Ayodhya dispute removed from an LL.B. test paper, but the Rajasthan High Court recently dismissed it. (**State of Rajasthan v. Anuj Kumar Rawat**)

In the absence of intentional and malevolent intent, **Justice Anoop Kumar Dhand** ruled that scholarly criticism of a court decision—even one that deals with delicate subjects—cannot be equated with an attack on religion.

According to the Court, *"it is not legally sustainable or tenable to challenge a portion of a*

question paper based only on the grounds that it hurts religious sentiments under Section 295A IPC, unless it is established that the content was included...with deliberate and malicious intent to outrage religious feelings."

Anuj Kumar Kumawat, the petitioner, is a first-year student at Jaipur's Mahavir Law College. He had contested the content of a question in the August 12, 2024, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Law University exam in Legal Language, Legal Writing, and General English.

According to Kumawat, the aforementioned sentence contained offensive comments on the ruling of the Supreme Court in the Ayodhya Ram Janmabhoomi–Babri Masjid case. He claimed that it was discriminatory, offended religious feelings, and in violation of Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code and Article 25 of the Constitution.

He requested, among other things, that the University take serious action against the examiner, remove such content, and apologize publicly.

The Court, however, emphasized the importance of preserving academic freedom and rejected the petition.

"Unless there is a clear violation of the law or the language used is contemptuous, offensive, or defamatory, academic freedom and the autonomy of educational institutions should not be restricted and compromised merely because subjective language is said to have hurt sentiments."

Justice Dhand further noted that none of the other students who took the test had objected to the material.

The ruling continues by emphasizing that the Constitution safeguards reasonable and impartial criticism of court decisions.

The Court stated that a student, teacher, or scholar's personal or academic opinion on a court decision—even one that deals with delicate subjects—cannot be equated with a religious attack. Instead, it should be seen as *"a positive and constructive exercise in legal reasoning and critical analysis."*

The Court came to the conclusion that logic, not emotion, must guide the application of the law.

The Court dismissed the petition and all other pending applications, concluding that it was misconceived.

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