

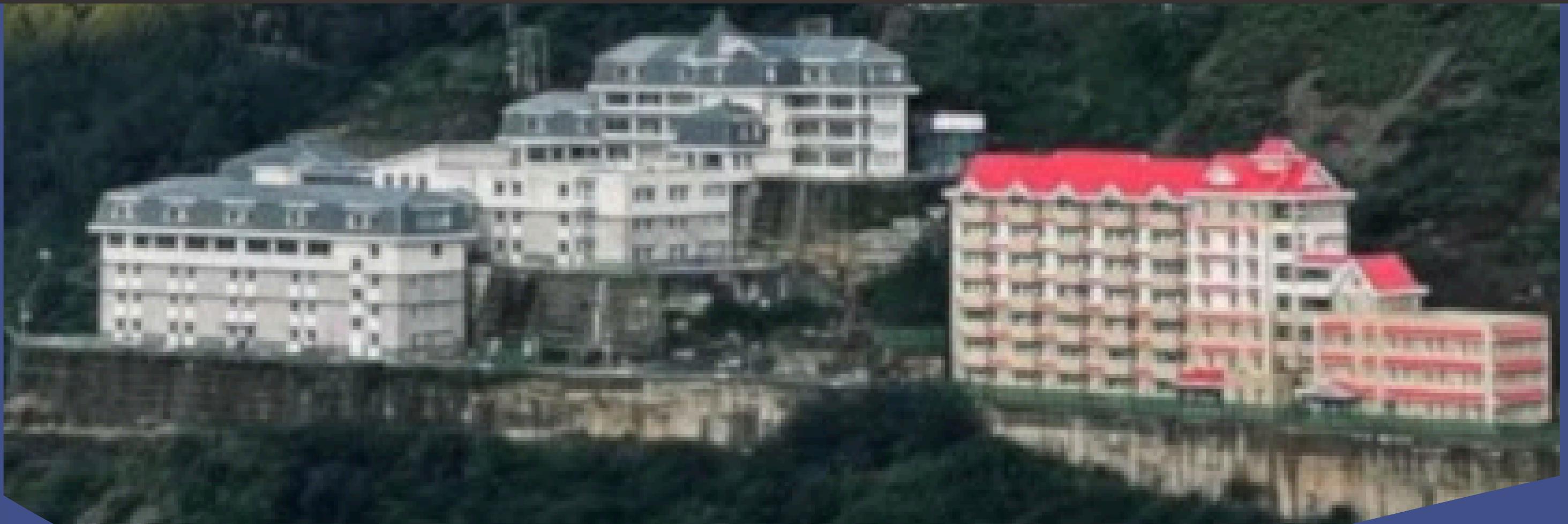


— 6th HPNLU — NATIONAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION 2025-2026

*In Collaboration with National Human Rights
Commission*

26TH - 27TH MARCH

Preliminary Rounds- 17th -19th March, 2026



BROCHURE

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ABOUT HPNLU

Himachal Pradesh National Law University (HPNLU, Shimla) was established by the State Government in the year 2016 by an Act of the Legislature (Act 16 of 2016). The University started functioning on the 5th of October 2016.

Located in the geographical terrains of the Himalayas, HPNLU, Shimla, offers a conducive atmosphere for academics, research, and extra-curricular engagements. The University runs two undergraduate courses: B.A. LL.B. Hons., Five-Year Integrated Course (FYIC), and B.B.A. LL.B. Hons. (FYIC); and One Year LL.M. Programme. The University also offers a Ph.D. Programme and Post-Doctoral Programme (LL.D.) in Law.

Presently, the University has about 750 students admitted to various courses. Under the visionary leadership of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Priti Saxena, the team is not only working laboriously and diligently but feels motivated to make palpable endeavours in academics and research.

The University has proactively organized events ranging from legal to social, curricular to extracurricular, and more. The cultural evenings, mooting competitions, seminars, webinars, and National and International Conferences have adorned the documentary and historical assemblage of HPNLU from time to time. Despite being in its growing stage, HPNLU has solidified its footing in academics by serving the society and the nation as a whole.

ABOUT NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India is an independent statutory body established under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, mandated to protect, promote, and enforce the constitutional and internationally recognised rights of individuals within the territory of India.

As an apex human rights institution, the NHRC functions as a watchdog over the State, monitoring compliance with fundamental rights guaranteed under Part III of the Constitution and obligations arising from India's participation in international human rights treaties. Empowered to inquire suo motu or upon petition into violations by public authorities, recommend reparative measures, intervene in court proceedings, and advise the Government on policy reform, the NHRC operates as a bridge between citizens and the State in the pursuit of accountable governance.

Its institutional mandate reflects India's commitment to democratic values, transparency, and the rule of law, positioning the NHRC as a cornerstone of the country's human rights enforcement architecture. In furtherance of its objective to strengthen human rights literacy and cultivate a culture of rights-based legal advocacy among future practitioners, the NHRC has expressed its decision to collaborate with Himachal Pradesh National Law University (HPNLU), Shimla, for the organisation of the National Human Rights Moot Court Competition, thereby integrating academic discourse with practical engagement and fostering a platform for students to interrogate contemporary human rights concerns through simulated adjudicatory processes.

OUR KNOWLEDGE AND MEDIA PARTNERS

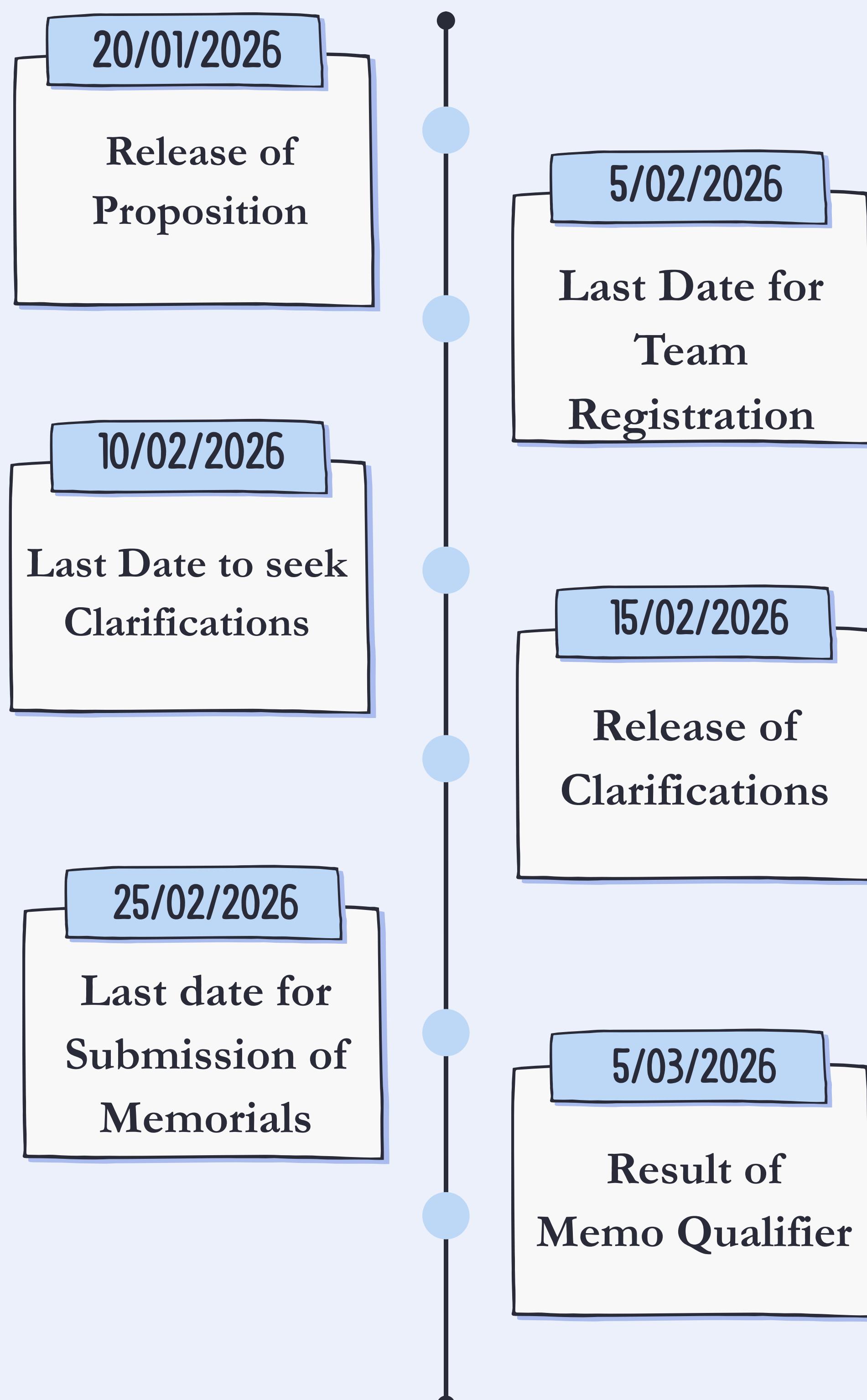


Manupatra is a leading legal research platform in India, extensively relied upon by courts, law firms, academic institutions, and legal professionals. It offers a structured and comprehensive database of Indian and international case law, statutes, rules, regulations, and secondary legal materials, enabling precise and reliable legal research. In addition to its research services, Manupatra Academy contributes to legal education by offering curated courses, certification programmes, and skill-oriented training modules for law students and practitioners. As the Official Knowledge Partner for the HPNLU National Moot Court Competition 2026, Manupatra's association complements the competition's focus on rigorous legal research, analytical clarity, and the development of strong advocacy skills.

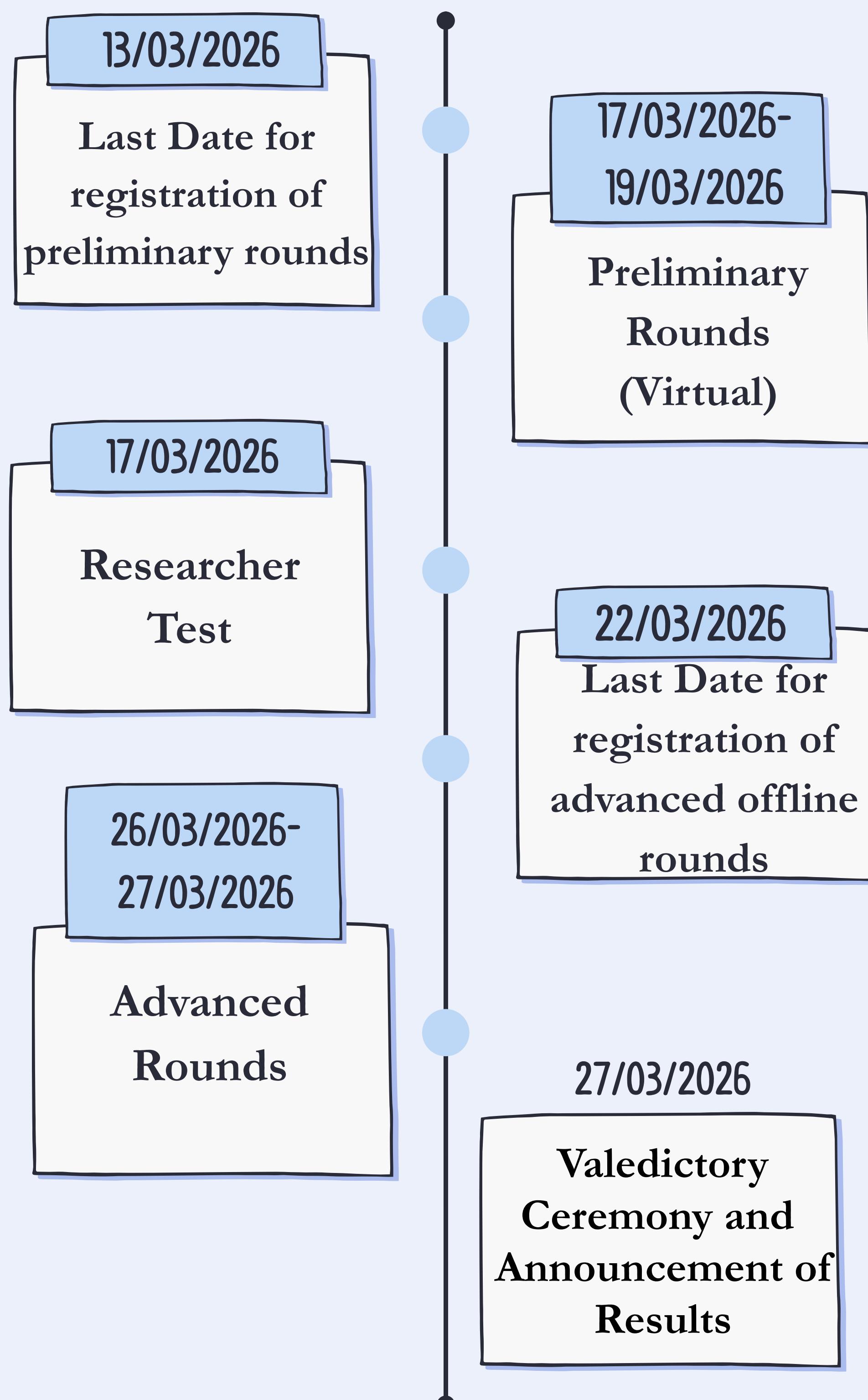


Lawctopus, started in 2010, is India's leading online media and education portal for law students and young lawyers. The media vertical, Lawctopus.com, reaches nearly 4 lakh readers every month. The ed-tech vertical, Lawctopus Law School (LLS), teaches over 3,000 learners every month. With a rating of 93.2/100, LLS's practical, online courses teach skills such as legal research, contract drafting, IP law, and more. On the media site, content such as law-related conferences, workshops, internships, jobs, and career advisory pieces and blogs make Lawctopus a young Lawyer's go-to friend and guide! A true guide and mentor to the next generation of lawyers, Lawctopus brings unparalleled value to this competition.

EVENT TIMELINE



EVENT TIMELINE



MOOT PROPOSITION

Background

1. The Republic of Indica is a sovereign, democratic, secular state governed by its Constitution. Among its foundational guarantees are fundamental rights and Human Rights, including freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a). These rights are, however, subject to restrictions under Article 19(2), permitting regulation in the interests of sovereignty and integrity of Indica, security of the State, public order, decency, morality, etc. Additionally, Article 21 protects the right to life and personal liberty, interpreted by courts to include dignity, mental health, and bodily autonomy.
2. In 2023, Indica replaced its old penal statute with the Indica Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (INS). Among its many reforms, INS introduced Section 152, which proscribes acts committed “purposely or knowingly” that excite or attempt to excite secession, armed rebellion, subversive activities; it also punishes any encouragement of separatist sentiment or other acts endangering the sovereignty, unity, or integrity of Indica. The statute contemplates all means of expression including written, spoken, signs, visible representation, electronic communications, use of financial means, or otherwise. In parallel, Section 226 criminalizes attempted suicide when committed with the intent to compel or restrain a public servant from performing a lawful duty.
3. The passage of these provisions stirred heated debates. Civil liberties groups argue Section 152 is overly broad and vague, and its elements like “subversive activity”, “encourages feelings of separatist activity”, or “endangers sovereignty” are undefined or imprecise. The government defends it as necessary in an era of hybrid threats, propaganda and online radicalization, especially in sensitive border regions. A recent Government White Paper claims there have been “17 incidents since 2022 of foreign-funded social media campaigns encouraging separatism in border districts,” which has increased pressure on authorities to use Section 152..

MOOT PROPOSITION

4. In a parallel development, the Indica Information Technology Act, 2000, remains in force in Indica, empowering the government and law enforcement to monitor, block, and take action against online activity deemed to threaten public order or national security. Notably, Section 66F (Cyber Terrorism), Section 69A (Blocking Orders), and Section 72 (Breach of Confidentiality) have frequently been invoked in sensitive political cases involving online dissent.
5. Mr. Rivan Kaul – 28-year-old independent journalist, formerly with a small regional daily, now runs an investigative journalism podcast and active social media presence. Based in Himgtala, which borders a region with active insurgent claims.
6. Ms. Rina Arora – IAS officer, District Commissioner (DC) of Himgtala, viewed by many locals as efficient but also controversial for implementing strict security protocols following insurgent attacks in nearby border zones.
7. Mr. Sameer Rana – local tribal leader and community organizer in Himgtala, who alleges his tribe suffered collateral damage during Operation Kumkum. He acts as an intervener in the case, claiming the Operation led to displacement, destruction of homes, and loss of livelihood.
8. Mrs. Asha Malik – Mental health activist and member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), who raises issues about the rights of persons who attempt self-harm, the duty of the State to provide mental health support, and proportionality of punishment under criminal law.
9. Ministry of Internal Security (MIS) – central government agency defending the use of Section 152 and 226, citing threat assessments, need to preserve national unity, and preventing chaos in sensitive border districts.

MOOT PROPOSITION

10. Himtala Police Commissionerate – local authorities who carried out the arrest of Mr. Kaul; they act under instructions from MIS but also claim they acted on independent intelligence reports.

Unfolding of Events and Factual Matrix

11. In late 2024, Indica's border state of Himtala witnessed an increase in cross-border insurgent activity and alleged drone intrusions from neighboring territories. Intelligence reports suggested that a coalition of anti-national groups, aided by foreign handlers, had established a covert operational base in the Ruhmal Valley, an ethnically diverse region with historical tribal autonomy claims.

12. On 14 February 2025, the Indican Armed Forces launched Operation Kumkum, a cross-border strike in a remote mountainous area claimed to harbour insurgents. The operation was shrouded in secrecy; the government briefed that intelligence suggested imminent threat. The official government communiqué described the operation as a “strategic success”, claiming that several key operatives were neutralized, and weapons caches were recovered. The Ministry called it "a preemptive and necessary strike to protect national security and territorial integrity.

13. However, local accounts began emerging shortly after, contradicting the official narrative. Eyewitnesses, tribal leaders, and humanitarian groups alleged that entire villages were razed, civilian populations displaced, and dozens of non-combatants killed. Drone footage and testimonies suggested indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombardment in areas not confirmed to house insurgents. Locals claim that no warning was given and that civilians were caught in crossfire. Mr. Rivan Kaul is a 28-year-old independent journalist, formerly with a small regional daily, now runs an investigative journalism podcast and active social media presence

MOOT PROPOSITION

14. Mr. Sameer Rana is a local tribal leader and community organizer in Himtala, who alleges his tribe suffered collateral damage during Operation Kumkum. He acts as an intervener in the case, claiming the Operation led to displacement, destruction of homes, and loss of livelihood. Mr. Sameer Rana, records drone-footage of smoke rising from villages, which he shares with Mr. Kaul. Mr. Kaul posts a thread on Xpress on 17 February alleging that Operation Kumkum was not merely a security operation but “a political media ploy” orchestrated to divert attention from governmental failures in healthcare and agriculture in border districts.
15. In his posts, Mr. Kaul not only accuses the government of civilian casualties but also quotes unnamed sources who claimed the operation violated protocols under international humanitarian law. He also appeals for solidarity of tribal communities. The thread ends with a symbolic photo of burnt huts and children fleeing, images provided to him by a local NGO.
16. The government responds with a press release denying any wrongdoing, stating that the drone footage is misleading, that the locals’ claims are exaggerated, and that Mr. Kaul is spreading disinformation. MIS also releases an intelligence alert that foreign agents might have interfered via social media to amplify dissent. Amid public tension, protests break out in Himtala on 20 February 2025.
17. During a protest outside the District Commissioner’s office, Mr. Kaul announces he will perform a dramatic act to draw the administration’s attention. He attempts to self-immolate in front of Ms. Rina Arora, holding a placard saying: “Truth burned by bullets”. Passersby and journalists record live video. Police intervene, but not before minor burn injuries and emotional trauma are inflicted. After rescue, Mr. Kaul is hospitalised. His speech at the protest is both filmed and streamed.

MOOT PROPOSITION

18. Concurrently, the Himtala Police Commissioner releases a leaked intelligence dossier to media claiming Mr. Kaul had prior contacts with separatist groups in neighbouring states, and that some foreign funding to NGOs in the region is linked to anti-national propaganda. The dossier's veracity is disputed; no court has yet established evidence.
19. The next day, Mr. Kaul is arrested under Section 152 (for the social media posts, plus alleged encouragement of separatist feelings) and Section 226 (for attempt to compel public servant by attempted self-immolation). He is remanded in custody. Mrs. Asha Malik and the NHRC intervene, raising concerns about his mental health, the legality of arrest before proper medical examination, the proportionality of punishment, and the right to fair trial.
20. Mr. Kaul files a writ petition under Article 226 in the High Court of Himtala, seeking: Quashing of the FIR under the relevant sections of the INS, Interim release on bail citing risk to health, ultimate suppression of free speech, Declaration that certain portions of Section 152 are unconstitutionally vague or violative of Article 19.
21. The High Court, after hearing arguments, refuses to quash the FIR. The Court holds there is *prima facie* a case under Section 152, citing the social media posts, the drone footage, and the alleged contacts. It also denies interim bail, though assigns medical check-ups, citing custodial facility. Concerning Section 226, the High Court expresses concern that an attempt to self-harm intended to pressure a public servant might be covered under that section, but signals that more evidence is needed.
22. Mr. Kaul then petitions the Supreme Court of Indica challenging the constitutional validity of Section 152—arguing it's overbroad, vague, chilling effect on speech, misuse by executive branch, lack of requirement of incitement or likelihood of harm.

MOOT PROPOSITION

1. Whether Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 is unconstitutional as violative of Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution and vague in its scope and application?
2. Whether Mr. Kaul's social media posts fall within the protected ambit of free speech or amount to subversive activity under Section 152 of BNS?
3. Whether Mr. Kaul's act of attempted self-immolation constitutes an offence under Section 226 of the BNS or amounts to a form of constitutionally protected protest?
4. Whether the invocation of Section 66F (Cyber Terrorism), 69A (Blocking), and Section 72 (Breach of Confidentiality) of the IT Act, 2000, against Mr. Kaul was legally justified and proportionate?
5. Whether the blocking orders under Section 69A of the IT Act violated Mr. Kaul's rights under Article 19(1)(a)?

Notes

1. All laws in force in the Republic of Indica shall be deemed to be pari materia with the corresponding laws of the Republic of India, unless expressly stated otherwise. This includes, *inter alia*, the Constitution of Indica with the Constitution of India; the Indica Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023; and the Indica Information Technology Act, 2000 with the Information Technology Act, 2000, along with the judicial interpretations thereof.
2. The Republic of Indica is a signatory to and bound by all international conventions and human rights instruments that are pari materia with those ratified by India, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

- Registration for the Competition shall be completed only through the Registration & Payment Link provided below.
- There shall be no fee for the submission of memorials for the Memorial Qualification Stage.
- Teams qualifying for the Oral Rounds shall be required to pay the applicable registration fees as per the stage of the competition.
- All submissions shall be made only through the designated Submission Link, which shall be activated post-registration.
- Submissions after the stipulated deadline shall not be considered.
- Registration once completed is non-refundable.

REGISTRATION FEES

- Preliminary Rounds (Online): INR 2,000/- per team (Rupees Two Thousand Only)
- Advanced Rounds (Offline – Quarter Finals onwards): INR 4,000/- per team (Rupees Four Thousand Only)

STRUCTURE OF THE COMPETITION

The Competition shall be conducted in the following stages:

- Memorial Qualification Stage [Selection of the Top Thirty-Two (32)]
- Preliminary Rounds I & II (Online)
- Quarter-Final Rounds (Offline)
- Semi-Final Rounds (Offline)
- Final Round (Offline)

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The fee for the Preliminary Rounds shall be payable only upon qualification from the Memorial Rounds.
- The fee for the Advanced Rounds shall be payable by teams qualifying for the Quarter-Finals and subsequent rounds.
- Failure to complete fee payment within the stipulated time may result in disqualification.

REGISTRATION LINK

MEMORIAL SUBMISSION LINK

PRIZE POOL

TEAM AWARDS

- **WINNER:** Cash Prize of INR 60,000/- (Rupees Sixty Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.
- **1st RUNNER-UP TEAM:** Cash Prize of INR 40,000/- (Rupees Forty Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.
- **BEST TEAM – PETITIONER:** Cash Prize of INR 15,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.
- **BEST TEAM– RESPONDENTS:** Cash Prize of INR 15,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.



INDIVIDUAL AWARDS



- **BEST ORATOR (MALE):** Cash Prize of INR 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.
- **BEST ORATOR (FEMALE):** Cash Prize of INR 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.
- **BEST RESEARCHER:** Cash Prize of INR 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only) + Certificate of Excellence.

PRIZE POOL



Additional Awards for Winners and Participants

- One free Manupatra Academy course of choice for the winning team.
- A 75% discount on any one Manupatra Academy course for the runner-up team.
- A 50% discount on any one Manupatra Academy course for the team placed third.
- 10% scholarship code to all event participants for all Law Octopus Courses.
- Additionally, all other participants can avail a 15% discount on any one course from Manupatra Academy

ORGANISING TEAM

Patron- in- Chief

**Hon'ble Mr. Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia, Chief Justice,
High Court of Himachal Pradesh & Chancellor, HPNLU,
Shimla**

Patron

**Prof. (Dr.) Priti Saxena
Vice-Chancellor, HPNLU, Shimla**

**Faculty
Convenor
Dr. Shaifali Dixit
(Faculty Chairperson,
MCC, HPNLU)**

Faculty coordinators

**Faculty
Coordinator
Dr. Chandrika
(Faculty Convenor,
MCC, HPNLU)**

**Faculty
Co-Coordinator
Dr. Rohit Sharma
(Faculty Coordinator,
MCC, HPNLU)**

ORGANISING TEAM

All Queries must be directed at
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SOCIAL MEDIA
HEAD
PURAB SHARMA

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dakshaini Gupta

Karthi Thiagarajan

Shivam Kapoor

Lavisha Goswami

Sneha Sharma

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