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CLAT LLM Advice: Interview With Zainab Lokhandwala, AIR 2, CLAT LLM 2014

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First published on June 12, 2014! But some advice is timeless.

Ryan Wilson interviewed Zainab Lokhandwala about her CLAT LLM preparation journey. Zainab is a graduate of ILS, Pune.

RW: What was your first reaction to the CLAT LLM results this year? Did the recall of the CLAT LLM results this year make you anxious?

Zainab: The CLAT results were released very late at night on the 31st and I had slept off by then. I saw my result the next day early morning and was pretty startled by it.

The result was available on the individual login account and a part of me was waiting for the consolidated merit list to be released just in order to be doubly sure. I definitely did not expect it.

The recall didn't make me anxious really, just a little disappointed. **When one is organising an examination that means so much to thousands of students it's rather lamentable when such a huge blunder occurs.** It reflects on the general competency of the institution and organisation committee.

RW: Share your views on this year's CLAT LLM paper.

Zainab: I liked the way this year's paper was set. **The MCQ section which was worth 50 marks was a good blend of practically everything one has learnt in the 3/5 years of the LLB course.**

From contracts, torts, family and crimes to company, labour and environment: everything was there. It also entailed a fine mix of substantive and procedural law questions. Some questions were devoted to recent legal developments like the Companies Act, 2013 which tested one's legal awareness.

The long answer questions were based only on basics. A strong foundation of basic concepts of law was all one needed to sail through this section.

Long answer questions dealt with judicial review, nature and types of rights, sovereign immunity and the nature of ownership and possession of property. This section was worth 100 marks.

RW: What was your preparation strategy and routine study period for CLAT '14?

Zainab: I have to say honestly I barely studied for the CLAT, in fact I didn't even get hold of previous year papers.

Ironically, I did see them after the CLAT LLM examination and only came to realise there is no way one can study for the post-grad CLAT overnight or even in a month or two.

This is because the paper has everything from the 3/5 years course and thus even though a little brushing might help, the CLAT is essentially a test of all that one already knows and not what one studies.



Zainab

RW: Did you find any sections in the paper, tough?

Zainab: No, not really. Like I said long answers were all about basics of constitutional law, property law and jurisprudence, thus every law student has to have learnt these things.

RW: What are your immediate and long term career plans?

Zainab: I want to take up a litigation career in environmental law. Environmental law is fascinating and challenging and while at ILS Law College, I have done a lot of work in that sphere. Regarding my short term plans: I am skimming through several options presently.

I appeared for a couple of interviews at litigation offices in Delhi and Kolkata (my hometown). I have been selected for an environmental law research fellowship and now can also do LLM.

Sadly though, the top law colleges in India do not offer an environmental law LLM. NLSIU being the most reputed law school in the country has only 2 LLM programs. Thus, it is possible I might not use my CLAT rank at all.

RW: Could you suggest reforms CLAT could introduce/work on, while making next years' paper.

Zainab: I truly liked the paper this year. I do not have any grievances regarding the topics covered in the paper.

However, I personally believe that it helps when short answers worth 10-15 marks are a better test of calibre than only 4 long answer questions worth 25 marks each.

Twenty-five marks is huge for one question in a competitive examination. This is because a candidate might be really good but may not be well-versed with any one long answer question, which would result in a substantial loss.