AILET

# Interview of CLAT (273) and AILET (87) PG Topper Faiz Ayat Ansari: Blueprint for CLAT Preparation

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*He secured AIRs of 273 and 87 in the CLAT and AILET examinations respectively in 2018 for LL.M entrance. Faiz has recently authored a book titled 'Law and Justice in the Era of Globalization'*

### Why did you decide to pursue law?

Well, to be honest, law was not the first career choice which I had initially thought of, nor was it the second! I initially wanted to play cricket for India and my second career choice was to be a medical professional.

Therefore, I opted for the science stream in my 12th standard. I had taken the AIPMT examination at that point of time for medical entrance.  Based on my merit in the general category, I was being offered admission in the dental field. I wasn't too much interested in that field.

So you can say that this was the pre-law period in my life. Though not expressly as a career choice, I always had a liking for law throughout my school days as well. I was good at public speaking and had a liking to express my views to the public at large. This liking was more or less an implied one and I hadn't yet realized that I could pursue a career in law.

The credit for making me realize this actually goes to my mother who one fine day, out of the blue, asked me *'Why don't you pursue a career in law?'* when I was wondering whether I should give the medical field another try or not. That is what was actually the triggering point of me opting to

pursue a career in law.  And I am extremely happy till date that I made the decision at that point of time.

In fact, I did not know that there are so many career avenues within law itself and it is such a dynamic career option.  I was probably only aware of the career options which a layman in India knows about law i.e litigation and to an extent judiciary.  Once I entered into the field of law, I got to know about the whole lot of career options which one can pursue and the dynamics of law.

### Walk us through your CLAT Preparation. How did you prepare for each subject?

So, from the preparation and the strategic point of view for the CLAT PG entrance exam, it is quite simple. In fact, I would opine that one should keep it simple and not unnecessarily complicate things while preparing for CLAT PG entrance exam.

The subjects involved in the CLAT PG entrance test are not alien ones for a law student. All the subjects are core subjects as prescribed by the Bar Council of India and it is not possible for a law student to not have studied any of the subjects at some point of time in their law graduation.

With respect to the preparation, one thing one should always keep in mind is that which are the subjects one is really good at and which are the subjects one is not really good at. I personally believe that the subject in which you are not at all good, you will not be extremely good in that subject in a short span of time.

This ideology leads to my personal strategy that you should maximize your strong points and minimize your weak points. This essentially means that if you are not good in ‘X’ law subject, you should not focus all your energy or most of your energy on ‘X’ subject.

Instead, you should just work towards having a decent knowledge of ‘X’ subject in which you are weak and then leave it at that. Instead, most of your time and energy should be dedicated to the subject in which you are strong and your primary aim should be to absolutely maximize your benefits in that subject.

### Did you take coaching for preparation? How important are coaching institutes for CLAT prep?

I did not take any coaching for appearing for the CLAT PG examination. It was all self-study when it comes to my preparation.

Coming to your second question, the answer to this is a very subjective one.

If you feel that you are organized enough and you have fairly studied the various law subjects during your 3 years or 5 years of law course, then I don't believe that you require any sort of coaching to appear for the CLAT PG examination.

However, if you are someone who likes someone else to set a bit of a roadmap for you and plan a little then there is no harm in taking coaching for the CLAT PG examination. This way you will be able to revise all the subjects in a structured manner. This does not, however, mean that taking coaching is absolutely necessary for appearing for CLAT PG examination.

### Which books/ resources did you use for your preparation?

I primarily referred to the CLAT LL.M. entrance book by Universal as well as the UGC NET law book by the same publisher. These books comprehensively cover most of the subjects which are required to be studied for CLAT PG entrance examination.

The one subject which I believe was not adequately covered in these entrance books is Jurisprudence. So, for jurisprudence, I referred to **V D Mahajan's book** on Jurisprudence and Legal Theory.

### What is the ideal duration for CLAT preparation according to you?

CLAT PG is one such examination where you are not studying something absolutely new. It is something which you have already studied during the duration of your 3 or 5 years LLB course.

This essentially means that you do not have to devote an insane amount of time for preparing for CLAT PG examination. However, this is again a very subjective thing. If you believe that your basics are not clear enough, then you will have to devote more amount of time.

In case you belong to the category where you have not got your basics cleared for several law subjects, then you probably need to start preparing for the CLAT PG examination by the month of September in order to appear for the exam in the month of May.

However, if you have got your basics sorted out, you may start off with your preparation around December or January and that will be sufficient enough to land you in a good National Law University for pursuing your LL.M.

### What is the importance of the college preference list?

Even though LL.M. is one such program where there is a lot of self-study involved, but I will not negate the importance of the college preference list. When you select your college preference list, a whole lot of factors come into the consideration like the specializations offered by the college, the placements offered, the faculties, the geographical location, the tuition fees, etc.

When it comes to CLAT PG, there is no absolutely perfect college preference list. It is the candidate who needs to figure out the best college for his or her own preferences and accordingly fill the college preference list.

### Did you take any other law entrance examination?

Yes, I did appear for AILET PG entrance examination which is conducted by National Law University, Delhi. I secured an **All India Rank of 87** in that examination and was also called for admission counselling for the same. However, I preferred the Gujarat National Law University.

### Walk us through your preparation for the same.

As far as the preparations for CLAT PG and AILET PG are concerned, there is not much of a difference between the two. CLAT tends to give more importance to subjects like Jurisprudence and Constitutional law whereas AILET is pretty much evenly spread out in various subjects.

Earlier there did not use to be any subjective part in the CLAT PG examination.

However, the decision of the Consortium of National Law Universities to include subjective part also in the CLAT PG examination is a very welcome step and this has almost diluted most of the differences which were there in the pattern of CLAT PG and AILET PG examinations.

### What was your reaction to your CLAT rank?

Well, the result was pretty much on expected lines so I wasn’t surprised much with my CLAT rank. Based on the feeling which I got after attempting the examination as well as after the declaration of the answer key, I was pretty much sure that I would be within the top 400 safely.

Even the AILET result was on the expected lines and I had a feeling that I would definitely make it to the top hundred in that particular entrance exam as well.

### Did you consider dropping a year? What is your thought on dropping a year for CLAT?

I wouldn't say that dropping a year in order to attempt CLAT PG examination is a wise option. The reason for this is something which I stated earlier that CLAT PG is not such an examination in which you are studying something new altogether which you have never studied earlier.

This means that ideally, a preparation of four to five months should be enough to find you a seat in a good National Law University for pursuing your LL.M. In case you really are targeting one particular law school in order to pursue your LL.M and happened not to get that law school based on your rank or your sole aim for appearing in CLAT PG is to land a job at a PSU which you could not crack in your first attempt, then what one can do is to pursue some job in a legal department of a company or join a law firm or join litigation and keep preparing for CLAT PG for the next year.

This way you will not drop a year altogether and at the same time gain some valuable work experience, which is never bad to have. However, it is a subjective thing and depends on the comfort and the personal ambitions which vary from individual to individual

### How is CLAT preparation different from other law entrance examination?

When it comes to LL.M. entrance examinations, there is a lot more uniformity among various entrance examinations as compared to the undergraduate law entrance examination patterns across different examinations.

This essentially means that you can prepare with an unambiguous mindset and prepare for one entrance examination in a good way and the same will be enough for you to appear for different LL.M. entrance examinations.

The usual core law subjects like Constitutional Law, Law of Contract, Law of Crimes, Jurisprudence, Law of Torts, International Law, Environmental Law, Intellectual Property Law, etc find a place in almost every LL.M. entrance examination in India and the same preparation would suffice for different examinations.

### What would be your subject-wise strategy for preparation if you were to take CLAT again?

There is a very popular English saying '***If it ain't broke, don't fix it***' and I believe in it. So, I would follow my tried and tested methodology of pursuing the preparation for any examination.

For the subjective part, in particular, I would keep a track of the contemporary legal events like some landmark judgment or some new legislation, as these are the popular type of questions generally asked.

For the preparation in general, I would first of all select one good book through which you can actually study all the subjects satisfactorily. I would divide the contents among the multiple-choice questions and the theory part. Then I would have a look at the amount of time which I have for preparing for that examination and the number of pages covered in that book for MCQs and theory.

So let's say if I start my preparation from the month of January for the CLAT PG examination which is usually scheduled in the second week of May. This means that I have got approximately 130 days in order to prepare myself for the examination.

Out of the 130 days, I would formulate a three-phase strategy, where phase one is from Day 1 to Day 60, phase two is from Day 61 to Day 100 and phase three is from Day 101 to Day 130. Phase one would be dedicated for going through the entire content of the book including theory as well as the MCQ part once in a comprehensive manner and I would also underline the points which I find a little difficult to understand or which may not be easy to remember.

I would refrain from underlining the part which is very easy or which I already know and it is almost impossible for me to actually forget it. This will be extremely useful when I actually start with the revision process. In phase two of the preparation, I would actually carry out the revision but this time I will double the number of pages which I had designated to myself in phase one.

This won't be an issue because in the revision I will not be going through each and every line which I had studied in phase one but I will be only going through the part which I have underlined. In the last ten days of phase two, along with the revision, I will also start solving a few old question papers. This part is only for getting used to the examination and your marks in this self-assessment should not really matter a lot and you should not take these marks extremely seriously.

The reason why I say so is that since one has already read from the entrance guide, there are chances that a lot of the questions which have been previously asked in previous CLAT PG entrance examinations have already been covered in the material which you have studied.

So, one should not be overconfident about it.  From the beginning of the third phase till one day before the examination, I would simply carry out the revision process without putting undue load on myself. With respect to the day before the examination, I would not at all be studying anything and be absolutely relaxed and just chill.

### Parting advice to law aspirants

Law is as dynamic as a career choice would get. However, in order to reap the maximum benefits, you should first of all respect yourself. You should not get carried away in a negative manner by what 'people' have to say.

If you yourself start thinking about what people have to say (negatively) about you, then what will be left for the people to think?! The one person who you need to understand the most in your life is yourself.

When you start the implementation of this attitude, unnecessary talks of irrelevant people don't bother you and you actually figure out the correct people with whom you would like to keep a bond much quicker. I personally call this the 'Theory of Irrelevance', where the thing which in no way is important for you finds itself in the irrelevant category *de facto*.

This may seem to be a fairly simple thing, but it is this thing where students or people in general struggle the most. Moreover, one also needs to respect one's body and not play around with the body clock.

Even though it's a subjective thing, but I believe in the good old theory whereby the day is meant for work and the night is for relaxing. So never make it a habit of compromising with your sleep for work or studies.

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