

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION NO. 9144 OF 2026

Shubham Vijay Mangire

... Petitioner

V/s.

The State of Maharashtra thr. The
Principal Secretary & Ors.

... Respondents

Mr. Sandeep Pathak, for the Petitioner.

Mr. Sameer Khedekar, with Ms. Mayuri Andhale, for Respondent No. 3.

Ms. Savina S. Crasto, AGP, for the Respondent – State.

CORAM : R.I. CHAGLA AND
FARHAN P. DUBASH, JJ.

RESERVED ON : 04th AUGUST 2026
PRONOUNCED ON : 14th AUGUST 2026

JUDGMENT : (Per Farhan P. Dubash, J.)

1. The present Writ Petition seeks, inter alia, a writ of mandamus directing Respondent No. 3 – State Common Entrance Test Cell (“**State CET Cell**”) to conduct an inquiry into the discrepancy between the scorecards of the Petitioner in respect of the MAH-MHT-CET 2026 (PCM Group) examination. The Petitioner also seeks a direction against Respondent No. 5 – University to quash and set aside the email communication dated 14th July 2026 (“**impugned communication**”), whereby his provisional admission came to be cancelled.
2. The Petitioner appeared for the MAH-MHT-CET 2026 examination on 16th April 2026 and thereafter for a second attempt on 19th May 2026. The results of the first and second attempts were declared on 15th June 2026 and 18th

June 2026, respectively. According to the scorecards initially relied upon by the Petitioner, he obtained the following scores:

<u>Subject Scores</u>	<u>First Attempt</u>	<u>Second Attempt</u>
<i>Physics</i>	<i>43.0961903</i>	<i>85.8444289</i>
<i>Chemistry</i>	<i>51.5891391</i>	<i>71.5043214</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>56.7177098</i>	<i>68.1095149</i>
Total Percentile	78.874707	73.5482364

3. On the basis of the aforesaid scores, the Petitioner is stated to have been granted provisional admission by Respondent No. 5 – University on 23rd June 2026 to the First Year of the B.Tech. Renewable Energy Engineering programme (Batch 2026–2030). Thereafter, sometime on or about 10th July 2026, the Petitioner was stated to have been telephonically informed by Respondent No. 5 – University that a discrepancy had been noticed in the scorecard submitted by him during the admission process and that, on that account, his provisional admission would be cancelled.
4. It is the Petitioner's case that, pursuant thereto, he once again downloaded the scorecards in respect of his first and second attempts from the portal of Respondent No. 3 – State CET Cell. According to the Petitioner, the scorecards then downloaded reflected the following different scores:

<u>Subject Scores</u>	<u>First Attempt</u>	<u>Second Attempt</u>
<i>Physics</i>	<i>43.0961903</i>	<i>85.8444289</i>
<i>Chemistry</i>	<i>51.5891391</i>	<i>11.5043214</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>2.7117098</i>	<i>4.6095149</i>
Total Percentile	7.8474707	13.5482364

5. Respondent No. 5 – University thereafter issued the impugned communication dated 14th July 2026 to the Petitioner, cancelling his provisional admission and referring the matter to its Legal Department for appropriate action.
6. Aggrieved thereby, the Petitioner approached this Court by filing the present Writ Petition on 17th July 2026. When the matter was taken up on the same day, this Court took note of the serious discrepancy between the aforesaid two sets of scorecards.
7. Having regard to the nature of the controversy and the submission advanced on behalf of the Petitioner that the discrepancy had occurred through no fault of his, we immediately directed Respondent No. 3 – State CET Cell to forthwith conduct an investigation and ascertain, inter alia, which of the two scorecards reflected the authentic marks obtained by the Petitioner and how the two sets of scorecards came to be issued and/or uploaded on the portal of Respondent No. 3. Having regard to the urgency of the matter, Respondent No. 3 was directed to complete the exercise expeditiously.
8. Pursuant thereto, Respondent No. 3 filed an investigation report dated 20th July 2026. However, the report only stated that the actual percentile obtained by the Petitioner was 7.8474707 in the first attempt and 13.5482364 in the second attempt. However, since the report did not adequately explain how the two sets of scorecards came to be issued and/or uploaded on the official portal of Respondent No. 3, this Court, by our further order dated 27th July 2026, directed Respondent No. 3 to file a Supplementary Report addressing the said aspect.
9. Pursuant to the said order, Respondent No. 3 submitted a Supplementary Report dated 29th July 2026 before us on 4th August 2026 (**“Supplementary Report”**). The Supplementary Report is comprehensive and is based upon

the official raw-score and percentile data maintained by the State CET Cell in respect of the relevant examination sessions, as also upon a comparison of such data with the scorecards relied upon by the Petitioner.

10. A perusal of the Supplementary Report leaves no manner of doubt that the actual overall percentile obtained by the Petitioner was 7.8474707 in the first attempt and 13.5482364 in the second attempt, and not 78.874707 and 73.5482364, respectively, as reflected in the scorecards initially relied upon by him.
11. The discrepancy is not merely one of a difference in the overall percentile. The Supplementary Report examines the subject-wise scores and the corresponding percentiles generated from the official examination data. Insofar as the first attempt is concerned, the percentile of 56.7177098 reflected against the subject of *Mathematics* in the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner does not correspond with the percentile data generated by the State CET Cell. The Supplementary Report records that candidates who obtained a raw score of 28 marks in *Mathematics* were awarded a percentile of 59.6891882, whereas candidates who obtained a raw score of 26 marks were awarded a percentile of 48.8283168. The Supplementary Report discloses that the percentile of 56.7177098 reflected in the Petitioner's scorecard was not awarded to any candidate in the relevant session.
12. This is a significant circumstance. A discrepancy of this nature cannot be characterised as a mere clerical or typographical error in the scorecard. The percentile is generated on the basis of the examination data and the performance of candidates in the relevant session. The fact that the particular percentile reflected in the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner was not awarded to any candidate in the relevant session substantially supports the conclusion of the State CET Cell that the said scorecard could not have been generated by it.

13. The position in respect of the second attempt is no different. The overall percentile of the Petitioner was 13.5482364 and not 73.5482364. The subject-wise data annexed to the Supplementary Report also demonstrates material discrepancies. In the subject *Mathematics*, candidates securing raw scores of 34 marks and 32 marks were awarded percentiles of 68.0915674 and 60.5193491, respectively. The percentile of 68.1095149 reflected in the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner, yet again, does not correspond with the percentile generated from the official examination data.
14. Similarly, in the subject *Chemistry*, candidates securing raw scores of 21 marks and 20 marks were awarded percentiles of 74.9279763 and 70.7700693, respectively. The percentile of 71.5043214 reflected in the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner does not correspond with the official percentile data. On the other hand, the official data indicates that the Petitioner obtained a percentile of 11.5043214 in the subject *Chemistry* in the second attempt.
15. In the subject *Mathematics* in the second attempt, the Petitioner obtained a raw score of 18 marks, corresponding to a percentile of 4.6095146. The percentile of 68.1095149 reflected in the scorecard relied upon by him is therefore wholly inconsistent with the official data maintained by the State CET Cell. The Supplementary Report contains comparative data of candidates securing different raw scores, including candidates securing 18 marks, which further substantiates the conclusion reached by the State CET Cell.
16. There is yet another circumstance which assumes significance. The State CET Cell declares percentile scores up to seven decimal places. The percentile of 78.874707 reflected in the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner contains only six decimal places. This is another objective circumstance which supports the conclusion that the said scorecard was not

generated by the State CET Cell in the ordinary course of its examination process.

17. Thus, the conclusion in the Supplementary Report is not founded upon a bare assertion by the State CET Cell that the scorecard is incorrect. It is supported by the underlying examination data and by a comparison of the raw scores and percentiles actually generated for candidates in the relevant examination sessions. The discrepancies are multiple, subject-specific and objectively verifiable. They extend to the overall percentile as well as to the percentiles attributed to individual subjects.
18. The Supplementary Report accordingly concludes that the scorecards produced by the Petitioner and annexed to the present Writ Petition at Exhibits “B” and “C” were not generated by Respondent No. 3 – State CET Cell and have been tampered with/fabricated. It further records that the only scorecards generated by Respondent No. 3 are those annexed to the present Writ Petition at Exhibits “F” and “G”.
19. We have carefully considered the Supplementary Report, the material annexed thereto and the submissions advanced on behalf of the Petitioner. We find no cogent basis to disbelieve the findings of the State CET Cell. Indeed, the Petitioner has not been able to identify any substantive error in the methodology adopted in the Supplementary Report, nor has he placed before this Court any material which would demonstrate that the percentiles reflected in the scorecards relied upon by him could in fact have been generated from the official examination data.
20. What is particularly significant is the nature of the response of the Petitioner to the Supplementary Report. The Petitioner does not effectively answer the substantive findings recorded therein. His principal objection is that the Supplementary Report does not specifically conclude that it was the

Petitioner himself who fabricated or manipulated the scorecards. That submission, in our view, completely misses the issue which arises for consideration in the present proceedings.

21. The question before this Court is not whether the Petitioner personally fabricated the scorecards, procured their fabrication, or knowingly relied upon documents which had been fabricated by somebody else. Those are matters which, if the competent authority considers it appropriate to investigate, would have to be examined in appropriate proceedings and upon such material as may be lawfully collected. This Court is not called upon, in exercise of its writ jurisdiction, to conduct a criminal investigation or to record a finding as to the identity of the person responsible for the fabrication of the documents.
22. The issue germane to the present Writ Petition is narrower and admits of a clear answer to the issue whether the scorecards relied upon by the Petitioner as evidencing his entitlement to admission are genuine scorecards generated by the State CET Cell. The Supplementary Report, supported by the official examination data, unequivocally answers that question in the negative. Once the very document on the basis of which the Petitioner sought to establish his higher percentile and secure admission is demonstrated to be not authentic, the absence of a finding that the Petitioner himself fabricated that document cannot confer any enforceable right upon him to retain the admission obtained on its basis.
23. Equally, the Petitioner's submission that he himself downloaded the scorecard from the official portal does not advance his case. Even assuming that the Petitioner did, in fact, obtain the document from the portal, that circumstance by itself cannot establish the authenticity of the contents of the document when the examination authority, upon verification of its original records and data, has categorically stated that the document was not

generated by it. The question as to how such a document came to be in the possession of the Petitioner, or how it came to be available for download, is distinct from the question whether the document reflects the marks and percentile actually awarded to him.

24. It must also be borne in mind that the Petitioner seeks to invoke the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Court to secure a direction which would have the effect of restoring an admission obtained on the basis of a scorecard which, according to the competent examination authority and the material produced before us, is not an authentic scorecard. A writ of mandamus cannot issue to protect an asserted right founded upon an inauthentic document. The extraordinary jurisdiction of this Court is intended to advance justice and prevent illegality, it cannot be invoked to sustain an advantage which has been obtained on the basis of a document that is demonstrably inconsistent with the official examination record.
25. We are conscious that the present proceedings are not criminal proceedings and that the Court must not prejudge any question of criminal liability. We therefore make it clear that our observations are confined to the authenticity of the scorecards and to the Petitioner's entitlement to relief in the present Writ Petition. Nothing stated in this order shall be construed as a finding that the Petitioner has himself committed any particular criminal offence or as precluding the competent authorities from taking such action as may be permissible in law, if they consider such action warranted.
26. At the same time, the circumstances brought before us are deeply disturbing. An examination conducted for determining merit and allocating scarce educational opportunities necessarily depends upon the integrity of the examination process and the authenticity of the documents produced by candidates. Any attempt to manipulate marks, percentiles or scorecards strikes at the very foundation of that process. It is particularly unfortunate

when such conduct arises in the context of admission to professional courses, where merit is intended to be the sole basis for securing an educational opportunity.

27. Competition for admission to professional courses may undoubtedly be intense. The anxiety of a student to secure admission, and the disappointment that may follow upon obtaining a lower score or percentile, are understandable. What cannot, however, be countenanced is the adoption of impermissible means to overcome the consequences of an examination result. No admission, however desirable, can justify the manipulation of an examination record. If such practices are allowed to go unchecked, the consequence is not merely an individual illegality, it is an injustice to every student who has participated in the examination honestly and competed on the basis of his or her actual performance.
28. We therefore find no reason to interfere with the decision of Respondent No. 5 – University to cancel the Petitioner's provisional admission on the basis of the discrepancy in the scorecard submitted by him. The Petitioner has failed to establish any legal right to continue in the course on the basis of the scorecard relied upon by him.
29. As regards any further action arising from the findings contained in the Supplementary Report, it is for the concerned authorities to consider, in accordance with law, whether any disciplinary, administrative or criminal proceedings are warranted. If Respondent No. 5 – University, Respondent No. 3 – State CET Cell or any other competent authority considers it necessary to inquire into the manner in which the scorecard relied upon by the Petitioner came into existence or came to be used, such exercise shall be undertaken independently and in accordance with law. Nothing contained in this order shall be construed as dispensing with any procedure or safeguards otherwise applicable to such proceedings.

30. In view of the aforesaid discussion, no case is made out for exercise of the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Court under Article 226 of the Constitution of India. The challenge to the impugned communication dated 14th July 2026 therefore fails.
31. The Writ Petition is accordingly dismissed. There shall be no order as to costs.

(FARHAN P. DUBASH, J.)

(R.I. CHAGLA, J.)

Jyoti Pawar