



## JNUTA EXPOSE ON RESEARCH ADMISSIONS 2017-18: Only 53% of intake offered for admissions, and total collapse of reservations!

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From the data obtained by JNUTA for 139 seats announced as intake in the e-prospectus, the truncated 2017-18 research degree admissions are all set to go down in JNU's history as ones in which the Constitutional guarantees of reservation were not implemented, and where the whole effort of the JNU admission policy was to ensure no admissions.

This shortfall in offers is not because of a paucity of applications, as in each Centre/School for which information is available, there were enough applications. In most cases, there were enough candidates called for the viva -voce, all of whom, it must be remembered would have got over 50% in the written examination. Yet, shockingly, only 53% of the seats specified in the intake have been offered. Moreover, each and every programme, barring two (which had one seat each), has registered a shortfall when compared to the seats announced in the e-prospectus.

Most distressingly, there has been a complete failure to satisfy the

**Constitutional provisions for reservations and the CEI Act, just at the stage of offers alone. Only 3 SCs, 2 ST, and 13 OBC candidates have been offered admission.** It is highly unlikely that either the numbers or the overall percentage for reservation will improve significantly once the complete data is available, as the number of seats left to be accounted for are less than a hundred.

### **Why did this come to pass?**

It gives JNUTA absolutely no pleasure to tell the JNU administration that we community told you so, right from the beginning of the unthinking implementation of a particularly perverse interpretation of the 2016 UGC Regulations. That this version is one that can only result in such abysmal figures is now evident from the data.

- **The decision to make the written test a qualifying examination, with a very high qualifying mark of 50%, has resulted in a massive reduction of the pool of candidates for selection.** JNUTA has always maintained that, given the unevenness of graduate and postgraduate education in the country and the reliance on coaching and tuitions, having a high cut-off mark does not necessarily enable the selection of candidates with genuine research potential; rather, the ability to score may just be a signifier of access to resources and social capital.
- **There also can no longer be any doubt that the decision not to give any relaxations for social disadvantage in the 50% qualifying mark has proved to be disastrous for social justice.** It is safe to conclude, given the final numbers, that hardly any SC, ST, OBC candidates made it to the viva. The ones that did undoubtedly suffered further by the

**completely unwarranted decision to abandon the deprivation points system** for research admissions, as even the award of these small numbers of marks could have helped.

- It is also evident that the **decision to make the viva a 100% in weightage is simply unfair**, as subjectivity inherent in the assessment of a candidate's research potential solely on the basis of oral performance, specially when the cohort is very small, is enhanced. **This was made far worse by the fact that the JNU administration decided to stealthily, unknown to the Centres/Schools at the time of viva voce, impose pass marks by category on viva voce scores, when computing the final results.** This decision was neither notified in the e-prospectus or in the instructions to Centres on how to conduct a 'discrimination-free' (what a joke!) viva voce.
- **JNU Science appears to be the worst hit from this data-set.** This is not only true for the reasons noted above, but because **the VC's admission policy actually did the greatest violence to the science research programmes**, even as it appeared as if they were the least affected in terms of seat cuts. The facts that JRF candidates were forced to write the JNUEE test (whereas earlier obtaining a JRF meant automatic selection to the viva voce stage), that M.Sc. holders were declared ineligible for admission to PhD programmes, that the M.Tech./PhD integrated programme was scrapped, confusions created by several changes in programme codes, have all contributed to this sharp fall in seats.

In a few weeks from now JNU faculty shall have to start discussions about the admissions for the 2018-19 admissions. This partial data from the truncated admissions of 2017-18 shows us that the critiques the JNU

community has made of the 50% qualifying mark, the 100% viva, and the removal of deprivation points are on the mark and are equally important as discussion of how to determine intake. **If JNU's research character and the breadth and variety of its research is to be maintained, none of these provisions can be part of JNU's admission policy.**

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