

THE HINDU

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Negative markings in competitive exams bad in law, rules Madras High Court

The Madras High Court on February 1 ruled that negative marking is bad in law and it should be done away with immediately.

Justice R. Mahadevan passed the ruling while disposing of a writ petition filed way back in 2013 by S. Nelson Prabakaran who could not clear the IIT Mains examination scoring 47 marks as against the cut off of 50 marks required to be eligible for writing the IIT Advanced examinations.

The petitioner had prayed for production of his answer sheets and for revaluation of the same. When the answer sheets were produced in the court it came to light that the student has actually scored 72 marks but 25 marks were reduced for wrong answers by awarding negative marks.

Though his prayer had become infructuous due to efflux of time when the writ was taken up for final hearing now, the petitioner's counsel A. Arulmozhi urged the court to declare the practice of negative markings in competitive exams as illegal.

Submitting details of competitive examinations conducted in the U.K., Germany, Canada, Australia and Russia, the counsel contended that no advanced country "harasses" young students with negative markings.

G. Nagarajan, counsel for Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which conducts several competitive exams, argued firmly in support of negative markings. However, the judge rejected his submissions and held against negative markings.