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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**
+ W.P.(C) 11402/2023 and CM APPL. 44364/2023, CM APPL. 44365/2023

MR XYZPetitioner

Through: Mr. Rudrajit Ghosh, Advocate.

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.Respondents

Through: Mr. Ankur Yadav SPC and Mr. Kartik Sharma, G.P.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE PURUSHAINDR KUMAR KAURAV

ORDER
% **29.04.2026**

1. The petition is for the following reliefs:

- A. Direct the Respondent Nos.1 and 2 to take-down and/or cause the taking-down of digital media published by the Respondent Nos.3-7 concerning the Petitioner, on account of breach of privacy and right to life and freedom of the Petitioner;*
B. Direct the Respondent Nos.1 and 2 to cause removal of links of the aforesaid digital media concerning the Petitioner herein from the platforms maintained by the Respondent No.8 and 9;
C. Pass necessary directions to preserve the lights to be forgotten, right to quiet life, reputation and privacy of the Petitioner, while dispensing with the present matter; and
D. Pass any such other orders as maybe deemed fit and proper in the interest of justice.



2. The Petitioner claims to be a Public Policy Professional currently working in New Delhi. The Respondent Nos. 1 and 2 are Government Ministries under the Information Technology Act, 2000 (“**IT Act**”). Respondent Nos. 3 – 7 are publishers of online news. Respondent Nos. 8 and 9 are Digital Media Intermediaries.

3. The facts of the case would indicate that during the years 2015 and 2016, Respondent Nos. 3 to 7 published certain online news articles concerning registration of an FIR against the Petitioner and his subsequent arrest. The Petitioner submits that the articles reproduced allegations made in the criminal complaint and disclosed his personal details. The Petitioner contends that one such article was also circulated on the social media platform maintained by Respondent No.8 and links, thereof, continue to appear in search results generated by Respondent No.9.

4. It is the case of the Petitioner that the aforesaid criminal complaint came to be quashed by the Hyderabad High Court *vide* order dated 11.07.2016 passed in CRL. Petition No.9803/2016. The Petitioner submits that despite quashing of the proceedings, the impugned articles continue to remain accessible online.

5. Subsequently, the Petitioner issued legal notices dated 15.05.2023 to Respondent Nos. 3 to 7 seeking removal of the impugned articles. However, the grievance was not completely resolved. Thereafter, he invoked the grievance redressal mechanism under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (hereinafter “**IT Rules 2021**”) and addressed a notice dated 03.08.2023 to Respondent Nos.1 and 2 seeking removal/blocking of the impugned content and related search results. However, no action was taken.



6. The grievance of the Petitioner is that despite exhaustion of the grievance redressal mechanism available under IT Rules, 2021, no effective steps were taken by the authorities for removal/blocking of the impugned content.

7. The perusal of the record indicates that the Petitioner had been subjected to criminal proceedings which, subsequently, came to be quashed by the competent Court. The principal relief sought in the petition pertains to removal/take-down of online news reports, social media circulation and search engine results relating to the said criminal proceedings, on the basis of the Petitioner's asserted '*right to be forgotten*'.

8. At present, a batch of matters concerning the "*right to be forgotten*" is pending before the Supreme Court in ***IKanoon Software Development Pvt. Ltd. v. Karthick Theodore & Ors.***¹ and before a Co-ordinate Bench of this Court in case of ***Laksh Vir Singh Yadav v. Union of India & Ors.***²

9. In view of the aforesaid, the Court is of the opinion that the relief sought in the present petition would require judicial finding to be rendered on an issue presently pending consideration before a co-ordinate Bench i.e., the same is *sub judice*. It is, thus, found appropriate to dispose of the present petition while granting liberty to the Petitioner to file a fresh petition, if the rights, and its scope, are established in favour of the Petitioner, and he becomes entitled to the relief being prayed for.

10. In the interregnum, the Petitioner is also at liberty to pursue such other legal proceedings, including those under Civil Law, to mitigate its grievance.

¹ SLP(C) 15311/2024

² W.P.(C) 1021/2016



11. With the aforesaid liberties, the petition, along with pending applications, stands disposed of.

PURUSHAINDRA KUMAR KAURAV, J

APRIL 29, 2026/aks/ss/ksr