

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S

Writ Petition(s)(Civil) No(s).284/2026

JANSHRUTI (PEOPLES VOICE)

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.

Respondent(s)

Date : 13-03-2026 This petition was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI

For Petitioner(s) : Dr. Shashi Kiran, Adv.
Dr. Satish Chandra, Adv.
Mr. Nikhil Sharma, Adv.
Ms. Namrata Gupta, Adv.
Ms. Anju Sen, Adv.
Ms. Jishmine, Adv.
M/s. Bakshi & Associates, AOR

For Respondent(s) :

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R

1. The instant writ petition has been filed purportedly in public interest seeking a series of the following directions:

i. Issue a writ of mandamus or any other appropriate writ, order or direction directing the Respondents including the Union of India, relevant State Governments, and Municipal or Local Authorities to strictly implement their constitutional and statutory duties to ensure public safety, including but not limited to:

a. Maintenance, routine inspection, and regular auditing of public infrastructure such as roads, footpaths, bridges, uncovered drains, and electric wiring;

b. Timely repair of potholes, broken or eroded public walkways, and collapsed or unfinished public structures such as bridges and flyovers;

c. Ensuring safety mechanisms and preventive infrastructure to mitigate electrocution due to unattended or exposed high-tension wires and snapped electric cables;

d. Ensuring accountability mechanisms and institutional reform in law enforcement to prevent custodial deaths, wrongful imprisonment, and inefficient or arbitrary police investigations.

ii. Direct the Respondents to constitute a High-Level Independent Safety Audit Committee, comprising civil engineers, infrastructure experts, forensic investigators, and representatives from civil society and human rights organisations, to:

a. Conduct periodic safety and maintenance audits of public utilities and civic infrastructure across metropolitan and semi-urban regions;

b. Identify vulnerable zones and submit actionable compliance reports with fixed timelines for rectification to this Hon'ble Court.

iii. Issue appropriate directions to establish a uniform compensation framework under constitutional tort doctrine, under which the State shall be held strictly and absolutely liable in cases involving:

a. Death or injury caused due to open drains, potholes, unsafe or unfinished bridges, or other collapsed public structures;

b. Fatal or serious injuries resulting from electrocution due to unattended high-voltage cables, fallen electric lines or exposed power infrastructure;

c. Death, grievous injury or mental trauma caused by police brutality, custodial violence, unlawful detention, or inefficient police work;

d. Any violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 14, 21 and 22 of the Constitution resulting from reckless or negligent acts of public authorities.

iv. Issue appropriate directions for time-bound investigations and departmental inquiries against concerned officials and functionaries responsible for gross negligence, administrative indifference, or breach of statutory and constitutional duty in the

above-mentioned matters, and ensure criminal liability where warranted.

v. Issue appropriate directions to frame and enforce a Statutory Code for Civic Safety Standards and Emergency Response Protocols, including:

a. Mandatory safety audits and third-party certification for all public infrastructure projects;

b. Real-time grievance redressal mechanisms for citizens to report hazardous conditions;

c. Periodic training of municipal and public works officials on public safety and emergency measures;

d. Mandatory public disclosure of pending and incomplete infrastructure works, including timelines and responsible departments.

vi. Issue a writ declaring the enforceability of the right to safe Infrastructure and dignified public spaces as part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution, along with the positive obligation of the State to prevent foreseeable harm arising from neglect of public amenities.

vii. Issue continuing mandamus and constitute a monitoring mechanism under the aegis of this Hon'ble Court to periodically assess compliance with the above directions, especially in light of recurring and systemic violations and disregard for prior judicial pronouncements.

viii. Direct the Respondents to create a publicly accessible database of deaths and injuries caused by civic failures, including pothole deaths, electrocution cases, custodial deaths, deaths or injuries from unfinished bridges, open drains, and voltage surges, updated monthly, to ensure transparency and accountability in government functioning.

ix. Direct the Respondents to issue a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for coordination among departments such as the municipal bodies, electricity boards, public works departments, and disaster management authorities to ensure swift preventive and corrective action in public safety matters.

x. Issue a writ or direction for development of a nationwide compensation portal to enable affected

individuals or families to easily file for and track constitutional tort claims in cases of public infrastructure or policing failures.

xi. Direct the Respondents to collect, digitise, and publish all data regarding infrastructure-related fatalities from 2020 onwards and provide district-wise reports to be submitted to this Hon'ble Court every quarter.

xii. Pass such other order(s)/direction(s) as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper in the interest of justice."

2. It may be seen from the very nature of reliefs that these are neither interrelated nor do they pertain to one State or the Union of India. It is nearly impossible to issue directions, which would be a completely unmanageable affair, unless the issues raised are specific to a particular State or its agencies.

3. We, therefore, decline to entertain this writ petition, leaving it open to the petitioner to approach the jurisdictional High Courts, if so advised, by way of appropriately drafted writ petitions.

4. It is clarified that we have not expressed any opinion on the merits.

5. The Writ Petition is, accordingly, dismissed.

6. All pending applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

(ARJUN BISHT)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI T.C.)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR