

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA  
EXTRAORDINARY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION**

**Writ Petition (C) No. \_\_\_\_\_ /2026**

**[Under Article 32 of the Constitution of India]**

**(PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION)**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

Harshita Grover

**...PETITIONER**

**VERSUS**

**1. Union of India**

**...RESPONDENT NO. 1**

**2. Union of India**

**...RESPONDENT NO. 2**

3. Union of India

**...RESPONDENT NO. 3**

4. Union of India

**...RESPONDENT NO. 4**

5. Bar Council of India

**...RESPONDENT NO. 5**

**To,**

**THE HON'BLE CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA  
AND HIS LORDSHIP'S COMPANION JUSTICES  
OF THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA**

**The Humble Petition of the  
petitioner above named**

**MOST RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH: -**

1. The Petitioner herein is a public-spirited Indian citizen, presently working as a journalist at TFIPOST. Earlier, the Petitioner worked in Lok Sabha TV, Hindustan Times and NITI Aayog. The

Petitioner is deeply committed to the ideals enshrined in the Constitution of India, particularly freedom of speech and expression. The Petitioner has approached this Hon'ble Court in public interest owing to grave concern regarding the persistent and growing misuse of the video conferencing and live-streaming facility in judicial proceedings, particularly the selective circulation of distorted, decontextualised, cropped and misleading clips from court hearings on digital platforms for sensationalism and monetisation. The Petitioner believes that such malpractice not only spreads misinformation amongst the public, but also undermines the dignity of courts, creates unwarranted prejudice, harms the professional career of lawyers, adversely impacts litigants (including government officials) and erodes public confidence in the administration of justice. The Petitioner submits that such misuse of courtroom recordings and video-conferenced hearings has a chilling effect on the independence, dignity, and effective functioning of both advocates and judges, as it exposes them to public trolling, character assassination, and reputational harm on the basis of incomplete and out-of-context material. The present writ petition is being preferred in public interest to seek

Appropriate directions to curb such misuse and to preserve the sanctity of judicial proceedings, the dignity of the Bench and the Bar, and the integrity of the justice delivery system.

That the particulars of the Petitioner are as under:

Name – Harshita Grover

2. The present Petition is filed under Article 32 of the Constitution of India by way of Public Interest Litigation, and the Petitioner does not have any personal or vested interest in the issues/ cause involved in the present petition. The Petitioner affirms that there is no civil, criminal, or revenue litigation pending involving her that has any legal nexus with the subject matter of the present petition. However, the Petitioner has been made Respondent to a criminal defamation case filed against her and a few news portals before Ld. JMFC-08, South East District of Delhi at Saket Courts and the same is pending at the stage of section 223 BNSS. The Petition is filed in the interest of protecting the independence of Judiciary, including the Bar and the

Bench. All advocates, judges and the litigants who participate in video-conferencing during the judicial proceedings will benefit from the outcome of the present Petition. Additionally, the citizens of India will also benefit from the present Petition as they will not be exposed to recording of cropped court hearings which are being circulated on social media. Thus, the present Petition seeks to ensure that no misinformation is carried out on social

media against the judicial institution. The Present Petition is filed as a Public Interest Litigation and the PIL Guidelines of this Hon'ble Court are duly followed.

3. It is humbly submitted that the Petitioner is filing the present petition on her own and not at the instance of someone else. The litigation cost, including the advocate's fee and the travelling expense of the lawyers, if any, is being borne by the Petitioner.

#### **FACTS CONSTITUTING CAUSE OF ACTION**

4. The present cause of action has arisen from the growing misuse of video-conferenced judicial proceedings and the selective circulation of clipped, edited, and decontextualised portions of court hearings on social media platforms. The Petitioner states that observations made by Hon'ble Judges during the course of proceedings are increasingly being extracted in fragments and circulated without reference to the full factual and legal context, thereby giving rise to

misleading public narratives and unnecessary controversy. This concern has further intensified in recent weeks, including in relation to certain observations made by the Chief Justice of this Hon'ble Court which were taken out of context and amplified through digital circulation.

5. The Petitioner submits that this trend has begun feeding into a broader social media phenomenon, which is directed specifically at the judiciary. The courtroom exchange between judges and advocate are magnified, distorted, and circulated out of proportion. The Petitioner submits that such circulation does not merely amount to criticism; rather, it creates a climate of hostility, misinformation, and deliberate sensationalism around judicial proceedings, thereby undermining public confidence in the administration of justice.
6. It is humbly submitted that an instance demonstrating the consequences of selective and decontextualised circulation of judicial proceedings arose in September 2024 in relation to Hon'ble Judge of the High Court of Karnataka. As reported in various media publications, certain video clips extracted from open court proceedings were widely circulated across social media platforms and attracted significant public attention, eventually prompting

intervention by this Hon'ble Court. Subsequently, Hon'ble Judge publicly stated that a few observations made during judicial proceedings had been reported out of context on social media platforms and clarified that such observations were neither intended to hurt any individual nor any section of society.

7. The Petitioner respectfully submits that the aforesaid incident is illustrative of a larger and recurring problem wherein isolated portions of judicial proceedings are extracted and disseminated without the accompanying factual, legal, and procedural context. Such circulation has the tendency to generate public controversy around fragmentary observations rather than the complete judicial record and may expose Judges to unwarranted criticism, hostility, and reputational harm. The Petitioner submits that Judges are not expected to decide cases in accordance with public opinion, popular sentiment, social media trends, or digital campaigns; rather, they are constitutionally obligated to discharge their duties in accordance with the rule of law, the material placed before the Court, established legal principles, and their judicial conscience. The increasing practice of circulating selective courtroom clips for sensationalism, engagement, or commercial gain therefore poses a

serious threat to the dignity of courts, public confidence in judicial institutions, and the independent administration of justice. A copy of the news article titled “Karnataka HC Judge Expresses Regret, Says Social Media Reported Out of Context” published on 22.09.2024 is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-1** for the kind perusal of this Hon’ble Court at page No. 42 to 44.

8. It has been reported that members of the Advocates’ Association, Bengaluru, pointed out that certain YouTube channels and social media accounts were circulating clips of court proceedings accompanied by misleading headlines, thereby creating distorted public impressions regarding the actual proceedings before the Court.
9. On 17.03.2025, the Bar Council of India issued a press release in view of unethical legal advertising, misleading social media promotions, and professional misconduct by advocates and legal influencers. A copy of the press release dated 17.03.2025 published by the Bar Council of India is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-2** for the kind perusal of this Hon’ble Court at page No. 45 to 47.

10. On 25.07.2025, the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCORA) wrote a letter to the then Hon'ble Chief Justice of India requesting for guidelines regarding videography and social media content creation by advocates within the Supreme Court premises. A copy of the Letter dated 25.07.2025 written by SCORA to the then Chief Justice of India is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-3** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 48 to 53.
11. It is humbly submitted that a further and equally serious consequence arising from the misuse of video-conferenced judicial proceedings is the prejudice caused to members of the legal profession. During the course of judicial hearings, advocates may often be subjected to rigorous questioning, correction, criticism, or exchanges with the Court as part of the ordinary adjudicatory process. However, isolated portions of such interactions are frequently extracted, edited, and circulated on social media platforms without the surrounding context of the proceedings. These clips are often accompanied by sensationalised captions and misleading narratives, portraying the advocate in an unfair and disparaging manner. A copy of the screenshot of a court proceeding

video uploaded on face book, on 17.10.2025 is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-4** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 54.

The link to the video is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 —

[<https://www.facebook.com/kanoonkidastak/videos/advocate-faces-contempt-after-warning-judge-country-is-burning-because-of-judici/4145611935687228/>] along with transcript of the video which is reproduced as under:

|                 |                                                                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Judge</b>    | This is the way your advocate will argue the case.                    |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Yes. I can argue in my own way. Not in your way, in which you say.    |
| <b>Judge</b>    | you can't say if the Court is doing injustice.                        |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Please mind that.                                                     |
| <b>Advocate</b> | did I say?                                                            |
| <b>Judge</b>    | You have said it. Video recording is there. Video recording is there. |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Yes. Please see.                                                      |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I only prayed.                                                        |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Video recording is there.                                             |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I only prayed before Your Lordship.                                   |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Don't try to humiliate any advocate.                                  |
| <b>Judge</b>    | It's a question of humiliation to a Judge.                            |

|                 |                                                                                |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Advocate</b> | Please don't try to humiliate any person.                                      |
| <b>Advocate</b> | The country is burning.                                                        |
| <b>Advocate</b> | The country is burning with the judiciary. These are my words.                 |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Don't try to humiliate any advocate.                                           |
| <b>Advocate</b> | You know too much. You have become a judge. We don't know. We are lawyers.     |
| <b>Judge</b>    | But you have to argue in a proper way.                                         |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I will argue in my own way. Don't cross the limit.                             |
| <b>Advocate</b> | Please don't cross the limit.                                                  |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I have already practised for the last 40 years.                                |
| <b>Judge</b>    | I will request the Chief Justice to change the Bench.                          |
| <b>Judge</b>    | No, not at all.                                                                |
| <b>Judge</b>    | This way cannot go.                                                            |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Everybody is present here.                                                     |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Everybody was present here. It has been said, "Great injustice is being done." |

12. There has been an instance of court proceedings of the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court being uploaded on Instagram (around nine weeks ago) showing incompetence of advocate where the Hon'ble Judge is saying "I am cancelling your licence". Such, courtroom exchange when made available to the public can have serious impact on the professional career of the advocate. A copy of the

screenshot of court proceedings of the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-5** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 55.

The link to the said proceeding is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 –

[<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DWT2Sq6E1ZQ/?igsh=MXRobmg3ejVzN3gyZw==>] along with transcript of the video is reproduced as under:

|              |                                                                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Judge</b> | Don't raise your voice in my court.                                               |
|              | Don't raise your voice.                                                           |
|              | I am telling you.                                                                 |
|              | What command are you making?                                                      |
|              | No merits.                                                                        |
|              | You are commanding the court.                                                     |
|              | You are commanding the court.                                                     |
|              | Who are you to command?                                                           |
|              | Why should I listen?                                                              |
|              | I am cancelling your licence. Go to the Bar office. I am cancelling your licence. |
|              | Where is your power?                                                              |
|              | Where is your power?                                                              |
|              | You are not even entitled to a right of audience.                                 |
|              | You are not even entitled to a right of audience.                                 |
|              | You do not have any power.                                                        |

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
|  | Where is your Vakalatnama? |
|--|----------------------------|

13. The Petitioner submits that such circulation has the effect of tarnishing the professional reputation, credibility, and standing of advocates, particularly young practitioners whose careers are still developing. The viral dissemination of such clips exposes advocates to public ridicule, harassment, and unwarranted criticism, despite the fact that such exchanges form part of the normal functioning of courts and do not reflect the advocate's professional competence or integrity.
14. It is humbly submitted that the concerns raised in the present Petition are neither speculative nor isolated. A recent instance arose before the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in the case of *Vaibhav Singh v. Delhi High Court*, [W.P.(C) 5417/2026], where an edited and selectively cropped video on social media platforms was circulated, showing the Hon'ble High Court in bad light. As recorded in the proceedings, the clip was widely disseminated across social media platforms. The Petitioner herein respectfully submits that the aforesaid incident constitutes a further illustration of how edited audiovisual material concerning members of the judiciary may be utilised to generate misleading narratives, vilification campaigns,

and public misconceptions regarding judicial officers, thereby adversely affecting the dignity of courts and public confidence in the administration of justice. A copy of the order dated 23.04.2026 passed by Hon'ble Delhi High Court directing to take down clip of court video is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-6** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 56 to 61.

15. It is further submitted that the present grievance is further illustrated by the recent public controversy arising out of media reporting and social media circulation of certain oral observations attributed to the Chief Justice of this Hon'ble Court during the course of judicial proceedings on 15.05.2026. According to the media report dated 16.05.2026, following backlash over the alleged use of the expression's "parasite" and "cockroach" during court proceedings, the Chief Justice of this Hon'ble Court issued a clarification stating that his oral observations had been misquoted and taken out of context. The said report further records that the observations were made in the course of hearing a contempt petition, and that the remarks drew widespread criticism as well as intense online circulation. The Petitioner submits that this incident exemplifies the very mischief complained of in the present Petition,

namely, the selective extraction, amplification, and circulation of judicial observations in fragmented form, leading to distortion of context, creation of false narratives, and undue prejudice to the dignity of the judiciary and the administration of justice. A copy screenshot of edited video of the Chief Justice of this Hon'ble Court uploaded on YouTube in relation to proceedings conducted in 15.05.2026 is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-7** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 62.

The link to the video is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 —

[<https://youtu.be/gq68IX2fTHE?si=fFDsskuRXorQMEZg>] along with transcript of the video is reproduced as under:

|                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Youtuber</b>    | This is the exact video where CJI ( ) is seen calling youngsters cockroach and parasite.                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Hon'ble CJI</b> | There are youngsters like cockroaches. They don't get any employment. They don't have any place in the profession. [Music] Some of them became media, some of them became social media, some of them became RTI activists, some of them |

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                 | became other activists. And they start attacking everyone.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Youtuber</b> | <p>So what happened was that there was a discussion going on in the court about fake law degrees, poor quality college degrees, how people enter a profession like law even without proper qualifications. But meanwhile, the Chief Justice of India also implicated people like media journalists, social media creators, RTI activists. Now people are angry about this and are saying that no qualification is required to become a leader. But when journalists, social media creators and RTI activists ask questions to the system, you call them unemployed cockroaches and parasites. However, CJI later clarified that they did not call the youth of India cockroaches and parasites but specifically those who enter professions like law and media with fake degrees and bogus qualifications.</p> |

16. Subsequently, on the next day i.e., 16.05.2026, the Chief Justice of this Hon'ble Court issued a clarification saying his comment related to some people acquiring fraudulent degrees and did not target India's youth, whom he called "*the pillars of a developed India*". The clarificatory media article dated 21.05.2026 is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-8** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 63 to 67.
17. It is humbly submitted that it is relevant to bring to the kind notice of this Hon'ble Court that the consequences of such unregulated dissemination of isolated courtroom snippets are no longer merely theoretical. Following the widespread circulation and selective portrayal of the Hon'ble Chief Justice's remarks concerning, a social-media driven movement styling itself as the "Cockroach Janta Party (CJP)" emerged and rapidly gained substantial online traction. The said platform and its associated campaigns have repeatedly invoked, caricatured, and weaponised the remarks as a means of targeting the institution of the judiciary. What began as an out-of-context extraction of judicial observations has thus evolved into a sustained public campaign ridiculing constitutional institutions, eroding public confidence in the administration of

justice, and subjecting members of the judiciary to unprecedented levels of online hostility, mockery, and reputational harm. The emergence and proliferation of such campaigns demonstrates the grave dangers inherent in the absence of effective safeguards governing the clipping, monetisation, dissemination, and algorithmic amplification of fragments of court proceedings. The present instance stands as a stark illustration of how selective excerpts from judicial proceedings are detached from their factual and legal context, transformed into viral content, and subsequently used to label judiciary as biased. A copy of the screenshot of “Cockroach Janta Party (CJP)” Instagram reel levelling Judiciary as Biased is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-9** for the kind perusal of this Hon’ble Court at page No. 68.

The link to the video is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 –

[<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DYmcKdZotSD/?igsh=MTR5OHV4aDJ0OGNtbA==>]

18. The Petitioner further submits that the increasing commercialisation of courtroom clips through social media platforms and content-creation channels has incentivised the

selective publication of such exchanges for viewership and monetary gain, thereby causing continuing harm to members of the Bar and undermining the dignity of judicial proceedings. Many advocates have consequently suffered reputational injury in the eyes of the clients and professional setbacks as a result of the unfair and decontextualised circulation of courtroom interactions, warranting appropriate safeguards against such misuse. In fact, a video published on YouTube in or around 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of May 2026 depicts the court courtroom exchange between a Judge and an Advocate in the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi as "Clash". A copy of the screenshot of video published on YouTube in or around 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of May 2026 depicting the court courtroom exchange between a Judge and an Advocate as "Clash" one such video is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-10** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 69.

The link to the video is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 – [<https://youtube.com/shorts/v4gBqb0GzU?si=KEzWM81B0D4XI7Wc>] along with transcript of the video is reproduced as under:

|                 |                                     |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Advocate</b> | My Lord, even the orders we pass... |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Judge</b>    | Nothing more. Nothing more. Thank you.                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Advocate</b> | My Lord's order... My Lord, I am so sorry. My Lord's order also says that after some submissions. My Lord, I never had the opportunity to place my submissions completely. My Lord, this interim application may kindly be adjudicated upon. |
| <b>Advocate</b> | My Lord, they kindly put me to time. My Lord, they kindly put me to time.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Don't speak anything more. Don't speak anything more.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I am praying for an opportunity.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Don't speak anything more.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Advocate</b> | It's a prayer I am making, My Lord. They kindly put me to time.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Judge</b>    | What's your good name?                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Advocate</b> | My name is Advocate Bharat Chugh. My Lord, kindly permit me to at least place this. I am praying for an opportunity, My Lord, to place this.                                                                                                 |
| <b>Judge</b>    | What is it, Bharat Chugh?                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Advocate</b> | My Lord, I have not had the opportunity. My Lord, kindly give me the opportunity. I am praying, My Lord. It's a personal                                                                                                                     |

|  |                                                |
|--|------------------------------------------------|
|  | request. My Lord, it's a personal observation. |
|--|------------------------------------------------|

19. It is humbly submitted that the unchecked circulation of selective, edited, and sensationalised clips from judicial proceedings has broadly affected the sanctity and dignity of the judicial process. Court proceedings are intended to facilitate the administration of justice through reasoned adjudication and not to serve as material for public entertainment or digital controversy. However, short excerpts from hearings are increasingly extracted and disseminated with provocative captions, misleading descriptions, and clickbait headlines designed to attract attention and engagement. Such content frequently becomes the subject of online trolling, ridicule, and commentary directed against Judges, advocates, litigants, and even the institution of the judiciary itself. The Petitioner submits that when isolated courtroom exchanges are transformed into viral content, the focus shifts away from the substantive issues being adjudicated and towards personalities and controversies. This practice undermines public confidence in judicial institutions and diminishes the solemnity that must

necessarily accompany the exercise of judicial functions in a constitutional democracy.

20. It is humbly submitted that judicial proceedings often involve spontaneous exchanges between the Bench and members of the Bar which are neither intended to form part of the final judicial record nor reflective of the ultimate adjudicatory outcome. During the course of hearings, judges may pose probing questions, make preliminary observations, engage in lighter conversations, or interact with advocates for the purpose of clarification and effective adjudication. Such exchanges must necessarily be understood within the broader context of the proceedings. However, the selective extraction and circulation of these isolated moments on social media platforms frequently presents a distorted picture of what transpired in Court, leading members of the public to perceive such interactions adversely or out of context. The viral dissemination of such clips creates misconceptions regarding both Judges and advocates, encourages unwarranted commentary and trolling, and ultimately diminishes the dignity, decorum, and public understanding of the judicial process. A copy of the screenshot of a conversation (video)

between a Judge and an Advocate of the Hon'ble High Court of Madhya Pradesh is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-11** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 70.

The link to the said conversation (video) is attached herewith which was last accessed on 25.05.2026 – [\[https://www.instagram.com/reel/C4xGCQWvjxR/?igsh=MWNvNmVvbTh0eDgyaA==\]](https://www.instagram.com/reel/C4xGCQWvjxR/?igsh=MWNvNmVvbTh0eDgyaA==) along with transcript of the video is reproduced as under:

|                 |                                                                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Judge</b>    | Who are you?                                                                         |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I am a practitioner.                                                                 |
| <b>Judge</b>    | Say I am a man. You are being heard.                                                 |
| <b>Advocate</b> | I am a practitioner from Pappi.                                                      |
| <b>Judge</b>    | You are Pappi or Dappi, I don't care. <i>(said in a humorous/light-hearted tone)</i> |

21. It is further humbly submitted that the circulation of such clips often gives rise to organised campaigns of criticism and trolling directed against individual Judges and members of the Bar. In the contemporary digital environment, decontextualised snippets are rapidly shared across multiple platforms and are

frequently accompanied by abusive comments, misinformation, and personal attacks. Such campaigns create a distorted perception of judicial proceedings and foster an atmosphere in which Judges and advocates are judged not on the basis of complete proceedings or reasoned judgments but on isolated moments extracted from lengthy hearings. The Petitioner submits that the administration of justice requires an environment free from intimidation, sensationalism, and public pressure. The persistent circulation of such content therefore has the effect of eroding the dignity of courts and exposing judicial officers and legal practitioners to unwarranted public hostility. The resulting harm extends beyond individual reputations and directly affects public confidence in the fairness, independence, and integrity of the justice delivery system.

22. It is humbly submitted that a significant factor contributing to the growing misuse of judicial footage and courtroom recordings is their increasing commercial exploitation on digital platforms. The Petitioner submits that numerous social media accounts, content creators, YouTube channels, Instagram pages, and other online platforms routinely extract, edit, and upload portions of

judicial proceedings for the purpose of generating views, engagement, subscribers, advertising revenue, sponsorship income, and other monetary benefits. On platforms such as YouTube, such content may generate revenue through advertisement programmes, including monetisation policies linked to viewership and audience engagement. Further, several channels restrict access to portions of such content through “members-only” subscriptions, paid memberships, exclusive content offerings, and similar mechanisms designed to derive financial gain from judicial material. Consequently, judicial proceedings, which are intended to advance transparency, public access to justice, and public understanding of the legal process, are transformed into commercial products for private profit. The Petitioner respectfully submit that video-conferencing facilities and access to court proceedings were never conceived as instruments for monetising judicial discourse or creating revenue-generating digital content. The circulation of such clips is frequently motivated by the prospect of maximising engagement through controversy, sensationalism, and provocative presentation rather than fair and accurate reporting.

This commercial incentive encourages selective editing, misleading captions, exaggerated commentary, and decontextualised dissemination of courtroom exchanges, thereby distorting the true nature of judicial proceedings and undermining the dignity of the justice delivery system. The Petitioner therefore submits that the use of judicial recordings for private commercial gain is contrary to the purpose for which such access is granted and warrants the formulation of appropriate safeguards and regulatory measures by this Hon'ble Court. A copy of screenshot of a YouTube channel (Law Chakra) requiring payment to watch courtroom proceedings is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-12** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 71 to 72.

23. It is humbly submitted that several mature jurisdictions have recognised the need to balance transparency in judicial proceedings with safeguards against misuse of court footage. By way of illustration, the United Kingdom Supreme Court expressly provide that audiovisual recordings of proceedings are made available solely for the purpose of fair and accurate reporting of judicial proceedings. The accompanying disclaimer

further cautions users that misuse of such material may attract liability for breach of copyright, defamation, and, in appropriate cases, contempt of court. The Petitioner respectfully submits that the existence of such safeguards demonstrates an acknowledgment that unrestricted circulation and repurposing of judicial recordings can adversely affect the administration of justice and public confidence in courts. While preserving the principle of open justice, reasonable restrictions and safeguards are necessary to prevent distortion, commercial exploitation, and misuse of judicial proceedings. The Petitioner therefore submits that a similar safeguard is necessary to ensure that access to court proceedings remains a tool of transparency rather than a mechanism for sensationalism, vilification, and commercial gain. A copy of the UK Supreme Court copyright Terms and Conditions is annexed herewith and marked as **ANNEXURE P-13** for the kind perusal of this Hon'ble Court at page No. 73 to 77.

## **SOURCE OF INFORMATION**

24. The source of information is social media and newspaper reports.

The Petitioner as a journalist has personally witnessed some

instances of courtroom exchange between lawyers and judges which are distorted and circulated on social media either in order to mislead the citizens or subject advocates and judges to public pressure. The Petitioner has personally and through her media sources verified the information and facts pleaded in the present petition. The Petitioner has also made independent verification of facts from a few members of the Bar before filing the present Petition. Additionally, official press release of the BCI and letter of SCORA have been attached with the present Petition were procured from their respective websites.

### **DETAILS OF REMEDIES EXHAUSTED**

25. Prior to approaching this Hon'ble Court, the Petitioner did not deem it appropriate to first make a representation to the concerned authorities, as the issue presently raised has assumed extraordinary urgency owing to the alarming misuse of judicial video-conference proceedings, the circulation of clipped and decontextualised footage, and the consequential spread of false and misleading narratives on social media platforms. The Petitioner state that the continued circulation of such material, including through fabricated or misleading accounts allegedly

created for propaganda and monetisation, has caused serious prejudice to the dignity of the judiciary, undermined public confidence in the administration of justice, and created an atmosphere of unwarranted pressure upon judges and members of the Bar. In these circumstances, any delay in judicial intervention would be contrary to the interest of justice, and the Petitioner is therefore constrained to invoke the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Hon'ble Court under Article 32 of the Constitution of India, particularly since the issues raised herein have national ramifications and affect the administration of justice across several States and Union Territories.

**NATURE AND EXTENT OF INJURY CAUSED AND LIKELY TO BE CAUSED:**

26. That the injury caused is grave and continuing. The selective circulation of such clips causes undue pressure on the minds of Judges, tarnishes the dignity of the institution, and projects isolated judicial observations as though they were final conclusions. The same practice also causes serious reputational harm to advocates whose exchanges in court are clipped and

made viral, often in a manner that is unfair, partial, and damaging to their professional credibility. The Petitioner submits that the sanctity of judicial proceedings is thereby compromised, and the courtroom is increasingly treated as material for trolling, outrage, and online spectacle rather than a place of adjudication.

27. The Petitioner further submits that the said misuse is not accidental but increasingly commercial in nature. Court proceedings and judicial footage are being repurposed for engagement, monetisation, and online visibility through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and similar digital intermediaries. Such conduct exploits judicial material for private gain and is wholly inconsistent with the purpose for which video-conferencing and open access to proceedings were introduced. In the absence of urgent safeguards, the misuse of this feature is likely to continue and deepen, thereby causing continuing harm to the judiciary, the Bar, and the administration of justice.

28. That the present cause of action is not confined to any isolated or standalone incident involving a particular judicial observation, but arises from a growing and recurring pattern whereby oral

observations, exchanges, remarks, and interactions occurring during judicial proceedings are selectively extracted, edited, decontextualised, and circulated across social media platforms without reference to the complete proceedings, factual background, legal submissions, or ultimate judicial determination. The Petitioner submits that such practices have increasingly resulted in the distortion of judicial discourse, the creation of false and misleading public narratives, and the targeted vilification of Judges and advocates through sensationalised content. The consequence of such misuse extends beyond reputational injury and directly impacts the administration of justice by creating unwarranted public pressure, apprehension, and prejudice around judicial functioning, thereby hindering the free and independent discharge of judicial duties in accordance with the rule of law. The continued absence of adequate safeguards, dissemination, and commercial exploitation of judicial proceedings has enabled the perpetuation of this mischief, compelling the Petitioner to invoke the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Hon'ble Court under Article 32 of the Constitution of India to preserve the dignity of

courts, the independence of the judiciary, and the integrity of the justice delivery system.

29. The Petitioner states and declares that to the best of her knowledge, the issue raised was not dealt with or decided and that a similar or identical petition was not filed earlier by the petitioner or by any other person. The Petitioner also declares that no cost has been imposed upon her in a PIL by this Hon'ble Court or any other court in India.

In view of the above, the Petitioner is preferring the present writ petition with the following among other grounds: -

### **GROUND**

**A. BECAUSE** the selective clipping and circulation of court proceedings creates a real risk of prejudice to the administration of justice. Oral observations made during hearings are often tentative and intended to test submissions. When such observations are circulated without context, they may create a misleading impression about the issues involved and the eventual outcome of the case.

**B. BECAUSE** the principle of open justice promotes transparency and public confidence in the judicial system. However, open access cannot be understood as a licence to selectively reproduce, distort,

sensationalise, or commercially exploit judicial proceedings. The absence of safeguards has enabled misuse of judicial recordings in a manner inconsistent with the object of transparency.

**C. BECAUSE** this Hon'ble Court has emphasised the importance of preserving the independence and dignity of the judiciary. Oral exchanges between the Bench and the Bar often occur during the process of testing arguments and do not constitute final judicial findings. The selective circulation of such exchanges on social media frequently presents them as conclusive pronouncements, thereby creating misleading public narratives and exposing Judges and advocates to unwarranted criticism.

**D. BECAUSE** the publication of isolated courtroom clips often creates a media-trial atmosphere. Fragmentary accounts of proceedings may generate public opinion before the conclusion of the adjudicatory process and may prejudice the rights of litigants. Such practices are inconsistent with the guarantee of a fair process under Article 21 of the Constitution.

**E. BECAUSE** the misuse of courtroom recordings affects both the Bench and the Bar. Judges may be subjected to unwarranted public criticism based on incomplete narratives, while advocates may

suffer reputational harm through the selective publication of ordinary courtroom exchanges. Such practices discourage free and effective participation in judicial proceedings.

**F. BECAUSE** despite giving clear warning on misleading social media promotions, and professional misconduct by advocates and legal influencers, the Bar Council of India has failed to stop the persistent problem on social media. Furthermore, the letter of SCORA has also recognised the problem of misuse of social media for sensational presentation or selective portrayal of court proceedings on social media which misleads the public about the facts and context of cases, thereby compromission the integrity of the adjudication process. However, no action has been taken so far and the posts are persistently made.

**G. BECAUSE** judicial proceedings are made accessible in the interest of transparency and accountability and not for commercial gain. However, courtroom recordings are increasingly being used on digital platforms to generate advertising revenue, subscriptions, and engagement-based income. Such commercialisation creates incentives for sensationalism and defeats the purpose of open access.

- H. BECAUSE** misleading thumbnails, clickbait headlines, provocative commentary, and edited courtroom clips encourage sensationalism rather than accurate reporting. These practices distort public understanding of judicial proceedings and erode confidence in the justice delivery system.
- I. BECAUSE** the incidents placed on record demonstrate that the misuse of judicial recordings is neither isolated nor speculative. Judicial observations have repeatedly been reported out of context, edited footage has been circulated with misleading narratives, and social media campaigns have emerged around fragmentary courtroom clips. These incidents disclose a recurring problem requiring institutional safeguards.
- J. BECAUSE** this Hon'ble Court in *Swapnil Tripathi v. Supreme Court of India* [(2018) 10 SCC 639] recognised the importance of public access to court proceedings while also acknowledging the need for appropriate safeguards. The present petition does not seek to restrict access or fair reporting but only seeks reasonable measures to prevent distortion, misuse, and commercial exploitation of judicial recordings.

**K. BECAUSE** while fair reporting of judicial proceedings is protected under Article 19(1)(a), such protection does not extend to conduct that interferes with the administration of justice, spreads misinformation, or subjects judicial institutions to organised vilification campaigns. Reasonable safeguards are therefore constitutionally permissible and necessary.

**L. BECAUSE** the absence of a mechanism governing the recording, clipping, redistribution, archiving, and monetisation of judicial recordings has created a regulatory vacuum. This vacuum has enabled the distortion of judicial proceedings, commercial exploitation of court material, and the spread of misleading narratives concerning Judges, advocates, and litigants. While transparency remains a fundamental aspect of open justice, its misuse threatens public confidence in the judiciary and may adversely affect the independent and fearless administration of justice. The Petitioner therefore seeks narrowly tailored safeguards that preserve public access while preventing abuse of judicial recordings.

**M. BECAUSE** this Hon'ble Court in *State of Uttar Pradesh v. Mohammad Naim*, [1964 SCR (2) 363] has held that before making

observations affecting the conduct of any person, it is relevant to consider (i) whether the person whose conduct is in question is before the Court or has an opportunity of explaining or defending himself, (ii) whether there exists evidence on record justifying such observations, and (iii) whether such observations are necessary for the decision of the case as an integral part thereof. The Petitioner submits that oral exchanges between the Bench and the Bar, preliminary observations, comments made in the course of testing submissions, observations on a lighter note, or spontaneous courtroom interactions frequently do not satisfy the aforesaid parameters and do not constitute findings or conclusions of the Court. However, selective extraction and circulation of such portions of proceedings on social media platforms presents them as definitive judicial pronouncements, thereby creating misleading public perceptions, exposing Judges and advocates to unwarranted criticism, and generating undue external pressure upon the judicial process. Such decontextualised dissemination is capable of undermining public confidence in the administration of justice and interfering with the independent and fearless discharge of judicial functions. Therefore, in order to preserve the dignity of courts,

protect the integrity of judicial proceedings, and prevent misuse of audiovisual recordings of court proceedings, an appropriate regulatory framework governing clipping, republication, dissemination, and monetisation of judicial recordings is necessary and constitutionally warranted.

N. Any other grounds maybe taken during the course of arguments with due permission of this Hon'ble Court.

### **PRAYER**

Therefore, in the light of the submissions made hereinabove, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may graciously be pleased to grant the following reliefs /prayers herein:

- A. Issue an appropriate writ, order or direction to the Respondents to immediately restrain the unauthorised extraction, modification, dissemination or monetisation of audio-visual recordings of judicial proceedings on social media and other digital platforms, except through the official website or channel of the concerned Court.
- B. Pass such other or further order(s) or direction(s) as this Hon'ble Court may deem just, fit and proper in the interest of justice.

**FOR WHICH ACT OF KINDNESS, THE PETITIONER  
SHALL AS IN DUTY BOUND, EVER PRAY.**

Drawn & Drafted by:

Md. Imran Ahmad

D/5368/2023,

R. Jude Rohit & Daksh Sachdava

Advocates for the Petitioner

Drawn and Drafted on: 25.05.2026

Place: New Delhi

Filed on: 26.05.2026

**Filed By:**

**Anil Kumar**

**Advocate for the Petitioner**