

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

Petition(s) for Special Leave to Appeal (Crl.) No(s). 5756/2026

[Arising out of impugned judgment and order dated 08-09-2025 in BA No. 2039/2025 passed by the Gauhati High Court]

CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

ARUN KHUNDONGBAM @NANAO

Respondent(s)

WITH

W.P.(C) No. 540/2023 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 103548/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 130954/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 115711/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 155266/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 93882/2024 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION, IA No. 185454/2023 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION, IA No. 154824/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 154823/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 157612/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 155582/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 154999/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 100121/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 195814/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 144163/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 142916/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 155427/2023 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT, IA No. 104107/2023 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT and IA No. 104041/2023 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT)

W.P.(Crl.) No. 329/2023 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 159270/2024 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 23846/2026 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS and IA No. 23845/2026 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT)

Diary No(s). 19210/2023 (XV)

(IA No. 96006/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING AFFIDAVIT, IA No. 96004/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT, IA No. 96007/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES and IA No. 96005/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE PETITION (SLP/TP/WP/..))

W.P.(C) No. 572/2023 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 138502/2025 - APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION, IA No. 104680/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 154993/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 144180/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 142744/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 104681/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T., IA No. 104131/2023 - GRANT OF INTERIM RELIEF, IA No. 154986/2023 -

INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 142741/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 196140/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES)

W.P.(C) No. 574/2023 (X)

(IA No. 104941/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T. and IA No. 104939/2023 - GRANT OF INTERIM RELIEF)

W.P.(C) No. 576/2023 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 113486/2023 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION, IA No. 167211/2023 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION, IA No. 134039/2023 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION and IA No. 105227/2023 - GRANT OF INTERIM RELIEF)

W.P.(Cr1.) No. 321/2023 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 143696/2023 - PERMISSION TO APPEAR AND ARGUE IN PERSON)

W.P.(Cr1.) No. 327/2023 (X)

(IA No. 146436/2023 - APPLICATION FOR FILING THE PETITION WITHOUT DISCLOSING THE IDENTITY OF THE PETITIONER/RESPONDENT and IA No. 146435/2023 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS)

W.P.(C) No. 841/2023 (X)

W.P.(C) No. 802/2023 (X)

(IA No. 154036/2023 - GRANT OF INTERIM RELIEF)

W.P.(C) No. 875/2023 (X)

(IA No. 165144/2023 - EX-PARTE AD-INTERIM RELIEF)

CONMT.PET.(C) No. 1257/2023 (XV)

SLP(Cr1) No. 5757/2026 (II)

SLP(Cr1) No. 2729/2026 (II)

(IA No. 49215/2026 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT)

Diary No(s). 19206/2023 (XV)

(IA No. 194232/2024 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 100067/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING AFFIDAVIT, IA No. 96003/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING AFFIDAVIT, IA No. 96000/2023 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING C/C OF THE IMPUGNED JUDGMENT, IA No. 147906/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 144564/2023 - INTERLOCUTARY APPLICATION, IA No. 155289/2023 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 100064/2023 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT, IA No. 194233/2024 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT, IA No. 155292/2023 - PERMISSION TO APPEAR AND ARGUE IN PERSON, IA No. 96002/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES, IA No. 147907/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE APPLICATION FOR DIRECTION and IA No. 96001/2023 - PERMISSION TO FILE PETITION (SLP/TP/WP/..))

Date : 24-07-2026 These petitions were called on for hearing today.

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

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UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

SLP (Criminal) No.2729 of 2026

1. List on 27.07.2026.

W.P. (Criminal) No.329 of 2023

2. By order dated 26.02.2026, this Court took note of the fact

that the victims and their families, who continue to reside in the State of Manipur, were unaware of the filing of the chargesheets, because the judicial proceedings were being conducted before the competent Court at Guwahati. Consequently, directions were issued by this Court for extending free legal aid to the victims and for supplying copies of the chargesheets to them through their legal aid counsel. Subsequently, vide an order dated 24.03.2026, compliance with the aforesaid directions was reiterated.

3. Thereafter, as noticed in our order dated 27.05.2026, a status report was submitted by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of High Court of Manipur. The report, *inter-alia*, stated that the Registrar Generals of the High Courts of Manipur and Guwahati, together with the Member Secretaries of the State Legal Services Authority of both States, had established communication with the victims and their families to facilitate the provision of free legal aid. It further recorded that a structured course of action had been evolved in a joint meeting regarding the appointment of legal aid counsel, supply of chargesheets, and addressing logistical impediments relating to travel, boarding and lodging, amongst other issues.

4. We are informed by Ms. Vrinda Grover, learned counsel for the petitioner(s) that notwithstanding the aforesaid directions and the status report filed by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the High Court of Manipur, several victims' families have conveyed that copies of the chargesheets have still not been supplied to them. She further submits that she was able to contact two legal aid counsel, of whom one had received the chargesheet, whereas the other was still awaiting its supply.

5. We accordingly direct that the legal aid counsel, with the aid of the Member Secretaries of the State Legal Services Authority of Manipur and Guwahati to immediately co-ordinate with the offices of Hon'ble the Chief Justices of High Court of Manipur and Guwahati for obtaining the copies of the chargesheets, wherever the same have been filed but have not yet been supplied to the victims, their families, or their legal aid counsel. It goes without saying that the concerned authorities shall ensure that such chargesheets are supplied at the earliest, and in any event not later than one week from the date on which the request is received from the legal aid counsel.

6. Mr. Dattatray Padsalgikar, former Director General of Police, Maharashtra, who was appointed by this Court to monitor the ongoing investigations, has filed his 14th status report dated 15.07.2026. The report reveals that a new Director General of Police has been appointed in the State of Manipur. It refers to the violent incident that occurred on 13.05.2026 and its aftermath. The report further notes, as a positive development towards the restoration of peace and communal harmony, the visit of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Manipur to Churachandpur on 04.07.2026 to attend the funeral of a Member of Legislative Assembly, who had died due to the injuries sustained by him in the 2023 violence. The report additionally highlights joint operations are being undertaken by the State Police and the Central Security Forces to maintain law and order, and further records that security along the National Highways has been strengthened to ensure uninterrupted movement of essential commodities.

7. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), to whom 31 cases were transferred by the State Government for investigation, has also filed its status report. The report, *inter-alia*, notes that chargesheets have been filed in 21 cases; investigation is ongoing in 11 cases; closure reports have been filed in 6 cases, of which 3 have been accepted; and 4 cases are under investigation. The complete particulars have been furnished in a tabulated form annexed to the report.

8. The CBI has also highlighted the following challenges encountered during the course of investigation:

(i) Owing to the volatile law and order situation, examination of witnesses has become difficult, as many of them have been displaced/relocated.

(ii) Several witnesses have been reluctant to cooperate due to an atmosphere of mistrust.

(iii) The existence of multiple regional dialects and language barriers has posed significant difficulties in effectively communicating with local residents and witnesses.

(iv) The prolonged suspension of internet services has adversely affected the collection of digital evidence.

(v) Restrictions on the free movement of persons have also impeded the conduct of field investigations.

9. Special Investigation Teams (SITs), who are investigating 3020 cases across 8 districts, have likewise filed their status report. It records that chargesheets have been filed in 301 cases; charges have been framed in 31 cases; and trial has commenced in 10 cases. In all these cases, as many as 2924 witnesses are yet to be

examined. The complete particulars have been appended in a tabulated form in the status report.

10. We are further informed that an online meeting was convened on 29.06.2026 with the Director General of Police, Manipur and other senior police officials, wherein emphasis was laid on initiating appropriate action against more than 800 identified accused persons and ensuring the filing of chargesheets these cases. The senior officials were accordingly advised to expedite the ongoing investigations.

11. It may be true that on account of the challenges highlighted by the CBI, they might be facing some practical difficulties in carrying the ongoing investigations to their logical conclusion. Nevertheless, we are of the view that the pending investigations must be completed within a reasonable timeframe. We are, therefore, tentatively proposing the constitution of Special Courts, with the concurrence of the State of Manipur and the High Courts of Manipur and Guwahati, so that the trials can be conducted on a day-to-day basis, especially in light of the fact that there has already been an inordinate delay in completing the investigation of pending cases. This course of action, however, would be possible only after the CBI and the SITs conclude their respective investigations and file the requisite chargesheets. We, therefore, impress upon both investigating agencies to make all possible endeavours, irrespective of the impediments referred to above, to complete the investigations expeditiously.

12. In this regard, we direct the State of Manipur, through its Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, to provide full

cooperation to the investigating agencies, coordinate effectively with them, and provide all such assistance as may reasonably be required to overcome the difficulties highlighted in the status reports above.

13. Let fresh status reports be filed by Mr. Dattatray Padsalgikar, the CBI and the SITs before the next date of hearing.

14. We have also requested Ms. Aishwarya Bhati, learned ASG representing the State of Manipur and the CBI to collate the details of all the FIRs in which investigations are pending or where chargesheets have already been filed. This would give an estimated idea of how many trials would be required to be conducted. This information is imminently required as it would enable this Court to assess the requisite strength and the number of Special Courts which need to be established for conducting the trials.

15. On oral mentioning, IA (D) No.15531/2026 (in W.P. (Civil) No.540/2023) is taken on Board.

16. Learned counsel for the applicant(s) points out that at least 30 persons belonging to one community are missing and that, despite efforts from the concerned organisation, their whereabouts could not be ascertained.

17. In this regard, we deem it appropriate to direct the applicant(s) to approach Hon'ble the Chief Justice of the High Court of Manipur, who may, in his discretion, entrust the task of tracing the missing persons to one of the SITs or to such other authority or forum as the Chief Justice may deem appropriate.

18. List on 10.08.2026.

19. The petitioner(s) may approach the Three-Judge Committee headed by Justice Gita Mittal, former Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court, and furnish full details of the site in question. The Committee may verify the claim and upon verification of it, the Committee shall ensure that wherever the aforesaid lawful structure had existed and has been since demolished, that particular site is not permitted to be encroached upon.

20. The term of the Committee is extended till 31.12.2026.

21. List on 10.08.2026 along with rest of the matters.

(NITIN TALREJA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI DILEEP KUMAR)
DY. REGISTRAR