

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
CIRCUIT BENCH AT KOLHAPUR
CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO. 8 OF 2026

WITH

INTERIM APPLICATION NO. 614 OF 2026

WITH

CONTEMPT PETITION (ST) NO. 6309 OF 2026

Harish Bhimrao Kamble

...Petitioner.

Versus

The State of Maharashtra and Others

...Respondents.

Mr. Raviraj Biraje with Mr. Kartik Y. Patil, for the Petitioner.

Mrs. Neha S. Bhide, Government Pleader with Ms. T. J. Kapre, AGP for the Respondents-State.

Mr. N. G. Hajare, Education Officer (Primary), Zilla Parishad, Sangli is present.

Mr. Ashok Udhavrao Ghuge, Education Officer (Primary), Kolhapur is present.

**Coram : Sharmila U. Deshmukh &
Neeraj P. Dhote, JJ.**

Date : August 19, 2026.

P. C. :

1. By the order dated 2nd April 2026, this Court had granted interim relief in terms of prayer clause H1 and H2, which reads as under.

"H1. First, we pray for an ad-interim direction to the District Collector and the Forest Department to identify dangerous schools prone to wild attacks in 7 days & jointly deploy Safe School Transport for the school children, escorted by a dedicated Rapid Response Team (RRT). We are making a highly specific request: this RRT must be permanently stationed near the identified attack-prone schools strictly between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM every day. Securing the approach to schools is an absolute statutory mandate

under Rule 6 of the RTE Rules. Children cannot be left to navigate an active hunting ground."

"H2. Second, we pray for an ad-interim direction to permanently station one Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulance at the Shittur-Warun primary center. Under Section 38V of the Wildlife Protection Act and Article 21, the State has a twin obligation: to protect the animals, and to protect the citizens from those animals. We need that ambulance deployed with urgency."

2. Despite the order having been passed on 2nd April 2026, absolutely nothing has been done by the District Collector and the Forest Department to identify the dangerous schools or to deploy safe school transport for the school children escorted by a dedicated Rapid Response Team ('**RRT**').
3. Today an additional Affidavit has been filed by the learned Counsel appearing for the Petitioner, which sets out that there are total 228 students, who are traveling from 8 villages to 5 schools, facing continuous exposure to wildlife attack.
4. The maximum distance is traveled by a child for about 30 kilometers to study in 6th standard, and he walks 4 hours daily, as no transport facility is available. The apathy of the State Government is appalling. There is absolutely no concern for the safety of the children as not even the minimum transport facilities are made available for the students, who are traveling for such a long distance for the purpose of education.

5. Being concerned with this situation, the order of 2nd April 2026 was passed, which has been conveniently disregarded by the Respondents Authorities. We cannot countenance such a conduct on behalf of the District Collector and the Forest Department.
6. There is no Affidavit, which has been filed by the District Collector and the Forest Department, showing compliance of the order dated 2nd April 2026.
7. We direct the District Collector and the Forest Department to file Affidavit within a period of one week from today, submitting an explanation for non-compliance of the order dated 2nd April 2026.
8. We make it clear that if we are not satisfied with the explanation, we will be constrained to take a very serious view of the matter.
9. Stand over 25th August 2026.

[Neeraj P. Dhote, J.]

[Sharmila U. Deshmukh, J.]

Digitally
signed by
RAJU
DATTATRAYA
GAIKWAD
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