

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

Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 83 / 2025

Ranveer Gautam Allahabadia ...Petitioner(s)

versus

Union of India and others ...Respondent(s)

with

Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 85 / 2025

Ashish Anil Chanchlani ...Petitioner(s)

versus

State of Guwahati and others ...Respondent(s)

and

Writ Petition (Civil) No. 460 / 2025

M/s. Cure SMA Foundation of India ...Petitioner(s)

versus

State of Guwahati and others ...Respondent(s)

ORDER

1. These Writ Petitions arise in the common context of several incidents involving publication and dissemination of offending and demeaning speech through internet-based streaming platforms. However, we find it apposite to first refer to the different cases separately.

A. CRIMINAL WRIT PETITIONS

- 2.** Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 83/2025 and Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 85/2025 (**Criminal Writ Petitions**) arise from a common incident of allegedly obscene comments and expressions which were circulated as part of a comedy series published on the internet. Criminal complaints were filed across the country, and three FIRs were lodged against the Petitioners, as also other persons, in different States. The Petitioners, thus, moved the Criminal Writ Petitions seeking, *inter alia*, quashing of the FIRs/complaints, interim protection from arrest, or clubbing of the various FIRs into a singular investigation.
- 3.** In the course of hearing in these cases, this Court had granted the Petitioner in the Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 83/2025 interim protection from arrest, subject to depositing his passport and not airing any further show on YouTube or other media and had also directed that no further FIR be registered re: that incident. These conditions were subsequently relaxed *vide* orders dt. 03.03.2025 and 28.04.2025, whereby the Petitioner was allowed to resume the production and streaming of his show on public social media and to seek the release of his passport from the investigating agency, i.e., the Maharashtra Cyber Crime Bureau.
- 4.** Additionally, this Court had observed that it would be inclined to consider the steps taken by the State to regulate obscene speech published on social media and digital platforms.

B. CIVIL WRIT PETITION

5. On the other hand, Writ Petition (Civil) No. 460/2025 (**Civil Writ Petition**) was filed by an NGO engaged in social service activities involving persons afflicted with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (**SMA**), a genetic condition which leads to muscle weakness and consequential wasting. The Petitioner-NGO was prompted to approach this Court in the wake of several videos being streamed over the internet, containing content and speech which was demeaning to persons with disabilities, including those suffering from SMA. In the said petition, the Petitioner-NGO had also impleaded five comedians, who were found to be involved in content over the internet which disparaged disability-afflicted persons, as Respondent Nos. 6 to 10.
6. We may note, at this stage, that some of the private Respondents impleaded in this petition were also accused in the FIRs forming the foundation of the Criminal Writ Petitions.
7. Considering the gravity of the expressions disseminated by Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 and their potential impact on the dignity of persons with disability in contemporary society, this Court had mandated their physical presence for the hearing of the matter. However, after they submitted unconditional apologies, on record as well as through their social media channels, that requirement was relaxed *vide* order dated 25.08.2025. Through subsequent orders, the said Respondents were permitted to show their *bona fide* repentance in the shape of events aimed at raising funds for the benefit of persons with disability, while

Ms. Aparajita Singh, learned senior counsel representing the Petitioner-NGO, had suggested that a dedicated corpus of funds ought to be created for financial aid and assistance for people suffering from SMA.

8. Since then, the private Respondents have filed various affidavits, statedly in compliance with the successive orders of this Court. When the matter came up for hearing recently, we had an occasion to consider their purported compliance and the consequential conduct. The said conduct was, however, found to be patently lacking *bona fides* on the part of Respondent Nos. 6 to 10, and *vide* order dated 14.07.2026, we were constrained to impose costs amounting to a total of Rs. 15 lakhs. We are informed that the costs have since been deposited with the Registry of this Court.

9. Now, Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 have submitted their fresh compliance affidavits, wherein the following steps have been highlighted:

9.1. Numerous events, with a minimum of two per month, were organised by Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 to raise funds towards and promote awareness regarding SMA warriors. The persons with disability, including those suffering from SMA, were invited as guests as well as participants, and they were also invited for special interaction with the performers. Although ten such programmes could be organised initially, due to logistical issues, specific arrangements could not be made for inviting and seating specially-abled persons in four subsequently scheduled shows. These shows are said to have been held, and the

revenue generated therefrom has been earmarked for fundraising purposes.

9.2. From the above programmes, a corpus of approximately Rs. 12.55 lakhs is said to have been created. A part of this amount has already been donated to the Petitioner-NGO, and the private Respondents have expressed their willingness and eagerness to similarly donate the remaining corpus as well.

9.3. A Chess tournament for differently abled persons, named 'Super Heroes Cup', was organised from 14.03.2026 to 16.03.2026 in Pune. The tournament received widespread coverage in print and digital media, leading to awareness being spread about various disabilities, including SMA. The event also encouraged large donations to organisations supporting such persons. The said event was organised through Chess Base India, which also sponsored food, lodging, and travel for the participants and their family, caretaker, etc. Additionally, Grandmaster P. Harikrishna was also invited to encourage persons to participate and to spread awareness on various disability-related issues.

9.4. Constructive conversations have taken place between Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 and the Petitioner-NGO for hosting a specialised programme aimed at spreading awareness about SMA. They have discussed the structure and material for such programmes to celebrate the lives of SMA warriors. Apart from providing detailed information and sharing ideas, the above-mentioned Respondents have expressed their gratitude for the Petitioner-NGO's guidance in developing their programme. They

are also in the process of obtaining the consent of the SMA warriors for participation and involvement in the proposed programme.

10. These developments, which have been acknowledged by learned senior counsel for the Petitioner-NGO, indicate true compliance with what has been observed by this Court in previous orders. We expect that Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 will work hard and continue on their endeavour to organise events for celebrating the lives and enhancing the dignity of SMA warriors. They shall also continue to seek guidance from the Petitioner-NGO for such events as well as show promptness in supporting any further events or initiatives suggested by the Petitioner.
11. Ms. Madhavi Diwan, learned senior counsel representing the private Respondents, has brought a demand draft, drawn in the name of the Registry of this Court, to enable the said Respondents to donate the remaining corpus generated by them. Upon our persuasion, the Petitioner-NGO has consented to accept the specified amount for application towards one of the causes to which the NGO is dedicated.
12. Similarly, the costs deposited by Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 shall also be transferred to the Petitioner-NGO, for being applied towards its noble cause.

C. FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING DIRECTIONS

13. In view of the observations made above, especially the substantial compliance with the orders of this Court, we believe it is appropriate

that the complaint(s), if any, filed against Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 460/2025 ought to be deemed as concluded.

- 14.** At this stage, we also find it apposite that the proceedings forming the subject matter of Writ Petition (Criminal) Nos. 83/2025 and 85/2025 be closed. The continuation of those proceedings, in the peculiar facts and circumstances of these cases, would not serve any cogent purpose.
- 15.** We are cognisant that important larger issues regarding the scope of regulation of speech on internet-based social media remain to be dealt with. In our considered opinion, those issues can be taken up by this Court in another appropriate case, while the Criminal Writ Petitions can be disposed of. It, however, goes without saying that there is no impediment for the appropriate executive authority to take necessary steps, as permissible in law, on this aspect.
- 16.** Similarly, further hearing and judicial intervention may be required on the suggestion by Ms. Aparajita Singh that a specialised corpus of funds be created by the Union of India for SMA patients. She points out that preventative as well as post-atrophy treatment is hindered due to lack of adequate and systematic financial support. We believe that the genesis of these Writ Petitions would not be the suitable foundation for such consideration. It would, rather, be in the interest of justice and all stakeholders that a dedicated case to consider this prayer be registered, while closing the Civil Writ Petition.
- 17.** Hence, invoking the powers vested in this Court under Article 142 of the Constitution, we pass the following directions:

(i) The following FIRs/complaints, along with any proceedings arising therefrom, shall stand quashed:

(a) FIR No. 05/2025 (P.S. Nodal Cyber Police, Thane, Mumbai District);

(b) FIR No. 03/2025 (P.S. Cyber Police Station, Guwahati District);

(c) FIR No. 29/2025 (P.S. Cyber Police Station, Jaipur Commissionerate); and

(d) any other criminal complaint regarding the incident involved in the Criminal Writ Petitions.

(ii) The Petitioners in the Criminal Writ Petitions may move the appropriate court for consequential discharge of their bail bonds;

(iii) The Petitioner in the Civil Writ Petition shall be at liberty to initiate contempt of court proceedings against Respondent Nos. 6 to 10 therein, if they are involved in any further incidents of disparaging, discriminatory, or demeaning content being published and circulated through social media or digital platforms; and

(iv) The Registry is directed to initiate a Suo-Moto Writ Petition titled *“In Re: Lack of Adequate and Systematic Treatment for SMA Patients and Other Ancillary Issues”* to enable this Court to take a cohesive view of the matter.

18. The instant Writ Petitions are, thus, disposed of in the above terms.
Ordered accordingly.

19. Pending applications, if any, also stand disposed of.

20. We request Ms. Aparajita Singh, learned senior counsel, to assist this Court in the newly registered Suo Moto Writ Petition, either in a representative capacity or as *amicus curiae*. The Registry shall also issue notice to the Union of India, through the Attorney General for India, in the said matter, returnable on 08.10.2026.

.....CJI
(SURYA KANT)

.....J.
(JOYMALYA BAGCHI)

.....J.
(V. MOHANA)

**NEW DELHI;
AUGUST 14, 2026**

ITEM NO.32

COURT NO.1

SECTION X

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Writ Petition(s) (Criminal) No(s). 83/2025

RANVEER GAUTAM ALLAHABADIA

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.

Respondent(s)

(IA No. 97402/2025 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS, IA No. 55507/2025 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION, IA No. 41866/2025 - GRANT OF INTERIM RELIEF, IA No. 97400/2025 - INTERVENTION APPLICATION, IA No. 43847/2025 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES and IA No. 43457/2025 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES)

WITH

W.P.(Cr1.) No. 85/2025 (X)

(IA No. 50613/2025 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES)

W.P.(C) No. 460/2025 (PIL-W)

(IA No. 295640/2025 - CLARIFICATION/DIRECTION and IA No. 295639/2025 - INTERVENTION/IMPLEADMENT)

Date : 14-08-2026 These matters were called on for hearing today.

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

For Petitioner(s) : Ms. Aparajita Singh, Sr. Adv.
Ms. Pragya Barsaiyan, Adv.
Mr. Suprateek Neogi, Adv.
Mr. Prakhar Shukla, Adv.
Mr. Shubham Rajhans, Adv.
Ms. Ansha Varma, AOR

Ms. Manju Jetley, AOR

Mr. Chandansingh Shekhawat, Adv.
Mr. Janay Jain, Adv.
Mr. Pranav Sarthi, AOR
Mr. Vinayak Chitale, Adv.
Mr. Ayush Raj, Adv.
Ms. Prachi Dhingra, Adv.
Mr. Udit Bajpai, Adv.
Mr. Utkarsh Vatsa, Adv.
Ms. Sandali Gupta, Adv.

For Respondent(s) : Mr. Ankit Roy, AOR
 Ms. Mrinalini Ramesh, Adv.
 Ms. Jaya Pandey, Adv.

Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
 Ms. Madhulika Upadhyay, AOR
 Mr. Kanu Agrawal, Adv.
 Mr. Gaurang Bhushan, Adv.
 Ms. Sansriti Pathak, Adv.
 Mr. Mayank Pandey, Adv.

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 Mr. Aaditya Aniruddha Pande, AOR
 Mr. Shrirang B. Varma, Adv.
 Mr. Aditya Krishna, Adv.
 Ms. Sushmita Pandey, Adv.
 Ms. Arunima Das, Adv.
 Mr. Ashwin Arun Hirulkar, Adv.
 Ms. Kunika Bansal, Adv.

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 Mr. Mayank Pandey, Adv.
 Mr. Abhishek Kr.pandey, Adv.
 Mr. Aman Mehta, Adv.
 Dr. N. Visakamurthy, AOR

Mr. Chinmoy Sharma, Sr. A.A.G.
 Mr. Shuvodeep Roy, AOR
 Mr. Deepayan Dutta, Adv.
 Mr. Saurabh Tripathi, Adv.
 Mr. Vijay Deora, Adv.

Ms. Nisha Bhambhani, Adv.
 Mr. Rajat Arora, AOR
 Ms. Mariya Shahab, Adv.

Mr. R. Venkataramani, Attorney General
 Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
 Mr. Anil Kaushik, A.S.G.
 Ms. Kanu Agrawal, Adv.
 Mr. Gaurang Bhushan, Adv.
 Mr. Abhishek Kumar Pandey, Adv.
 Mr. Kartikay Aggarwal, Adv.
 Mr. Raman Yadav, Adv.
 Ms. Ameyavikrama Thanvi, Adv.
 Mr. Chitvan Singhal, Adv.
 Mr. Amrish Kumar, AOR

Mr. Abhinav Mukerji, Sr. Adv.
 Mr. Sidharth Chopra, Adv.
 Mr. Nitin Sharma, Adv.

Mr. Ranjeet Singh Sidhu, Adv.
Mr. Kuber Mahajan, Adv.
Mr. Abhinav Bhalla, Adv.
Ms. Bihu Sharma, Adv.
Ms. Archita Nigam, Adv.
Mr. Nachiket Kaul, Adv.
Ms. Swikriti Singhania, AOR

Ms. Madhavi Divan, Sr. Adv.
Ms. Stuti Gujral, Adv.
Mr. Lavin Hirani, Adv.
Ms. Shubhangni Jain, Adv.
Mr. Ayush Kaushik, Adv.
Mr. Saksham Singh, Adv.
Ms. Sruthi Susan Mathew, Adv.
Mr. Miran Ahmad, Adv.
Mr. Abhay Pratap Singh, AOR

Mr. Siddharth Aggarwal, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Gaurav Agrawal, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Avinash Lalwani, Adv.
Mr. Somesh Tiwari, Adv.
Mr. Utsav Saxena, Adv.
Mr. Lavin Hirani, Adv.
Ms. Stuti Gujral, Adv.
Mr. Kartikey Singh, Adv.
Mr. Navay Hooria, Adv.
Mr. Aditya Ladha, Adv.
Ms. Jaanvi Chopra, Adv.
Mr. Jagatjeet Singh, Adv.
Ms. Shrija Rawat, Adv.
Mr. B Bharanitharan, Adv.
Mr. Vishwajeet Singh, Adv.
Ms. Vismita Diwan, Adv.
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Mr. Raman Yadav, Adv.
Ms. Ameyavikrama Thanvi, Adv.
Mr. Chitvan Singhal, Adv.
Mr. Amrish Kumar, AOR

Ms. Ansha Varma, AOR

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

The Writ Petitions are disposed of in terms of the signed order.

Pending application(s), if any, shall stand closed.

(NITIN TALREJA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(NIKITA SINGH)
COURT MASTER (NSH)

(Signed order is placed on the file)