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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ W.P.(C) 8284/2026 & CM No. 39105/2026

BADMINTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIAPetitioner
Through: Mr. Apurv Kurup, Senior Advocate
with Mr. Rajat Nair, Mr. Dhruv
Pandey & Mr. Gurjas Narula,
Advocate.

Versus

UNION OF INDIA & ANR.Respondents
Through: Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
of India with Mr. Chetan Sharma,
ASG, S. Avshreya Pratap Singh
Rudy, Mr. Ashish K. Dixit, Mr. Amit
Gupta, Ms. Usha Jamnal, Mr. Ankit
Khatri, Ms. Nyasa Sharma, Mr. R.V.
Prabhat, Mr. Yash Wardhan Sharma,
Mr. Shubham Sharma & Mr. Naman,
Advs. for R-1&2.
Ms. Shiva Laxmi & Mr. Kamaldeep,
Advocates for UOI.

CORAM:
HON'BLE JUSTICE TEJAS KARIA

ORDER
19.06.2026

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1. The present Petition has been instituted under Article 226 of the Constitution of India, 1950, seeking appropriate directions for the takedown of misleading, factually incorrect, and allegedly motivated reporting, statements, publications, posts, and related content concerning the Hon'ble Judges of the Constitutional Courts in connection with the 2nd International



Bar & Bench Badminton Championship held in London on 07.06.2026 (“**Event**”).

2. Mr. Apurv Kurup, the learned Senior Counsel for the Petitioner made the following submissions:

2.1 The Petitioner is the apex national governing body responsible for the administration, regulation, promotion and development of the sport of Badminton in India. The Petitioner is affiliated with the Badminton World Federation (“**BWF**”), being the international governing body for the sport of Badminton, and functions in accordance with the laws, rules and regulations framed and promulgated by the BWF. In its capacity as the national governing body for Badminton in India, the Petitioner is actively engaged in promoting the sport at all levels, including institutional, professional and diplomatic forums.

2.2 The Event was a *bona fide* and professionally organised international Badminton event spearheaded by Ms. Abantika Deka, a former international Badminton player of repute and founder of Deka Events. The Event was intended to promote camaraderie, sportsmanship and goodwill within the legal fraternity through the medium of Badminton. However, subsequent to the conclusion of the Event, certain sections of the print and digital media, social media handles and platforms, and organised groups published, circulated and disseminated statements, articles, posts and publications (“**Impugned Content**”), which were factually incorrect, malicious and motivated, and were calculated to scandalise and lower the dignity of the Hon’ble Chief Justice of



India and the Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts in the estimation of the public. The said publications are stated to contain, *inter alia*, the following factual misrepresentations and mis-statements:

- a. The hidden Truth behind London Badminton, CJI & Law minister | LIVE” streamed on the YouTube channel “@thepublicindia” through its owner, Neelu Vyas, which is available at <https://www.youtube.com/live/Qo667rOYcb8>.
- b. Why are 75 judges on a vacation with the Union Law Minister, listen in to the inside story | LIVE” streamed on the YouTube channel “@thepublicindia” which is available at <https://www.youtube.com/live/ty23WITcs1M>.
- c. Judges, minister went to London badminton event. Who's heeding Modi's austerity call?” which is available at <https://theprint.in/feature/judgesminister-london-badminton-modi-austeritycall/2958514/?amp>.
- d. Spotlight on foreign travel by judges and a badminton tournament in London: The storm in a teacup over a badminton event in England for 150 Indian judges and lawyers may have died down, but troubling questions remain” by Correspondent Meetu Jain, Associate Journals Limited [National Herald], which is available at <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/amp/story/national/indian-judges-cji-surya-kant-badminton-tournamentlondon>.



e. Law ministry sets up lawyers-judges badminton match in London, activists frown upon back home” by Correspondent Satya Prakash, which is available at: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/diaspora/lawministry-sets-up-lawyers-judges-badminton-match-inlondon-activists-frown-upon-backhome/> amp?shem=rimsouwoe.

f. Some of the tweets on X with misleading statements are as follows:

i. <https://x.com/priyankac19/status/2064178392942158311?s=2>

ii. https://x.com/bismil_prasad/status/2064360420631359529?s=2

iii. <https://x.com/GolfVictor007/status/2064568474282967357?s=20>

2.3 The most serious and aggravating statement is stated to have been issued by the All India Lawyers Union (“AILU”) by way of a Formal Statement dated 11.06.2026, signed by its President, Sh. Bikas Ranjan Bhattacharya, and its General Secretary, Sh. P.V. Surendranath. In the said statement, the Event was described as a “*vulgar display of inappropriate and objectionable collaboration*”, and the participation of the Hon’ble Chief Justice of India and more than 100 sitting Judges was characterised as a “*violent negation*” of the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, 2002, and as compromising judicial independence. The said statement was made without any factual, legal or evidentiary foundation.

2.4 The Impugned Content forms part of a concerted and politically motivated campaign and attack against the integrity of the Judiciary. Under the pretext of the Event, unfounded allegations against the Hon’ble Chief Justice of India and sitting Judges of the



Hon'ble Supreme Court and High Courts are levelled through distortion of facts and use of inflammatory expressions intended to undermine public confidence in the institution of Judiciary.

- 2.5 On 10.06.2026, the Press Information Bureau (“**PIB**”) Fact Check Unit issued a public clarification stating that social media claims regarding the visit of Shri Kiren Rijiju, Hon'ble Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, and Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State for Law & Justice, to London for a Badminton event with Judges were entirely false. It further clarified that the viral photographs were from a Badminton event held in November 2025 at Thyagaraj Stadium, New Delhi, and not from London.
- 2.6 On 11.06.2026, the Ministry of Law & Justice, Department of Legal Affairs, issued an official statement clarifying that reports alleging the participation of Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Law & Justice, along with 75 Judges of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and various High Courts in the Event, were false and misleading. The statement further recorded that the old photographs, including one from the All India Judges' Badminton Championship held on 29.11.2025 at Thyagaraj Stadium, New Delhi, were being misrepresented as photographs from the Event.
3. Issue Notice. Learned Counsel for the Respondents accept Notice.
4. Mr. Tushar Mehta, the learned Solicitor General of India along with Mr. Chetan Sharma, the learned Additional Solicitor General of India submitted on behalf of the Respondents that:



- 4.1 The photographs circulated on social media depicting the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vikram Nath and Hon'ble Ministers Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal and Shri Kiran Rijju playing Badminton in London are misleading.
- 4.2 The Photographs were taken when a national level Bar and Bench Badminton tournament was held on 29.11.2025 at Thyagraj Stadium, New Delhi. In the aforesaid tournament, Hon'ble Judges and lawyers from various High Courts participated. On the inaugural day, a token first match was played by the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Vikram Nath and Hon'ble Ministers Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal & Shri Kiran Rijju.
- 4.3 The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India has never participated in any Badminton tournament and / or any sports activities in London. The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India was on an official visit to London for few days in June 2026, where his Lordships met the President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom is the Right Honourable Lord Reed of Allermuir and attended an official function at the Supreme Court of United Kingdom. The Hon'ble Chief Justice of India also addressed functions concerning Arbitration Law and Artificial Intelligence in London.
- 4.4 None of the Hon'ble Ministers, i.e., Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal and Shri Kiran Rijju ever visited London. It is absolutely false to suggest that the Hon'ble Law Minister had gone with 75 Hon'ble Judges to London. Firstly, the Hon'ble Law Minister never visited London during this period and was in India only. Secondly, as per



the information of the Government, only two Judges from Allahabad High Court visited London in their personal capacity.

4.5 It is unfortunate that by peddling fake news based upon a different event held in Delhi, the image of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, and other High Courts is attempted to be tarnished.

5. Having considered the submissions advanced by the learned Senior Counsel for the Petitioner and the learned Solicitor General of India, this Court is of the view that the Impugned Content is *ex-facie* false, malicious and derogatory to the Judiciary, the Executive and the sport of Badminton. The continued circulation and dissemination of such content has a direct bearing on the reputation of these institutions and, if not restrained forthwith, is likely to erode public confidence in the justice delivery system.

6. The material placed on record indicates a systematic misinformation campaign intended to malign the reputation of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India and Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts. It further appears that the Hon'ble Union Ministers have also been unnecessarily targeted through the dissemination of false and misleading information. The institution of the Judiciary is sought to be undermined through the use of social media platforms, search engines, web-hosting platforms, digital media platforms and other online services.

7. The false narrative sought to be propagated is that Hon'ble Judges and Hon'ble Union Ministers undertook foreign travel, at public expense, to participate in a sporting event, which appears to be entirely false and fabricated based on the PIB Fact Check exercise, which is also reconfirmed by the submissions made by the learned Solicitor General of India.



8. Therefore, it is clear that the information disseminated through the Impugned Content is misleading and intended to disparage the reputation of the Judiciary. Photographs pertaining to the Badminton tournament held in November 2025 at Thyagaraj Stadium, New Delhi, have been misrepresented as photographs from the Event. The questioning of judicial independence based on such false and misleading content is wholly unsupported by any factual or evidentiary foundation.

9. The Impugned Content does not merely amount to criticism, comment or fair reportage, but appears to be founded on demonstrably incorrect factual assertions, including the circulation of photographs unrelated to the Event and the attribution of participation to persons who, on the material placed before this Court, were not present at the Event. The dissemination of such false and misleading information, particularly when directed against Constitutional Courts, has the potential to cause serious and irreversible injury to public confidence in the justice delivery system.

10. This Court is, therefore, satisfied that strong case is made out for issuance of urgent directions in respect of the Impugned Content. Accordingly, the Respondents are directed to forthwith issue an appropriate Notification under the Information Technology Act, 2000 and the Rules framed thereunder or any other applicable law, in terms of the present Order, directing all concerned intermediaries, including social media intermediaries, significant social media intermediaries, search engines, web-hosting platforms, digital media platforms, internet service providers and other online service providers, to take down, remove, block, disable, de-index and restrict access to the Impugned Content, including fake and fabricated news, articles, videos and related material featuring or purporting



to depict the alleged participation, association or involvement of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court of India and the High Courts, and Hon'ble Union Ministers in the 2nd International Bar & Bench Badminton Championship held in London on 07.06.2026, together with any identical, mirrored, modified, edited, clipped, reproduced, re-uploaded, derivative or substantially similar versions thereof, by specifying the URLs including the URLs contained in Annexure-A to this Order, within 24 hours of receipt of the Notification.

11. All the recipients of the Notification shall also preserve and furnish, in a password-protected document or sealed cover, the Basic Subscriber Information and other relevant information available in respect of the uploaders or account operators disseminating the Impugned Content, including name, address, contact details, e-mail addresses, bank details, IP logs and allied records, within one week of receipt of the Notification to the Respondents, who shall initiate appropriate legal action against them in accordance with law.

12. The Respondents shall also issue a Notification in terms of this Order to all uploaders, news portals, bloggers, account holders and other concerned persons, directing them to take down the Impugned Content and restraining them from uploading, publishing, hosting, communicating to the public, circulating, distributing, posting, tweeting, sharing, reproducing, transmitting or otherwise disseminating or making available, directly or indirectly, the Impugned Content or any identical, mirrored, modified, edited, clipped, reproduced, re-uploaded, derivative or substantially similar version thereof on any platform, website, social media account, channel, handle, application or medium whatsoever.



13. Members of the public are further restrained from uploading, publishing, circulating, sharing or otherwise disseminating the Impugned Content on any social media platform, search engine, web-hosting platform, digital media platform or other online media or platform.

14. The Respondents are directed to file a Status Report indicating compliance with the aforesaid directions within three weeks.

15. List for compliance on 17.07.2026.

TEJAS KARIA, J
(VACATION JUDGE)

JUNE 19, 2026

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ANNEXURE-A

- A. <https://www.youtube.com/live/Qo667rOYcb8>.
- B. <https://www.youtube.com/live/ty23WITcs1M>.
- C. <https://theprint.in/feature/judgesminister-london-badminton-modi-austeritycall/2958514/?amp>
- D. <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/amp/story/national/indian-judges-cji-surya-kant-badminton-tournamentlondon>.
- E. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/diaspora/lawministry-sets-up-lawyers-judges-badminton-match-inlondon-activists-frown-upon-backhome/amp?shem=rimsouwoe>
- F. <https://x.com/priyankac19/status/2064178392942158311?s=2>
- G. https://x.com/bismil_prasad/status/2064360420631359529?s=2
- H. <https://x.com/GolfVictor007/status/2064568474282967357?s=20>