

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MANIPUR
AT IMPHAL**

W.P.(Crl.) No. 20 of 2026

Ashish Joseph aged about 38 S/o Surinder Joseph R/O 27-A,
Third Floor L/S, Front Portion, Masjid Moth, Near Uday Park,
VTC: Andrewsganj, PO: Andrewsganj, South Delhi, NEW
DELHI-110049.

... Petitioner

Versus

1. The State of Manipur represented by Chief Secretary
Government of Manipur, P.O. Mantripukhri & P.S.
Heingang, Imphal East, MANIPUR -795002.
2. The Superintendent of Police Imphal West, P.O. & P.S.
IMPHAL, Manipur – 795113.
3. The Officer-in-Charge, Patsoi Police Station, PO.
Langjing Achouba & PS Patsoi, Imphal West, Manipur-
795113.
4. Sarangthem Pushparani Devi (DETENU) aged about
30 D/O Pradeepkumar Singh.
5. Pradeep Kumar Singh (father of the Detenu).
6. MS. NG. Ibetombi Devi W/o Pradeep Kumar Singh
(mother of the detenu)

*Respondent Nos. 4 to 6 are all
resident of Patsoi Part-I, Patsoi
Sub-Division, PO. Langjing
Achouba & PS Patsoi, Imphal
West, Manipur – 795113.*

... Respondents

BEFORE
HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE MR. M. SUNDAR
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AHANTHEM BIMOL SINGH

For petitioner	Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal, Advocate along with Ms. Soniya Panwar and Mr. Dayali Elangbam, Advocates
For respondent Nos. 1 to 3	Mr. RK Umakanta, senior advocate and Public Prosecutor, State of Manipur instructed by Mr. W. Niranjit, State Counsel
For respondent Nos. 5 and 6	Mr. Ng. Somorjit, Advocate
Date of Order	25.06.2026

ORDER

[M. Sundar, CJ]

[1] Read this in conjunction with and in continuation of order dated 22.06.2026 made in the captioned WP which reads as follows :

'REPORTABLE

Sl. No. 1

IN THE HIGH COURT OF MANIPUR

AT IMPHAL

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Respondent Nos. 4 to 6 are all resident of Patsoi Part-I, Patsoi Sub-Division, PO. Langjing Achouba & PS Patsoi, Imphal West, Manipur – 795113.

... Respondents

**BEFORE
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HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AHANTHEM BIMOL
SINGH**

For petitioner	Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal, Advocate along with Mr. Dayali Elangbam, Advocate
For respondent Nos. 1 to 3	Mr. RK Umakanta, senior advocate and Public Prosecutor, State of Manipur instructed by Mr. W. Niranjit, State Counsel
For respondent Nos. 5 and 6	Mr. Ng. Somorjit, Advocate
Date of Judgment & Order	22.06.2026

**JUDGMENT & ORDER
(ORAL)**

[M. Sundar, CJ]

[1] This order will now dispose of the captioned WP (Writ Petition).

[2] This order is to be read in conjunction with and in continuation of proceedings/orders made in the previous listing on 20.06.2026 which reads as follows:

‘Suppl.-1, Sl. No. 1

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MANIPUR
AT IMPHAL**

W.P.(Crl.) No. 20 of 2026

Ashish Joseph aged about 38 S/o Surinder Joseph R/O 27-A, Third Floor L/S, Front Portion, Masjid Moth, Near Uday Park, VTC: Andrewsganj, PO: Andrewsganj, South Delhi, NEW DELHI-110049.

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3. The Officer-in-Charge, Patsoi Police Station, PO. Langjing Achouba & PS Patsoi, Imphal West, Manipur- 795113.
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... Respondents

BEFORE

**HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE MR. M. SUNDAR
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AHANTHEM BIMOL SINGH
(ORDER)**

(Order of the Court was made by Mr. M. Sundar, CJ)

20.06.2026

[1] Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal and Mr. Dayali Elangbam, learned counsel on record for the writ petitioner is before this Court (physical Court). To be noted, the writ petitioner is before this Court on the Video Conferencing (V.C.) platform.

[2] Captioned WP (Writ Petition) has been filed with a habeas corpus plea alleging that R4 (Sarangthem Pushparani Devi), daughter of Pradeepkumar Singh (R5), aged about 30 years has been illegally detained by her parents i.e., R5 and R6. To be noted, 'R4', 'R5' and 'R6' denote 'fourth respondent', 'fifth respondent' and 'sixth respondent' respectively and similar abbreviation/short form is being used for other respondents also.

[3] To be noted, R4 is being referred to as 'detainee' solely for the sake of convenience and the

same shall not be construed as expression of any opinion one way or the other in this order.

[4] The case of the writ petitioner is that the writ petitioner and detainee met in Delhi, they have known each other for over 4 (four) years now, they have decided to get married, writ petitioner's parents and detainee's parents have met and parents of both (detainee and writ petitioner) are aware of intended marriage. Detainee, in March of 2026 was requested by R6 to come over to Imphal for making purchases for wedding, detainee travelled from Delhi to Imphal on 29.03.2026 but thereafter, the writ petitioner alleges that instead of taking steps for marriage, the detainee has been illegally detained against her will by her parents and detainee is being forced to completely detach herself from the writ petitioner. It is the further specific case of writ petitioner that detainee is being illegally detained incommunicado and when she managed to lay her hands on her mobile phone, she made a call to the writ petitioner on 23.05.2026. It is also the case of the writ petitioner that a purported self-declaration has been extracted from the detainee involuntarily by coercion on 30.05.2026.

[5] To be noted, the writ petitioner approached Hon'ble Supreme Court inter-alia by resorting to Article 32 of the Constitution of India and Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 12.06.2026 made in Writ Petition (Criminal) No. 229 of 2026 reserved the right of the writ petitioner to invoke writ jurisdiction of this Court, pursuant to which captioned WP has been presented in this Court on 19.06.2026.

[6] Prima facie case for issue of notice made out.

[7] Issue notice to all respondents.

[8] Mr. W. Niranjit Singh, learned State Counsel led by Mr. RK Umakanta, learned senior advocate and learned State Public Prosecutor, is present in Court and Mr. W. Niranjit Singh, learned State

Counsel, accepts notice for official respondents R1 to R3. This Court is informed that R5 and R6 reside within the jurisdiction of the police station i.e., Patsoi police station and the Officer-in-Charge of this Patsoi police station is R3. Besides, notice in conventional mode/s to R4 to R6, State Counsel shall communicate this order to R4 to R6 through R3 forthwith.

[9] Learned State Public Prosecutor to ensure that R4 (detainee) is produced in this Court through/by R3 on Monday (22.06.2026).

[10] List under a suitable cause list caption on Monday.

[11] List on 22.06.2026.

JUDGE CHIEF JUSTICE

Sushil

P.S. I : Upload forthwith

P.S. II : All concerned will stand bound by instant order vide web copy uploaded in High Court website inter-alia as the same is QR coded.'

[3] Pursuant to afore-referred earlier proceedings/orders of this Court, today R-3 Mr. Soram Sarat Kumar, MPS (Proby), Officer-in-charge, Patsoi Police Station along with Ms. M. Dhaneshwori Devi, Ms. Th. Manileima Devi and Ms. W. Debala Devi, Women Constables of Patsoi Police Station were in Court and they produced R-4 (detainee). To be noted, short forms/abbreviations used in earlier proceedings/orders continue to be used in instant order for the sake of convenience and clarity.

[4] R-5 and R-6 were also present in Court and they are represented by Mr. Ng. Somorjit, learned counsel. As regards R-1 to R-3 (official respondents), Mr. RK. Umakanta, learned senior advocate and Public Prosecutor, State of Manipur instructed by Mr. W. Niranjit Singh, learned State counsel is before this Court.

[5] As regards the writ petitioner, he is before this Court on the Video Conferencing (VC) platform and his counsel Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal and Mr. Dayali Elangbam are before this Court (physical Court).

[6] Considering the nature of the matter, facts and circumstances of the case, this Court deemed it appropriate to have the statement of R-4 recorded in-camera rather than in open court. The same was done (after interaction of R-4 with members of this Division Bench) by learned Registrar (Vigilance) of this Court who is a serving woman District Judge in the District Judiciary of Manipur.

[7] R-4, who is clearly a major (29 years), as alluded to supra, wants to go back to Delhi, pursue her career there and make her own personal choice with regard to marriage. At the moment, she intends to marry the writ petitioner.

[8] R-4 has also made a statement that she would prefer that her parents (R-5 and R-6) and other members of her family are not taken to task though she is not now allowed to go out of her home alone and though her laptop (Lenovo) and mobile phone (we refrain from giving the mobile number in this judicial order) have been forcibly taken away/snatched by her parents/brother and she has for all practical purposes detained at home by R-5, R-6, her brother and other members of her family for nearly three months now.

[9] R-4 also made it clear that she does not want Mr. Ng. Somorjit, learned counsel to appear for her as she involuntarily signed in a paper (appears to be *Vakalatnama*) at the instance of/insistence of R-5 and R-6. Mr. Ng. Somorjit, learned counsel very fairly submitted that he would withdraw his *Vakalatnama* for R-4. The *Vakalatnama* is determined dispensing with the formality of filing a determination application. To be noted, this determination of *vakalatnama* is owing to nature of the matter and this shall not serve as precedent in all cases. Appointment of new counsel is not necessary as matter is drawing to a close.

[10] After recording of the aforesaid statement, this Court resumed open court hearing and had interaction with R-5 and R-6 in open Court.

[11] This Court directed presence of R-2 and Mr. Ksh. Shivakanta Singh, IPS, Superintendent of Police, Imphal West District, Manipur is present in Court.

[12] All the afore-referred counsel on both sides agreed to give a closure to the captioned matter and abide by directions of this Court which will be set out infra. To be noted, there will be a post disposal

ATR listing with a window to re-open the matter, if necessary. To be noted, 'ATR' denotes 'Action Taken Report'.

[13] Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal and Mr. Dayali Elangbam, learned counsel on record for the writ petitioner submitted, on instructions, (after a telecon with writ petitioner) that the writ petitioner who is now in Delhi will fly down to Imphal tomorrow and will go with R-4 to Delhi. R-4 submitted in open Court, on her own volition, that she will travel to Delhi with writ petitioner. R-2 is directed to give adequate security/protection and ensure that writ petitioner and R-4 are not harmed in any manner as it is submitted that writ petitioner had received some threats. This Court makes it clear that this observation is made as a matter of abundant caution and as a direction is required to R-2 and therefore, this shall not be read as an expression of any view or opinion on whether there was a threat or not.

[14] The statement given by R-4, Ms. Sarangthem Pushparani Devi, (duly signed) is put in a sealed envelope and sealed envelope shall now be in the custody of Registrar (Judicial) of this Court for further/future reference, if there is any need. This course is adopted as R-4 submitted that she does not want R-5, R-6 and her family members to be put in difficulty because of her statement as long as she is allowed to go to Delhi, pursue her career and marry writ petitioner.

[15] As regards the mobile phone and laptop of R-4, Mr. Ng. Somorjit, learned counsel for R-5 and R-6, on instructions, very fairly submitted that the mobile phone [this Court is informed that it is an i-phone 11 (Red)] and Laptop [Lenovo] were taken away forcibly from R-4, the devices are being brought to Court by her brother {son of R-5 and R-6, Mr. Muktaraj Sarangthem} and that R-5, R-6 and Mr. Muktaraj Sarangthem would handover the same i.e., mobile phone and laptop to R3 who will in turn handover the same to R4 (detainee) today.

[16] It is pertinent to record that at the request of R-6, R-6 and R-4 (detainee) i.e., mother and daughter had substantial interaction for considerable time in court and after interaction also R-4 reiterated her statement/stand that she wants to leave for Delhi with writ petitioner, pursue/continue her career and marry writ petitioner.

[17] As R-4 and all concerned did not want to precipitate the matter, the statement of R-4 is being kept in a sealed cover in custody of Registrar (Judicial) as alluded to supra.

[18] The following order is made:

- (i) R-2 shall now give adequate police protection/escort to R-4 to go over to her residence at Patsoi Part – I, near YMC Club, Imphal West, Manipur – 795113 and take her personal effects including her marksheets and other education related certificates. An inventory of what she takes shall be made and maintained in jurisdictional Police Station. This shall be done forthwith i.e., today;
- (ii) R-4 will leave for Delhi tomorrow or day after tomorrow (23.06.2026 Tuesday or 24.06.2026 Wednesday) with writ petitioner. R-2 shall provide adequate police protection and security to R-4 and writ petitioner to ensure that they board the flight to Delhi;
- (iii) R-4 till leaving for Delhi will stay in a place of her choice, be it the residence of her friend/s or hotel and R-2 shall ensure that adequate police protection is given to R-4 and writ petitioner in their place of stay until they board the flight.

[19] Captioned WP disposed of as closed in the aforesaid manner.

[20] Though captioned matter is disposed of in the aforesaid manner, the same shall be listed under the caption ‘Action Taken Report’ (‘ATR’) on Thursday (25.06.2026) and R-2 shall file an ATR on that day.

JUDGE

CHIEF JUSTICE

Sushil/Bipin

FR/NFR

P.S. I : Upload forthwith

P.S. II : All concerned will stand bound by instant order vide web copy uploaded in High Court website inter-alia as the same is QR coded.’

[2] Pursuant to aforesaid order dated 22.06.2026, captioned matter is listed before this Court today under the cause list caption 'FOR ACTION TAKEN REPORT'.

[3] On behalf of writ petitioner, counsel on record Mr. Dayali Elangbam is present in Court (physical Court) and his co-counsel Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal, learned counsel on record along with Ms. Soniya Panwar is before this Court on the Video Conferencing (V.C.) platform. As regards R1 to R3, Mr. W. Niranjit Singh, learned State Counsel led by Mr. RK Umakanta, learned senior counsel and learned State Public Prosecutor is before this Court (physical Court). As regards R5 and R6, Mr. Ng. Somorjit, learned counsel is before this Court (physical Court).

[4] To be noted, R4 is now in Delhi and Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal, learned counsel on record for writ petitioner along with Ms. Soniya Panwar is before this Court on the Video Conferencing (VC) platform as alluded to supra, writ petitioner and R4 (detainee) are present along with them. Mr. Kuldeep Singh Grewal submits that he is addressing this Court on VC platform from his chambers in Delhi. To put it differently, writ petitioner and R-4 are before this Court on the V.C. platform.

[5] As regards ATR, an ATR signed by R3 has been placed before this Court under cover of a letter dated 24.06.2026 bearing Reference No. 7/14/SP-IW/2026/11278 from R2 to learned State Counsel. To be noted, learned counsel for writ petitioner and learned counsel for R5 and R6 have been favoured with copies of ATR.

[6] All the afore referred counsel, State Counsel, senior counsel and State Public Prosecutor, counsel for writ petitioner, counsel for R-5

and R-6 as well as writ petitioner and R4 submit in one voice in unison that afore referred order dated 22.06.2026 in captioned WP has been duly complied.

[7] Before writing the concluding paragraph, this Court deems it appropriate to place on record its appreciation to all parties and their counsel i.e., writ petitioner, official respondents, detainee (R4), parents of detainee (R5 and R6) for taking a fair and balanced approach, particularly R2, R3 and their team for deft and swift action and filing an ATR that articulates the events and trajectory with absolute specificity and clarity *inter alia* making it clear that afore-referred WP order has been duly complied.

[8] Recording due compliance, case file *qua* captioned matter is consigned to records (to be noted, 'consigned to records' would mean that Registry need not list this matter anymore) as the captioned WP has already been disposed of vide afore referred order dated 22.06.2026. However, statement of R-4 in sealed envelope will continue to be in safe custody of learned Registrar (Judicial) of this Court.

JUDGE

CHIEF JUSTICE

FR/NFR

Sushil

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