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

+ **W.P.(CRL) 4257/2025**

RAJAGOPAL CHAKRAVARTHI VENKATEISHPetitioner

Through: Mr. Gautam Narayan, Senior
Advocate with Mr. Ashish Prasad,
Ms. Mukta Dutta and Mr. Atri Roy
Choudhury, Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ANR.Respondents

Through: Mr. Syed Abdul Haseeb, CGSC with
Ms. Nasreen Khatoon, GP for R-1, 2.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

ORDER
22.12.2025

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1. The Petitioner is an accused in a complaint bearing FOR No. 087/0506 filed by the Divisional Forest Officer, Sohna, Gurugram, pursuant to which proceedings in COMA No. 730/2023 (subsequently renumbered as COMA No. 259/2024) were initiated under Sections 32 and 33 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927¹.
2. The aforesaid proceedings are presently pending before the Court of the JMFC, Gurugram, and stand stayed by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh in CRM-15717-2025 and CRM-M-47620-2024.
3. The Petitioner's grievance is that when he applied for renewal of his passport, the Regional Passport Office, though acceding to the request,

¹ "Forest Act"



renewed the passport only for a period of one year instead of ten years, as contemplated under the Passports Act, 1967² read with the Rules framed thereunder.

4. The Passport Office has placed reliance on the Ministry of External Affairs Notification No. G.S.R. 570(E) dated 25th August, 1993, and has insisted that the Petitioner obtain a specific direction from the competent court prescribing the tenure of passport renewal, on the ground that the Petitioner is an accused in a pending criminal proceeding.

5. On this issue, it is pertinent to note that this Court has already held that neither the Passports Act nor the Rules framed thereunder provide for such a requirement. The reasoning of this Court in CRL.M.C. 3166/2025, titled ***Kaushalya Devi v. State of NCT of Delhi & Anr.***, squarely applies to the present case. The Passport Office, therefore, cannot insist upon a court-specified validity period for renewal. Notably, a similar view has also been expressed by the JMFC, Gurugram, who, upon a request made by the Petitioner, observed that the Court has no authority to direct renewal of a passport for any specified tenure, and that the passport authorities are required to act in accordance with the applicable rules.

6. At the same time, it must be noted that the Petitioner is presently on bail and there is no restriction on his travel. The court of JMFC, Gurugram, by order dated 27th August, 2025, has already granted no objection for renewal of the Petitioner's passport. Further, by a subsequent order dated 1st October, 2025, the said Court has also granted permission travel abroad. Copies of the said orders are on record.

7. In view of the foregoing, and for the same reasons as set out in

² "Passports Act"



Kaushalya Devi, the present petition is disposed of with a direction to the concerned Regional Passport Office to consider the Petitioner's application for renewal afresh, in accordance with law, without insisting upon a court-specified validity period.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

DECEMBER 22, 2025

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