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JYOTI SHARMA
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**NAFR**

**HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR**

**WPS No. 7214 of 2026**

Manish Kumar Verma S/o Shiv Kumar Verma Aged About 42 Years Posted As In Charge Principal Govt High School Jogipur Kota District Bilaspur C. G. R/o Ghutiya P O Baitulpur Tehsil Pathariya District Mungeli C. G.

**... Petitioner(s)**

**versus**

**1.** State Of Chhattisgarh Through The Secretary Ministry Of Education Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan New Raipur Atal Nagar District Raipur C. G.

**2.** Director Public Education Directorate Atal Nagar Naya Raipur District Raipur C. G.

**3.** Joint Director Education Department District Bilaspur C. G.

**4.** Additional Director Education Department District Bilaspur C. G.

**5.** Collector District Bilaspur C.G.

**6.** District Education Officer District Bilaspur C. G.

**... Respondent(s)**

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|---|---|---|
| For Petitioner | : | Mr. Achyut Tiwari, Advocate |
| For State/Respondent | : | Mr. Suyashdhar Badgaiya, G.A. |

**(Hon’ble Shri Justice Bibhu Datta Guru)**

**Order on Board**

**04/11/2026**

1. By the present petition, the petitioner has prayed for following reliefs:-

“10.1 That, the Hon'ble court may kindly be pleased to call

for the entire records from the respondents pertaining to the case of the petitioner.

10.2 That, the Hon'ble Court may kindly be pleased to quash/set aside the departmental enquiry (Annexure P/5) initiated and pending against the petitioner in the interest of justice.

10.3 That, the Hon'ble Court may kindly be pleased to direct the Respondent authorities to keep the departmental enquiry initiated against the Petitioner vide departmental charge-sheet dated 19.11.2025 (Annexure P/5) in abeyance till the final disposal of Criminal Case No. 3276/2025 pending before the learned J.M.F.C., Kota, District Bilaspur (C.G.), and Special Criminal Case (POCSO Act) No. 179/2025 pending before the learned Additional Sessions Court, Second Fast Track Special Court (POCSO), Bilaspur, District Bilaspur (C.G.), in the interest of justice.

10.4 Any other relief (s) that this Hon'ble Court may deem fit to grant in the interest of Justice.

2. At the outset, learned counsel appearing for the parties would jointly and fairly submit that the issue involved in this writ petition has already been considered and decided by this Court vide order dated **15.10.2026** passed in **WPS No.7565 of 2026**, wherein this Court held as under:-

“7. The question for consideration is whether, in the facts and circumstances of the present case, the departmental proceedings ought to be deferred until the common witnesses have been examined before the criminal Court.

8. The law on the subject is well settled. There is no absolute or inflexible rule that departmental proceedings must invariably remain stayed during the pendency of a criminal trial. Both proceedings may ordinarily continue simultaneously, as they are distinct in nature and the standard of proof applicable to them is different. However, where the criminal charge is grave, the factual foundation of both proceedings is substantially the same, the witnesses and evidence are common, and continuation of the departmental inquiry is likely to prejudice the defence of the delinquent employee in the criminal trial, deferment of the departmental proceedings may be warranted in the interests of justice.

9. In ***Capt. M. Paul Anthony v. Bharat Gold Mines Ltd. and Another, reported in (1999) 3 SCC 679***, the Hon’ble Supreme Court explained the circumstances in which it may be desirable to stay departmental proceedings pending a criminal trial, particularly where the charges are grave and involve complicated

questions of fact and law and the evidence in the two proceedings is substantially similar. The principles governing the issue have also been considered in ***Divisional Controller, Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation v. M.G. Vittal Rao, reported in (2012) 1 SCC 442; Stanzen Toyotetsu India Private Limited v. Girish V. and Others, reported in (2014) 3 SCC 636;*** and ***State Bank of India and Others v. Neelam Nag and Others, reported in (2016) 9 SCC 491***. The consistent view is that the question of deferment must be determined on the facts of each case, keeping in view the nature of the allegations, the identity of the evidence and the likelihood of prejudice, while also ensuring that departmental proceedings are not unnecessarily delayed.

10. XXX XXX XXX

11. A comparison of the material supplied indicates substantial overlap in the subject matter of the two proceedings. The concern raised by the petitioner is not merely that two proceedings are pending simultaneously, but that the examination of common witnesses in the departmental inquiry before their examination in the criminal trial may disclose the defence of the petitioner and adversely affect her

position before the criminal Court. It is, however, necessary to clarify that the mere existence of common witnesses would not, in every case, justify staying the entire departmental inquiry. The relief must be confined to what is necessary to protect the fairness of the criminal trial, without unduly impeding the disciplinary authority in the discharge of its duties. In this regard, the observations of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***Avinash Sadashiv Bhosale (Dead) through LRs. v. Union of India, reported in (2012) 13 SCC 142,*** and ***Shashi Bhushan Prasad v. Inspector General, C.I.S.F., Civil Appeal No. 7130 of 2009, decided on 01.08.2019***, may also be kept in view while applying the settled principles to the facts of the present case.

12. Having regard to the nature of the allegations, the substantial overlap between the factual issues involved in the criminal case and the departmental charge, and the material indicating that witnesses to the incident are common to both proceedings, this Court is of the considered view that the interests of justice would be served by deferring the examination of common witnesses in the departmental inquiry until they have been examined before the Trial Court in the pending criminal case. Such a course would safeguard the petitioner against the possibility of premature

disclosure of her defence, while at the same time preserving the authority of the departmental authorities to proceed with the inquiry in accordance with law. The direction is not intended to suspend disciplinary action indefinitely or to prevent the authorities from taking steps which do not cause prejudice to the petitioner's defence in the criminal trial.

3. Having considered the entire facts situation of the case, also considering the joint submissions made by the parties and further considering the fact that the identical issue has already been considered and decided by this Court in **WPS No.7565/2026**, this writ petition is also allowed and disposed of in terms of the order passed in the aforesaid writ petition.

4. Accordingly, it is directed that the respondents shall defer the examination of those witnesses in the departmental inquiry against the petitioner who are also cited as witnesses in the pending criminal case, until such common witnesses have been examined before the competent Trial Court. The departmental proceedings shall thereafter continue in accordance with law, subject to the applicable service rules and the observations made hereinabove.

5. In the result, the writ petition is **allowed and disposed of.**

**SD/-**

(**Bibhu Datta Guru**)
**JUDGE**

Jyoti