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

\# **CNR No. DLHC010483612026**

\+ W.P.(CRL) 3168/2026

MS CHAHAT RAGHAV .....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Akhil Sibal, Senior Advocate along with Mr. Vipul Wadhwa, Ms. Kashika Gera, Mr. Krishnesh Bapat & Mr. Aditya Raj Patodia, Advocates.

versus

UNION OF INDIA & ORS. .....Respondents

Through: Mr. Chetan Sharma, Additional Solicitor General along with Mr. Ashish K. Dixit, CGSC, Mr. Umar Hashmi, Mr. Amit Gupta & Mr. Naman, Advocates for Union of India.

Mr R.N Singh, Legal Officer along with Mr. Rishi Kr. Choudhary & Mr. Ravinder Kumar Chauhan for RAF.

CORAM:
HON'BLE THE ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ARUN BHARDWAJ

O R D E R

% 07.10.2026

1. In this Public Interest Litigation ("**PIL**") petition, the prayer reads as under:

> "*a) Issue necessary Directions and/or Orders to constitute an appropriate expert committee to formulate and place before this Hon'ble Court for review and approval, a binding Standard Operating Procedure, making the use of Body-Worn Cameras mandatory and continuous (always-on) for every member of the Delhi Police and the Rapid Action Force deployed on crowd-control, protest-management or dispersal duty, from the commencement of deployment until stand-down;*

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b) Issue a Writ of Mandamus and/or appropriate Directions to the Respondents Nos. 1 to 4, to notify and implement in a time bound manner, the duly approved Standard Operating Procedure, making the use of BodyWorn Cameras mandatory and continuous (always-on) for every member of the Delhi Police and the Rapid Action Force deployed on crowd-control, protest-management or dispersal duty, from the commencement of deployment until stand-down;

c) Direct that all footage so generated shall be (i) hashed at the point of capture; (ii) uploaded to a secure server (if possible, the server be under the supervision of the office a Magistrate), which the wearing officer can neither access nor edit; (iii) maintained with a complete and auditable chain of custody; and (iv) certified in accordance with Section 63 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023, so as to be admissible in evidence;

d) Direct that such footage shall be preserved for a minimum period of eighteen months, and that such period shall stand automatically extended the moment any complaint, first information report, inquiry or proceeding concerning the footage is lodged/initiated;

e) Direct that the footage shall be made available, through a restricted and logged access protocol and direct the formulation of an appropriate mechanism to entertain, admit and review the requests for making such footage available; and"

2. Amongst others, the Standing Order No. L&O/10/2022 ("**Standing Order**") titled '*Guidelines for Regulation of Rallies/Processions in Delhi*' and also the judgement of Hon'ble Apex Court in the matter of ***Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan v. Union of India***, 2018 INSC 635 in W.P.(C) 1153/2017 along with connected appeals, certain directions were issued in this regard.

3. Amongst others, a specific ground is urged about the Standing Operating Procedures ("**SOPs**") to be framed in the matter of use of body-worn cameras, their operation, memory and storage of the data collected

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through the such cameras at the time of handling certain mob related incidents.

4. In response to the submissions made by the counsel for the petitioner, Mr. Chetan Sharma, learned Additional Solicitor General, submits that, as and when required, the respondents have already framed SOPs through the Standing Order (*supra*). It is, however, urged that the present writ petition of the petitioner may be treated as a representation and the decision taken shall be communicated within a period of six months from today.

5. Based on the aforesaid submissions, it is apparent that the use of body-worn cameras by the police officials/personnel can be inferred not only from the tender issued for the procurement of the same, but also from the use of the same by the Traffic Police personnel.

6. The SOPs of these body-worn cameras are informed to be not in existence yet. Perhaps, the aforesaid gadget, in view of advancement of technology is being used for the purpose of policing and handling the mob.

7. In such an eventuality, there might not be a provision in the police manual to deal with the aforesaid aspect, including that of the Standing Order (*supra*). However, since the aforesaid statement is coming from the highest law official, learned Additional Solicitor General appearing for the Union of India, we deem it appropriate to take the same on record.

8. In view of the above, we direct the respondents to communicate the decision taken on the aspect of training of the SOPs in the matter of use and operation of body-worn cameras within a period of six months from today.

9. In case, in future, the petitioner is aggrieved by the inaction or in regard to the unreasonable terms in the SOPs, liberty is granted to approach afresh.

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10. Accordingly, the present PIL stands disposed of.

11. Pending application(s), if any, also stands disposed of.

NITIN WASUDEO SAMBRE, ACJ

ARUN BHARDWAJ, J

OCTOBER 7, 2026*/AN/KP*

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