

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Writ Petition(s)(Civil) No(s).451/2026

DIVYA & ORS.

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

UNION OF INDIA & ORS.

Respondent(s)

FOR ADMISSION

IA No. 107066/2026 - EXEMPTION FROM FILING O.T.

IA No. 109073/2026 - PERMISSION TO FILE ADDITIONAL
DOCUMENTS/FACTS/ANNEXURES

Date : 31-07-2026 This matter was called on for hearing today.

CORAM : HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE JOYMALYA BAGCHI
HON'BLE MRS. JUSTICE V. MOHANA

For Petitioner(s) :Mr. Ritvik Bhanot, Adv.
Mr. Adyayan Gupta, Adv.
Mr. Aayush Shankar, Adv.
Mr. Sandeep Kumar Sen, AOR

For Respondent(s) :Ms. Aishwarya Bhati, A.S.G.
Ms. Anupriya Srivastava, Adv.
Mr. Anirudh Singh, Adv.
Mr. Sudarshan Lamba, AOR
Mr. Madhav Sinhal, Adv.
Ms. Sansriti Pathak, Adv.
Ms. Chitrangda Rastravara, Adv.
Mr. Nithin Chowdhary Paluvari, Adv.

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R

1. The petitioners are family members/close relatives of certain Indian nationals belonging to the States of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, who are stated to have travelled to the Russian Federation between 2024 and 2025, on different categories of visas. It is alleged that most of them were duped by travel agents with the promise of employment opportunities in the

construction, hospitality, and service sectors. However, upon their arrival in Russia, their passports and identity documents were confiscated, and they were enrolled in the Russian Armed Forces, and were consequently taken to the line of fire in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine armed conflict. Unfortunately, many young Indian citizens have lost their lives in the ongoing hostilities, but their mortal remains have not been brought back to India after due verification. Similarly, it is submitted that no compensation amount has been paid to the bereaved families.

2. The instant matter has been heard on several occasions, and most recently, the Union of India has filed an additional status report.

3. Taking into consideration the prevailing circumstances and relevant factors, and with a view to resolve the pending issues, we deem it appropriate to issue the following directions at this juncture:

- (i) The Ministry of External Affairs shall notify an officer as the Nodal Officer, whose relevant particulars and contact number shall be provided to the family members of the deceased/injured Indian nationals who had gone to Russia.
- (ii) In the event of a fatality/casualty, the Ministry of External Affairs will arrange DNA tests of the mortal remains with the family members for the identification of the deceased body, and upon doing such an exercise, the deceased body along with a certificate of the DNA test shall be handed over to the concerned family.

- (iii) A complete set of the consolidated documents regarding the procedure to file for attaining compensation, which is to be filed with the Russian authorities, duly translated in regional language along with other necessary documents, may be supplied to the affected families. Such families may submit their claims with the Russian authorities through the Ministry of External Affairs. However, pendency of such claims should not be a ground to delay the cremation, performing other rituals, or the handing over of the mortal remains, which should all be separately expedited.
- (iv) The District Legal Services Authorities of the States of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh through their Member Secretaries, are directed to provide free legal aid to the aggrieved families for the purpose of submission of claims and/or conducting of DNA test, apart from other necessary legal/administrative formalities which are required to be completed by them.

4. The Ministry of External Affairs may also supply the translated version of the documents received from Russian authorities, if not already done so, having relevance to the return of the mortal remains or with respect to the compensation claims.

5. We lastly direct the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, to continue its efforts to bring back the remaining deceased bodies/mortal remains and/or trace the missing persons

through the relevant diplomatic channels.

6. Post the matter on for further consideration on 31.08.2026.

(ARJUN BISHT)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI DILEEP KUMAR)
DY. REGISTRAR