

**IN THE HIGH COURT AT CALCUTTA
(CONSTITUTIONAL WRIT JURISDICTION)**

APPELLATE SIDE

Present :

The Hon'ble Justice Partha Sarathi Chatterjee

WPA 9004 of 2024

With

CAN 1 of 2024

Subhrangsu Panda

Vs.

The State of West Bengal & Ors.

Petitioner-in-person : Mr. Subhrangsu Panda.

For the Respondents : Mr. Wasim Ahmed,
Sk. Md. Masud.

Heard on : 14.07.2025

Judgment on : 24.07.2025

Partha Sarathi Chatterjee, J.:-

Prelude:

1. The present writ petition has been instituted by Subhrangsu Panda, a practicing advocate of this Hon'ble Court, seeking extraordinary relief under Article 226 of the Constitution of India.

2. The petition primarily challenges the actions of the traffic authorities, specifically Respondent No. 10, Traffic Sergeant Palash Halder, in relation to the seizure of the petitioner's driving licence.

Petitioner's Case:

3. The factual matrix, as presented by the petitioner in the writ petition, centers around an incident that occurred on March 26, 2024, at the intersection of Khidirpur Road and A.J.C. Bose Road. The petitioner's vehicle, bearing registration number WB 12BP-7205, was intercepted by the private respondent no. 10 while he was traveling from his native place at Kakdwip, District South 24 Parganas, to his residence at Baksara, Howrah.
4. An allegation of over-speeding was made against the petitioner, with his vehicle reportedly recorded at 77 km/h, exceeding the stipulated speed limit of 60 km/h. The petitioner has categorically denied the allegation, contending that the matter ought to have been processed through the designated online portal, thereby affording him his fundamental right to a fair trial before a competent court of law.
5. Crucially, the petitioner alleges that the Respondent No. 10, Palash Halder, while discharging his official duties, demanded a cash payment of Rs. 1,000 as a fine. Upon the petitioner's refusal to pay in cash and his insistence on making the payment through the prescribed online mode, Respondent No. 10 is stated to have seized the petitioner's driving licence without assigning any cogent reason.
6. The petitioner disclosed his identity to Respondent No. 10 and informed him that he is a practicing advocate of this Hon'ble Court. He also displayed

the sticker issued by the Bar Association, High Court at Calcutta in his favour, affixed to his vehicle. Despite this, Respondent No. 10 neither returned the petitioner's driving licence nor did issue a temporary authorisation slip, as contemplated under Section 206(3) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (hereinafter referred to as 'the 1988 Act').

7. The petitioner repeatedly informed Respondent No. 10 that, in accordance with the provisions of Section 206(2) of the 1988 Act, the police authorities are not empowered to seize a driving licence unless there exists a specific reason to apprehend that the alleged offender may abscond or avoid service of summons. He further apprised Respondent No. 10 that this position has been affirmed in several decisions of this Hon'ble Court, which have consistently held that, in the absence of a recorded and specific reason by the police officer, seizure of a driving licence is not legally permissible.
8. In response, Respondent No. 10 asserted that he had full authority to seize the driving licence. He further claimed that he was well-versed in the law, was aware of the functioning of this Hon'ble Court, and had previously discharged duties under a former Hon'ble Judge of this Court. On that basis, he remarked that the petitioner need not trouble himself with explaining the law to him.
9. Subsequently, the petitioner received an SMS on his mobile phone bearing SIM card number 9903826338, sent through the Kolkata Traffic Police Portal, informing him that he had been prosecuted under Sections 112/183(1) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. An online challan bearing compound number AK24938642 was also generated.

10. Faced with the aforesaid situation, the petitioner has been constrained to file the present writ petition, primarily seeking the issuance of an appropriate writ for quashing the seizure of his driving licence. He further prays for a writ of mandamus directing the concerned respondents to initiate disciplinary proceedings against Respondent No. 10, and to issue appropriate directions to ensure strict compliance with the applicable rules, regulations, notifications, and judicial pronouncements by all traffic sergeants while discharging their official duties.
11. During the pendency of this writ petition, another learned Advocate of this Hon'ble Court filed an application, being CAN 1 of 2024, seeking leave to intervene in the present proceeding. In his application, the intervener narrated a similar incident that occurred on 26.03.2024, when he was returning from his native village to his residence in Kolkata, driving his vehicle bearing registration number WB-12BP-7205. The intervener's vehicle was intercepted at the junction of Khidirpur Road and A.J.C. Bose Road by the private respondent no. 10.
12. The intervener contended that the speed of his vehicle was allegedly recorded at 77 km/hour, exceeding the stipulated speed limit of 60 km/hour. He was also asked to pay a fine of Rs. 1,000 in cash. In the same manner, he insisted on making the payment through the designated online portal.
13. The intervener also disclosed his identity and informed Respondent No. 10 that he was a practicing advocate of this Hon'ble Court. However, despite this disclosure, his driving licence was seized. The intervener protested, stating that such seizure was unlawful. This statement reportedly provoked

Respondent No. 10, who reacted angrily, asserting that the intervener need not attempt to explain the law to him. He further remarked that he was well aware of the standard of advocates practicing before this Court. Respondent No. 10 then referred to a former Hon'ble Judge of this Court, claiming that he had previously served under him and was 'his man.' He mocked the intervener, allegedly saying that without having any money in his pocket, he dared to drive a vehicle. Respondent No. 10 then directed the intervener to check how much cash he was carrying, hand it over to him, and leave the spot.

14. The intervener claimed that, in order to avoid further humiliation at the hands of Respondent No. 10, he handed over a 500 rupee note to him, retrieved the key to his vehicle, and left the spot.

Respondents' case:

15. The record indicates that a Co-ordinate Bench of this Court, by its order dated 28.03.2024, noted that respondent no. 10 had refused to accept notice of the present writ petition. Subsequently, by an order dated 24.04.2024, the Co-ordinate Bench directed respondent no. 10 to file an affidavit in response to the averments made in paragraph nos. 12 and 13 of the writ petition. The State was also directed to file an affidavit-in-opposition addressing the issues raised in the writ petition.
16. However, respondent no. 10 ultimately filed an affidavit. In his affidavit, he stated that on 26.03.2024, while performing his official duties, he observed a vehicle bearing registration number WB 12BP 7205 being driven recklessly at a dangerous speed of 77 km/hour, which was significantly above the notified and permissible speed limit of 50 km/hour. The speed was recorded using a

manual speed laser gun. Respondent no. 10 intercepted the vehicle and informed the petitioner of the violation. Thereafter, in exercise of his powers under Sections 206(4) and 200 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, he asked the petitioner either to pay a fine of Rs. 1,000/- or to allow him to impound his driving licence.

17. The affidavit further states that the petitioner refused to pay the fine but handed over his driving licence to respondent no. 10. Respondent no. 10 claims that he attempted to persuade the petitioner to pay the fine either in cash or through the UPI facility available on the KTP Challan App, so that an acknowledgment slip for the seizure could be generated automatically. However, his efforts to persuade the petitioner were unsuccessful.
18. After a prolonged conversation, the deponent had no other option but to impound the petitioner's driving license in accordance with the provisions of Section 206(4) of the 1988 Act as the vehicle was being driven in contravention of the provisions of Section 183 of the 1988 Act.
19. The deponent contended that the provisions of Section 206(4) were incorporated into the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 by Section 88 of Act 32 of 2019, with effect from 01.10.2020 (vide S.O. 3311(E) dated 25.09.2020), which is subsequent to the judgment delivered by this Court in the case of *Dipankar Dutta vs. State of West Bengal & Ors.* The respondent no. 10 further asserted that in a decision rendered in WPA 14318 of 2022 (*Priyasha Bhattacharyya vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors.*), a Co-ordinate Bench of this Court held that while a police officer has the authority to seize and

impound a driving licence, the power to suspend the licence does not vest in the police.

20. Respondent no. 10 further contended that the Expert Committee constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety had identified over-speeding, among other offences, as one of the primary causes of fatal road traffic accidents. The Committee recommended suspension of the driving licences of offending drivers as a deterrent measure. He claimed that he acted in good faith, in his capacity as a public servant, and diligently discharged his statutory duties.
21. He contended that as many as 22 fatal and 71 non-fatal road traffic accidents occurred on Khidirpur Road and AJC Bose Road during the period from 01.01.2023 to 29.04.2024. According to statistical records, the area is considered highly vulnerable for road users. Notably, within the past year alone, 4 fatal accidents occurred on Khidirpur Road and 6 fatal accidents on AJC Bose Road, all in the year 2023.
22. Respondent no. 10 categorically denied having demanded any bribe from the intervener and stated that he could not recall any such incident.
23. The respondent no.5 has filed a separate affidavit-in-opposition. Reiterating the stand taken by the respondent no. 10, the respondent no. 5, in his affidavit, contended that he went through the CCTV footages of the area where the vehicle was intercepted by the respondent no. 10 and found that the petitioner was driving the car in a reckless and dangerous manner at a speed of 77 km/hour. On 26.03.2024, the affidavit stated, several individuals

including the petitioner was prosecuted for violating the stipulated and permissible speed limit in accordance with the 1988 Act.

24. The affidavit asserted that a police officer is empowered to seize the license of a driver for violation of the provisions of 183, 184, 185, 189, 190, 194C, 194D or 194E of the 1988 Act.

Contents of affidavit-in-reply filed by the petitioner:

25. The petitioner filed two separate affidavits in response to the affidavits-in-opposition. In his reply, the petitioner contended that a signboard was displayed in the concerned area indicating that the maximum speed limit was 60 km/hour. He further stated that the compound slip, prepared under Rule 349 of the Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 (hereinafter referred to as "the 1989 Rules"), itself mentioned that the fine was payable either in cash or through the UPI portal within seven days from the date of issuance of the notice.
26. The petitioner asserted that a driving licence could be seized only upon fulfilment of any of the conditions enumerated under Section 206 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and that a person can be disqualified from driving a vehicle only in accordance with the provisions of Section 19A of the said Act. He also contended that the judgment delivered in *Dipankar Dutta vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors.* continues to remain binding and holds the field.

Submission:

27. Mr. Panda, appearing in person, asserted that the seizure of his driving licence on March 26, 2024, was unlawful, arbitrary, whimsical, and actuated by mala fides, amounting to a clear violation of statutory provisions and causing him considerable mental anguish.

28. He contended that the power to seize a driving licence under Section 206(4) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, is neither absolute nor automatic, but is to be exercised only under specific conditions, such as when there exists a "reason to believe" that an offence under certain provisions of the Act has been committed, or where the driver attempts to abscond or evade the due process of law. The petitioner submitted that mere suspicion or doubt does not satisfy the statutory requirement for such a coercive measure, and that the expression "reason to believe" must be founded upon objective and verifiable facts.
29. He argued that a significant lapse on the part of respondent no. 10 was the failure to issue a temporary acknowledgment for the seized licence. He further contended that the payment of the fine should be made exclusively through the designated online portal, and that demanding cash or seizing a licence for non-payment is illegal and beyond the scope of permissible action under the law.
30. Mr. Panda cited two decisions, reported at (2004) 4 CHN 380 (*Dipankar Dutta vs. State of West Bengal*), (1998) 1 CalLJ 441 (*Dipankar Dutta vs. State of West Bengal & Ors.*), and two unreported decisions by two different Co-ordinate Benches of this Court rendered in WPA 4360 (W) of 2020 (*Suryaneel Das vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors.*) and in WPA 14318 of 2022 (*Smr. Priyasha Bhattacharyya vs. The State of West Bengal & Ors.*). He also relied on an unreported decision by a Co-ordinate Bench of the Madras High Court in W.P. No. 11 of 2023 (*K. Senthilkumar vs. Inspector of Police & Anr.*), and contended that the actions of respondent no. 10 are in direct

contempt of the orders passed in the aforesaid decisions and that the said respondent is liable to face contempt proceedings.

31. Mr. Panda heavily relied on the decision rendered in the case of *Smt. Priyasha Bhattacharyya* (supra) and argued that even the instructions issued by the Road Safety Expert Committee indicate that the police authorities do not have the authority to automatically seize and impound a driving licence. He further contended that the "compound slip" issued in the present case is not in compliance with the relevant provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act and Rules.

32. In response, Mr. Ahmed, learned Advocate appearing for the State, submitted that in the present case, the driving licence has already been returned to Mr. Panda. He urged Mr. Panda to reconsider whether he wished to seriously pursue the present writ petition, particularly in light of the fact that his driving licence has been received.

33. Ultimately, Mr. Panda and Mr. Ahmed jointly submitted that, since the matter involves a question of law, this Court may pass an appropriate order that would serve as a guideline for police officers entrusted with traffic duties.

Discussion and Conclusion:

34. Before delving into the contours of the controversy that led to the institution of the present writ petition, it would be appropriate to examine the legal framework and to quote certain provisions from the 1988 Act and its connected rules, governing the seizure of driving licences, issuance of acknowledgment slips, compounding slips, and the authority to impound such licences.

35. Section 2(10) of the 1988 Act defines that the ‘driving licence’ which means the licence issued by a competent authority under Chapter II authorising the person specified therein to drive, otherwise than as a learner, a motor vehicle or a motor vehicle of any specified class or description whereas, Section 2(20) does define that ‘licencing authority’ which means an authority empowered to issue licences under Chapter II or, as the case may be, Chapter III.

36. Section 19 of the Act confers the Power of licensing authority to disqualify from holding a driving licence or revoke such licence if he is satisfied, after giving the holder of a driving licence an opportunity of being heard, that any of the eight conditions enumerated in that provision has been fulfilled. Section 19A, which was inserted in the Act by the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 (32 of 2019), S. 11 w.e.f. 09-08-2019, is quoted below:

“(1A) Where a licence has been forwarded to the licensing authority under sub-section (4) of section 206, the licensing authority, if satisfied after giving the holder of the driving licence an opportunity of being heard, may either discharge the holder of a driving licence or, it may for detailed reasons recorded in writing, make an order disqualifying such person from holding or obtaining any licence to drive all or any class or description of vehicles specified in the licence-

(a) for a first offence, for a period of three months;

(b) for a second or subsequent offence, with revocation of the driving licence of such person:

Provided that where a driving licence is revoked under this section, the name of the holder of such driving licence may be placed in

the public domain in such manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government.]”

37. Therefore, it is needless to state that the power to revoke a driving licence or to disqualify a holder of driving licence rests with the licencing authority as defined in Section 2(20) of the 1988 Act.
38. Undoubtedly, the provisions of sub-Section (2) of Section 112 of the 1988 Act have empowered the State Government to fix the maximum speed limit in a particular area or on a particular road or roads. Sub-Section (1) of 112 mandates that no person shall drive a motor vehicle or cause or allow a motor vehicle to be driven in any public place at a speed exceeding the maximum speed or below the minimum speed fixed for the vehicle under this Act or by or under any other law for the time being in force.
39. The provisions of Section 200 of the 1988 Act cloths the officers or authorities, as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify, with the power to compound the offences referred to in Section 200 of the Act, including the offences committed under Section 183 of the Act which prescribes punishment for driving a vehicle in contravention of the speed limit referred to in Section 112 of the Act.
40. To shed a light on the issue, it would be prudent to quote the provisions of Section 206 of the 1988 Act, which are as follows:

“ **206. Power of police officer to impound document :-**

(1) Any police officer or other person authorised in this behalf by the State Government may, if he has reason to believe that any identification mark carried on a motor vehicle or any licence, permit,

certificate of registration, certificate of insurance or other document produced to him by the driver or person in charge of a motor vehicle is a false document within the meaning of section 464 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (45 of 1860) seize the mark or document and call upon the driver or owner of the vehicle to account for his possession of or the presence in the vehicle of such mark or document.

(2) Any police officer or other person authorised in this behalf by the State Government may, if he has reason to believe that the driver of a motor vehicle who is charged with any offence under this Act may abscond or otherwise avoid the service of a summons, seize any licence held by such driver and forward it into the court taking cognizance of the offence and the said Court shall on the first appearance of such driver before it, return the licence to him in exchange for the temporary acknowledgment given under sub-section (3).

(3) A police officer or other person seizing a licence under sub-section (2) shall give to the person surrendering the licence a temporary acknowledgment therefore and such acknowledgment shall authorise the holder to drive until the licence has been returned to him or until such date as may be specified by the police officer or other person in the acknowledgment whichever is earlier: Provided that if any Magistrate, police officer or other person authorised by the State Government in this behalf is, on an application made to him, satisfied that the licence cannot be, or has not been, returned to the holder thereof before the date specified in the

acknowledgment for any reason for which the holder is not responsible, the Magistrate, police officer or other person, as the case may be, may extend the period of authorization to drive to such date as may be specified in the acknowledgment.

¹ [(4) A police officer or other person authorised in this behalf by the State Government shall, if he has reason to believe that the driver of a motor vehicle has committed an offence under any of sections 183, 184, 185, 189, 190, 194C, 194D, or 194E, seize the driving licence held by such driver and forward it to the licensing authority for disqualification or revocation proceedings under section 19: Provided that the person seizing the licence shall give to the person surrendering the licence a temporary acknowledgement therefor, but such acknowledgement shall not authorise the holder to drive until the licence has been returned to him.]”

41. Thus, a plain reading of the provisions of Sub-section Section 206 of the Act indicates that Sub-section (1) empowers the police officer to seize the driving licence if he has reason to believe to seize the licence that there is any mark or document relate to the vehicle is false. Sub-section (2) empowers the police officer authorised by the State Government to seize the licence if he has reason to believe that that driver concerned may abscond or otherwise avoid the service of a summons. Sub-section (3) mandates such police officer to issue acknowledgement of such licence to the driver concerned. Sub-Section (4) empowers the police officer to seize the licence if he has reason to believe that

the driver concerned committed an offence under any of the Sections, viz., 183, 184, 185, 189, 190, 194C, 194D or 194E of the 1988 Act.

42. Therefore, a combined reading of Sub-Sections (1), (2), (3) and (4) indicates that a police officer cannot claim to have unfettered power to seizure of a driving licence by a police officer. Seizure of driving licence by a police officer can be done only in three contingencies, which are as follows:

- i) when the identification mark or licence or the documents relating to the vehicle are false;
- ii) if the driver concerned try to abscond or avoid service of summons;
- iii) if the police officer has reason to believe that has committed an offence under any of the Sections, namely, 183, 184, 185, 189, 190, 194C, 194D or 194E of the 1988 Act.

43. It is pertinent to note that the legislature has consciously employed the expression 'reason to believe'. Section 26 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 corresponding to 2(29) of BNSS, 2023, defines the expression 'reason to believe', which is as follows:

“A person is said to have "reason to believe" a thing, if he has sufficient cause to believe that thing but not otherwise.”

44. The phrase "sufficient cause" implies that there must be concrete circumstances that would lead a prudent and reasonable person to draw a particular inference. The term "believe" should not be confused with "suspect." This belief must be based on objective satisfaction rather than

subjective interpretation or unfettered discretion. In other words, there must be specific facts or grounds forming the basis for a reasonable belief.

45. Therefore, the seizure of a driving license is not an automatic process; it is contingent upon the fulfilment of certain prescribed conditions. Furthermore, once a license is seized, the concerned authority is obligated to issue an acknowledgment to the driver. This acknowledgment serves as a temporary authorization, enabling the driver to continue operating the vehicle either until the license is returned or until the date specified in the acknowledgment.
46. Therefore, based on the discussions set out in the foregoing paragraphs, it would not be inappropriate to observe that a police officer in uniform can seize a driving licence only upon fulfilment of any of the conditions enumerated in Section 206 of the 1988 Act and the officer is bound to issue acknowledgment.
47. The recurring issues concerning the improper seizure of driving licences, unlawful demands for parking fees, and the unauthorized insistence by police officers on the production of registration and insurance certificates, despite the absence of any legal mandate, have repeatedly invoked the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Court and consumed a considerable amount of judicial time. Moreover, serious allegations have been raised regarding coercive practices by certain traffic officers, including persistent and illegal demands for immediate payment of fines, whether in cash or through UPI, coercing individuals into compounding the offence on the spot, and compelling them to sign compound slips admitting guilt following the seizure of their licences. Although this Court has on multiple occasions issued clear and specific

directions to the concerned authorities, these violations continue to occur repeatedly.

48. The records indicate that, at present, printed compound slips are being issued without first ascertaining whether the driver concerned is willing to face trial. It must be underscored that every alleged offender has the fundamental right to defend himself, and any act of compelling a person to admit guilt, make payment of a penalty, or sign a compound slip constitutes a violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. Support of this view shall be obtained from the proposition laid down in the decision reported in (2004) 4 CHN 380 (*Dipankar Dutta vs. State of West Bengal*).
49. In the decision of *Smt. Priyasha Bhattacharya (supra)*, A Co-ordinate Bench of this Court held that a police officer does not have the authority to suspend a driving licence. The respondent no. 10 also admitted such legal position in his affidavit. Furthermore, in another decision reported at (1998) CLJ 441 (*Dipankar Dutta vs. State of West Bengal & Others*), another Co-ordinate Bench held that while a police officer may require a driver to produce the driving licence on the spot, the production of the certificate of registration and the insurance certificate must be in accordance with the provisions of Section 130 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
50. In *Smt. Priyasha Bhattacharya (supra)*, it was further held that any notification, circular, or instruction issued by the Expert Committee or the Supreme Court-appointed Road Safety Committee would operate merely as an

instruction, and such instruction cannot override the express provisions of the statute.

51. Although Section 206 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, uses the term *impound*, the Act does not define this expression. Consequently, the meaning of the word must be understood in its ordinary and common parlance. While the police officer is empowered to seize a licence under the said provision upon fulfilment of any of the conditions enumerated in Section 206 of the 1988 Act; however, he is to forward the same to the Court to take cognizance of the offence allegedly committed by the driver and if the conditions contained in Sub-section (4) of Section 206 of the 1988 Act, he is to send the licence to the licencing authority for disqualification or for initiating revocation proceeding under Section 19 of the Act. Therefore, the authority to suspend, revoke, or impound the licence is vested solely in the licensing authority that issued it. Consequently, I cannot agree with the contention of respondent no. 10 that he had the power to impound the licence.

52. The record indicates that the licence was seized based on the reading of a manual laser gun; however, there is no evidence to show that any acknowledgment was issued to the petitioner at the time of seizure. Respondent No. 10 claims that such acknowledgment was issued digitally, but it remains unclear whether any effort was made to ascertain whether the petitioner intended to face trial. On the contrary, the incident suggests that the petitioner was coerced into compounding the offences. A printed form, styled as a compound form and containing a column for the alleged offender, namely, the driver- to admit guilt, has been brought on record. Therefore, it is evident that the petitioner's right to defend the allegations was violated. Such

incident suggests that, on other occasions, similar measures have been taken by officers entrusted with traffic duties.

53. In the given case, Mr. Panda and Mr. Ahmed have conjointly stated that the petitioner's driving licence has been returned to the petitioner and I have been informed that the case which was started following the incident has been compounded. However, if complaint or any consequential case, if registered, is deemed to stand quashed by virtue of this order.

54. It is indeed unfortunate to note that both in the writ petition and in the application filed by the intervener, serious allegations have been made against on solemn affirmation. It has been alleged that the petitioner and the intervener were subjected to rude and arrogant behaviour by respondent no. 10, who is further accused of making derogatory remarks against individuals practicing before this Hon'ble Court and taking the name of a former Judge of this Court in an inappropriate manner. I am not inclined to abruptly jump to the conclusion that those allegations are true.

55. If such conduct did in fact occur, it is unfortunate and unexpected from a person holding the rank of an officer in the police department. This is not a police State; it is a welfare State governed by the rule of law. It must be clearly stated that, in a democratic society, even a person accused of a petty offence is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. No citizen should be subjected to rude or arrogant conduct by any staff or officer of any department. The justification that such behaviour is necessary for maintaining law and order cannot be accepted. Public servants are expected to uphold constitutional

values and act with restraint, courtesy, and accountability in their interactions with the public.

56. However, since the offences have been compounded and the driving licence has already been returned, I do not consider it appropriate to make any adverse remarks or to recommend disciplinary action against respondent no. 10 at this stage. Nonetheless, having regard to the overall episode and the manner in which the incident was handled by respondent no. 10, I am inclined to issue a caution, directing him to strictly adhere to the due process of law in future, particularly in matters involving the seizure of driving licences and the handling of similar incidents, and to conduct himself with professionalism, sensitivity, and responsibility in all interactions with members of the public.
57. The incident also highlights the need for proper and refresher training for officers and staff, including the respondent no. 10, who are entrusted with traffic duties in the city and across the State. Such training should aim to ensure awareness of the relevant legal provisions and judicial pronouncements. The Deputy Commissioner (Traffic) is directed to arrange for such training and to ensure that, in every case of licence seizure, an acknowledgment is issued. Before compounding any offence, officers must ascertain whether the individual wishes to contest the allegation in trial and must strictly follow due process and the applicable legal principles.
58. The petitioner is directed to communicate this order to the Secretary; Home Department, Government of West Bengal; the Director General of Police, West Bengal; and respondent nos. 2, 3, and 4 for their information and necessary compliance.

59. With these observations and order, this writ petition and its connected application are, thus, disposed of.

(Partha Sarathi Chatterjee, J.)