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

% ***Date of Decision: November 02nd, 2026***

\# **CNR No. DLHC010175412025**

\+ W.P.(C) 4143/2025

GOVIND KUMAR DHURIYA & ORS. .....Petitioners

Through: Mr. Siddharth Dutta, Mr. Pratyush Singh, Mr. Kandarp Raj Dipankar, Ms. Pratyksha Priya, Advocates.

versus

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

Through: Mr. Amit Tiwari, CGSC with Ms. Ayushi Srivastava, Mr. Arpan Narwal, Mr. Kushagra Malik, Mr. Ujjwal Tyagi, Advocates.

CORAM:
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE AMIT MAHAJAN

AMIT MAHAJAN, J. *(Oral)*

1. By way of the present petition, the petitioners seek the following reliefs:

> *"A. ISSUE a Writ of Mandamus and/or a Right or Direction in nature of Mandamus directing the Respondents to forthwith compensate all the victims affected by this tragedy and for the mental agony and harassment that victims had to bear because of the gross mismanagement and carelessness at the helm of the Respondents which includes refund of the tickets.*
> *B. ISSUE a Writ of Mandamus and/or a Right or Direction in nature of Mandamus directing the Respondents to compensate the victims and the Petitioners from the salaries of all the officials responsible that include Railway officials, bureaucrats, police officers from Delhi police or any other central security agency that may have been entrusted to maintain law and order and to ensure the safety of the passengers instead of using the taxpayers money for the same to set a perfect example for the officials across the country that their actions bear consequences upon them.*
> *C. ISSUE a Writ or Direction or Order in the nature of Mandamus*

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and direct the Respondents to curate a detailed plan of action and present before this Hon'ble Court within a proper time-frame to deal with a sudden surge of crowd in cases of public events where the surge of crowds is anticipated along with a plan of action to streamline the entry and exit of the passengers so that such incidents never repeat and are prevented therefore.

D. ISSUE a Writ or Direction or Order in the nature of Mandamus and direct the Respondents to forthwith punish the individuals/officers at all levels in the employment of Respondents who were responsible for creating a situation by issuing extra tickets both to passengers as well as those who came to the platform to purchase platform tickets when there was no proper arrangement/security available at the station on the fateful day."

2. Succinctly stated, the petition relates to the stampede at New Delhi Railway Station on 15.02.2025, in which 18 persons lost their lives and 15 persons were injured. The petitioners state that they had booked tickets for Train No. 20802 (Magadh Express) from New Delhi to Prayagraj, scheduled to depart at 9:05 PM on 15.02.2025.

3. It is the case of the petitioners that they reached the station well in time but could not board the train because of the heavy crowd, and that they were present at the station when the stampede took place on the foot-over-bridge. Petitioner No. 2 is a person with disability.

4. The petition was initially filed as a Public Interest Litigation titled ***'Govind Kumar Dhuriya & Ors. v. Union of India & Ors.* W.P.(C) 4143/2025'**. By order dated 02.04.2025, the Division Bench of this Court directed the petition to be treated as a civil writ petition filed by the petitioners in their individual capacity.

5. Thereafter, by order dated 20.07.2026, the learned CGSC was directed to seek instructions as to whether any policy had been framed in respect of prayer (C). By order dated 10.08.2026, the respondents

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were directed to file an additional affidavit setting out the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to be followed in such circumstances. Pursuant thereto, the respondents have filed an additional affidavit dated 27.08.2026.

6. Aggrieved by the alleged failure of the respondents to manage the crowd at New Delhi Railway Station, as a result of which the petitioners could not board their train and were exposed to the stampede, the petitioners have preferred the present petition.

7. The learned counsel for the petitioners submits that the petitioners had booked tickets to travel from New Delhi to Prayagraj by Train No. 20802 (Magadh Express), scheduled to depart at 9:05 PM on 15.02.2025. He submits that the petitioners reached the station at about 8:00 PM but found the platforms and the foot-over-bridge overcrowded. He submits that despite repeated attempts, and while trying to protect Petitioner No. 2, who is a person with disability, the petitioners could not board their coach and the train left without them. He further submits that at about 10:00 PM, the announcement of a special train to Prayagraj from Platform No. 16 led to a sudden rush on the foot-over-bridge, which resulted in the stampede. He further submits that the petitioners witnessed its aftermath and could return home only after 1:00 AM on 16.02.2025, and that the incident was the result of the failure of the respondents to manage the crowd.

8. He submits that the petitioners are pressing only prayer (C) and do not press prayers (A), (B) and (D). He submits that the petitioners do not seek refund of the fare, and the respondents may retain the ticket money. He further submits that the question of compensation

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concerns the persons actually affected by the incident, and the petitioners do not seek any compensation for themselves.

9. He submits that the real object of the petition is to ensure that a proper SOP is in place for managing large crowds at railway stations, and that it is implemented on the ground and does not remain only on paper.

10. *Per contra*, the learned counsel for the respondents, in response to prayer (C), refers to the additional affidavit dated 27.08.2026. He submits that Annexure-1 thereto, being the Railway Board letter No. 2025/TG-V/4/1 dated 01.05.2025 titled ***"Strategic Preparedness for Events with High Passenger Footfall"***, provides for advance planning for festivals, melas including the Maha Kumbh, recruitment examinations, sports events and other predictable gatherings. He submits that each Division is required to list the upcoming events and assess the expected crowd. He further submits that the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager and the Senior Divisional Security Commissioner are required to jointly compile such a list at least three weeks in advance, and to prepare a joint action plan covering crowd management areas, special trains, additional security staff, extra ticket counters and ticket checking.

11. On a query from this Court as to what the respondents have actually done to manage crowded events, the learned counsel for the respondents refers to the other measures set out in the affidavit. He submits that the Railway Board policy dated 30.05.2025 provides for holding areas outside stations, access control of platforms, CCTV cameras, monitoring rooms with CCTV feeds, communication

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equipment and the posting of a senior officer for coordination. He submits that passenger holding areas are to be created at 76 high-traffic stations in terms of the letter dated 28.11.2025. He further submits that the waiting list limits have been rationalised by the policy dated 02.07.2025, and the timing of reservation charts has been revised by the letter dated 16.12.2025, so that passengers know their status in advance.

12. On this Court pointing out that the affidavit largely speaks of steps to be taken in the future, the learned counsel for the respondents refers to Annexure-6 of the additional affidavit, being the RLDA letter dated 12.01.2026. He submits that a Holding Area / Yatri Suvidha Kendra, with a capacity of about 7,000 passengers, was commissioned on the Ajmeri Gate side of New Delhi Railway Station on 11.10.2025. He submits that it has 22 ticket counters, 25 Automatic Ticket Vending Machines, announcement and train information systems, CCTV cameras, luggage scanners, door frame metal detectors and a dedicated control room. He further submits that the daily footfall at the station went up to 3,29,527 passengers on 24.10.2025, which shows the scale of traffic that these arrangements have to handle.

13. This Court has heard the learned counsel for the parties and perused the record.

14. In view of the submissions made by the learned counsel for the petitioners, prayers (A), (B) and (D) are dismissed as not pressed. The statement that the petitioners do not seek refund of the fare is taken on record.

15. As regards prayer (C), the record shows that the Railway Board

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has issued SOPs and circulars dealing with planning for high-footfall events, holding areas, access control, CCTV monitoring, waiting list limits and passenger information. A framework, therefore, already exists. Framing of policy is within the domain of the executive, and this Court does not consider it necessary to direct the framing of a fresh SOP. However, the incident of 15.02.2025 shows that what ultimately matters is how these measures are implemented on the ground before and during each crowded event. There must also be accountability, and a proper record must be maintained of the steps taken in each case.

16. In the opinion of this Court, the additional affidavit largely speaks of steps to be taken in the future. Apart from the Holding Area / Yatri Suvidha Kendra on the Ajmeri Gate side of New Delhi Railway Station, which, as per Annexure-6 to the additional affidavit, being the RLDA letter dated 12.01.2026, was commissioned on 11.10.2025 with a capacity of about 7,000 passengers, 22 ticket counters, 25 Automatic Ticket Vending Machines, CCTV cameras, luggage scanners, door frame metal detectors and a dedicated control room, the respondents have not shown much on the ground. Considering that the daily footfall at the station went up to 3,29,527 passengers on 24.10.2025, this Court is of the view that the measures must be monitored and recorded for every crowded event. It is for this reason that the following directions are being issued.

17. Accordingly, it is directed as under:

a. The respondents shall strictly implement the SOPs and circulars referred to above, including the Railway Board

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letters dated 01.05.2025, 30.05.2025, 02.07.2025, 28.11.2025 and 16.12.2025.

b. Before every event at which a large passenger footfall is expected, a senior officer nominated by the competent authority of the respondents shall, at least one week before the event, review the arrangements in coordination with the Delhi Police and the other agencies concerned, in terms of the said SOPs and circulars.

c. The said officer shall prepare a written report recording the arrangements made and the steps taken for the event.

d. The report and the connected records shall be properly maintained and kept ready, so that they can be produced before the appropriate authority or Court if any untoward incident takes place.

18. In case of non-compliance, the respondents shall be held liable.

19. In view of the aforesaid, the present petition is disposed of.

20. Pending application(s), if any, also stand disposed of.

AMIT MAHAJAN, J

NOVEMBER 2, 2026
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