HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT ALLAHABAD

In Re: Commission of Criminal Contempt and Criminal Offences by Lawyers in Court No. 49 on 28.10.2026

In Chamber

HON'BLE AJAY BHANOT, J.
HON'BLE DIVESH CHANDRA SAMANT, J.

[PER : HON'BLE AJAY BHANOT, J.]

1. In the morning of 28.10.2026 when both of us were preparing to move to the Court from the chamber of (Ajay Bhanot, J.), a call was received by the Private Secretary from the Bench Secretary to inform us that a group of lawyers who had gathered in the courtroom were in a restive mood and were shouting slogans. After receiving the call we proceeded to the Court.

2. When the Court sat for its daily business Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Advocate referenced a letter dated 27.10.2026 issued by the newly elected office bearers of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association regarding some incident in our Court on 27.10.2026 in which he was allegedly humiliated. Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Advocate stated before the Court that no such incident had occurred in this Court with him, and that he was never humiliated by this Court. Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Advocate also stated that Court proceedings were conducted in an amicable manner (so long he was present).

After the aforesaid statement was made some other counsels proceeded to make mentions regarding their cases. At that point in time, other lawyers who were present in the Court and even outside the Court started shouting so loudly that we found it impossible to conduct the Court and proceed with the daily business. The aggressive and unruly group of lawyers were looking to provoke an untoward incident in the Court. The menacing gestures and the deafening uproar raised by the lawyers made it difficult to believe that a constitutional court was facing learned members of the Bar and not confronting a riotous mob hell-bent on violence. The Court had no option but to rise. The court was of the belief that sober voices would soon prevail and felt that the court proceedings would resume after some time, but that was not to be.

3. After we had returned to our chambers, Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A-I came running into our chambers and earnestly pleaded to save his life. Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A.-I appeared shaken to the roots. Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learend A.G.A.-I had a swollen face and was walking with great difficulty. Thereafter Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya narrated to us that immediately after we have risen a group of lawyers savagely assaulted him inside the Court room. He also informed us that the lawyers who were assaulting him had also threatened him for defending the State in matters listed before the Court and that he had to pay the price for the same. He survived only because of the intervention of Shri

Sandeep Tiwari, learned AGA, and some lawyers asked him to rush to the Judge's chamber if he wanted to save his life. Shri Malviya also informed us that lawyers also physically assaulted other AGAs and staff of the Court and vandalized the Courtroom. They abused the judges. We were also informed by Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned AGA that chairs of the Court room had been removed in advance before the court sat.

4. Since Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A.-I was badly beaten and was complaining of severe pain and ache on his face, neck, head and back and was unable to stand or even sit, we laid him up in the reclining chair in the chamber and called a doctor from the High Court Dispensary immediately for medical assistance. The doctor at the High Court Dispensary promptly arrived and gave medical aid to Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A.-I.

5. In the meantime other AGAs namely, Shri Sanjeev Pandey, Pradeep Jaiswar, and Shri Sandeep Tiwari who were on duty in our Court also rushed to our chambers and informed us about the aforesaid incident. Version of the other AGAs corroborated the incident as narrated to us by Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya. Shri Pradeep Kumar Jaiswar, learned AGA also informed us that he and other learned AGAs too had been dragged by the said lawyers. The learned A.G.As also said that they were warned against defending the State in the court by some of the attacking

lawyers and that the said lawyers abused the judges in Court. We were also informed that the said lawyers had apparently planned the incident in advance since the chairs in the Court were removed before 10:00 A.M. The learned A.G.A. expressed their fear and shared their concern with us.

6. Concerned by the turn of events we called the Registrar General to enquire into the matter and submit a report. Registrar General informed us that he had already taken cognizance of the matter on the administrative side, and had visited the courtroom to manage the situation and to ensure the safety of the staff. After enquiring into the matter Registrar General has submitted a report in the evening of 28.10.2026. The report of the Registrar General discloses that apart from Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned AGA and Shri Pradeep Kumar Jaiswar, learned AGA, other AGAs, Court Staff were also assaulted by the said group of lawyers. The Courtroom was vandalized and furniture was damaged by the said group of lawyers. The security personnel on duty in Court premises were also attacked by some lawyers.

7. We also take notice of some of the videos which have been shown to us regarding the assault on Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned AGA-I and vandalism in the Court. The lawyers who assaulted Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A.-I are apparently identifiable in the video.

8. The statements of the learned AGAs and the report submitted by Registrar General have established that a number of lawyers hurled abuses at the Court, shouted aggressive slogans, savagely assaulted the State Law Officers and Court Staff and indulged in wanton acts of violence and vandalism in the courtroom on 28.10.2026 during court hours. Court furniture was damaged and turned up side down in the incident. The group of lawyers also physically attacked the security personnel in the court premises. The Court could not function on account of the aforesaid criminal acts of the lawyers.

9. Genesis of the aforesaid incidents is the letter dated 27.10.2026 issued by Dr. C.P. Upadhyay, Senior Advocate, President elect and Shri Santosh Kumar Mishra, Advocate, General Secretary elect of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association.

10. The letter dated 27.10.2026 issued by Dr. C.P. Upadhyay, Senior Advocate, President elect and Shri Santosh Kumar Mishra, General Secretary elect of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association (copy of which was marked to one of us namely, Ajay Bhanot, J.) raises the following issues.

(i) The letter dated 27.10.2026 alleges that special arrangements have been made by the Court for a separate chair to be placed in the front row for police officials and other senior officials.

(ii) The letter in the same breath mentions that a new tradition has been created for seating of important persons which shall be boycotted by the Bar.

11. The aforesaid recitals are rather misleading. This Court had provided for seating of an official or any other person who was called to assist the Court. The intendment of the aforesaid seating arrangement is to facilitate proper assistance to the Court. A chair is provided to the said official/person and the same is placed at an appropriate place/vantage point to enable the said official/person to follow the court proceedings closely, understand the nature of assistance required by the Court, and render the same effectively.

12. In the past this arrangement has helped the cause of justice before the Court.

13. The seating arrangement in Court was never objected to by any member or office bearers of the Bar over the years. Most importantly no lawyer is inconvenienced since a separate chair is arranged for the official/person who is appearing to assist the Court.

14. It is clarified that there are two categories of officials who are asked to appear in Court. One category is of officers who are summoned to face contempt proceedings. The second category is of officers who are called to assist the process of the Court. No separate seating arrangements

are made in the Court for officials who are summoned to face contempt proceedings.

15. However in the past two months couple of incidents were reported when some learned counsels had misbehaved with, humiliated and even roughed up the officials in Court. The said officials had appeared to assist the Court. These actions of learned counsels made the officials fearful and they became reluctant to express their views independently and freely before the Court. Intimidation of officials in court creates a hostile atmosphere which prevents the officials from offering free and frank views and disables them from rendering faithful assistance to the Court. Such conduct of learned counsels obstructed the process of Courts.

(iii). The said letter alleges that a learned counsel was forced to apologize on 27.10.2026 to a senior police official in the Court on 27.10.2026. (It is noteworthy that the name of the learned counsel has not been disclosed in the letter).

16. On 27.10.2026 a senior police official had appeared in court along with records of the investigations in Criminal Misc. Writ Petition No.14975 of 2026 (Naman @ Anurudha Kumar v. State of U.P. and 3 others) to assist the Court, and had occupied his seat in the Courtroom. When the Court sat at about 10:00 AM, Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned AGA-I had pointed out that a learned counsel had

misbehaved with the said senior police official and had tried to physically shove him (the official) away. According to Shri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned A.G.A.-I the said learned counsel was politely informed that the senior police official was seated to assist the Court and that he had come with the records. The learned counsel was also told that the seating arrangement was in keeping with the practice of this Court. On hearing this the learned counsel became rude and aggressive with the learned A.G.A. (Other AGAs in Court later corroborated the incident in our chamber after the violence).

17. The Court faced the learned counsel with the aforesaid behaviour. The learned counsel did not deny the incident, but expressed no remorse for the same. The Court apprised him of the fact that his behaviour created an impediment in the court proceedings. The Court also alerted him of the legal consequences of such conduct in the Court. The learned counsel then consciously chose not to escalate the matter, and tendered his apology to the official. The Court thereafter made light observations to ease the atmosphere, and commenced the daily business. The aforesaid allegations in the letter dated 27.10.2026 are factually incorrect. Most importantly none of the elected office bearers came to the Court at any time to enquire about the incident.

18. As seen earlier learned counsel was not forced to apologize. On the contrary he made a deliberate choice to

express remorse. Expression of regret is not an act of humiliation, but a path to redemption. In the dialogic process of the Court recognition of error by the Bar and the Bench alike is not an admission of weakness but an assertion of strength. For it is only when we recognize errors, we can strengthen the process of law.

(iv) The allegations made in the letter dated 27.10.2026 is that one of us (Ajay Bhanot, J.) had pointed his finger towards the lawyer, and passed orders directing that the lawyer be sent to jail.

19. The aforesaid recital in the letter dated 27.10.2026 regarding the pointing of the finger towards the lawyer and passing the order to send the learned counsel to jail is also a total falsehood and a deliberate one. The true fact is that no order to send the learned counsel to jail was ever passed by this Court. No such order was dictated nor exists on the record.

20. After the incident the Court proceeded with other cases and it was business as usual. Throughout the day and even after we had retired to our chambers, neither the aforesaid counsel nor the aforesaid newly elected Office Bearers or indeed anyone from the Bar came to make an objection regarding seating arrangements in Court or the incident itself. The said letter dated 27.10.2026 calling for strike/humiliation of Judges was issued in a peremptory fashion without verifying the correct facts regarding the

incident or approaching the Court for ventilating any grievance. The Court is always open and accomodative to suggestions from the Bar which foster harmony between the Bench and the Bar, and above all for the service of justice.

(v) Lastly, the letter dated 27.10.2026 alleges that Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel was humiliated in the Court.

21. As seen earlier, no such incident had occurred with Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel in the Court. In fact, Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel had taken pains to appear before us on 28.10.2026 at about 10:00 AM in the morning and contradicted the aforesaid letter dated 27.10.2026 insofar as it referred to his humiliation.

22. We need to record that Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Advocate to his credit stood alone in open Court to state the truth and to deny the false incident which was attributed with him while braving an aggressive mob of lawyers who were bent on violence. The courage of Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Advocate to volunteer to speak the truth even in the midst of a hostile mob of some lawyers is a tribute to his character and testimony to the high traditions of the Bar. The Court has always held Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel in the highest esteem.

23. The aforesaid letter dated 27.10.2026 concludes by asserting that the humiliation of a lawyer by the Court and

entitled them to humiliate the Courts. False facts and inciting language in the letter dated 27.10.2026 reveal its questionable intent.

24. A live nexus between the false imputations and provocative language used in the aforesaid letter dated 27.10.2026 issued by Dr. C.P. Upadhyay, Senior Advocate, President elect and Shri Santosh Kumar Mishra, General Secretary elect of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association and the violence and disruption of proceedings which occurred in the Court today can be discerned.

25. The following facts have been established before us:

I. Unruly and aggressive behaviour by a group of lawyers before the Court interfered with process of court and prevented the Court from discharging its judicial and constitutional functions.

II. A group of lawyers physically assaulted the learned AGAs in Court and during court hours.

III. A group of lawyers also physically assaulted the court staff namely one Bench Secretary and one Peon in Court and during Court hours.

IV. A group of lawyers ransacked the court room and destroyed the furniture. The acts of vandalism were committed in Court by the lawyers during Court hours.

V. A group of lawyers also physically attacked CRPF personnel and police personnel who were on duty.

VI. Social media platforms erupted with false news and disinformation regarding the incident.

Social Media-Judicial Process

26. After the incident in the Court social media went viral with innumerable posts and incessant chatter. The social media platforms had a free run, and truth was the first casualty. An entire narrative of falsehoods and half truths was developed and propagated on the social media platforms to bring the High Court into disrepute and irreparably assault the constitutional stature and glorious standing of the Allahabad High Court. The false narrative has created disaffection against the High Court, and impeded the process of law. Besides bringing the judges (one of us, Ajay Bhanot, J.) into disrepute.

27. A frenzy of social media falsehoods caused the carnage of truth. Infact truth has ceased to be relevant.

28. Social media as a technological tool in the instant case has ceased to be an asset, and has become a threat to the rule of law and the judicial process. Characteristics of social media outpourings where utter falsehoods can pass for truth with immunity and reputations can be destroyed with a sense of impunity and constitutional institutions can be paralyzed without accountability were evidenced in this

case as well. The Goebbilian dictum, “A lie told a thousand times becomes the truth” became the reality of the day. Social media had a field day and played its role of a Goebbilian institution to the hilt in this case.

29. In view of its peculiar capabilities social media stands on a distinct class from other mediums of dissemination of information and views like newspapers, magazines, televisions etc.

30. Lack of effective regulatory mechanism against dissemination of falsehoods and fake information on social media reflects the inability of human institutions to cope with the fruits of advancing technology. Technology transforms society and impacts the law. The law has to evolve to keep pace with technological changes which affect human life and society. Advancing technology cannot abort fundamental rights or disrupt the legal process or cause a constitutional stassis. Some principles of constitutional law jurisprudence of free speech need to be revisited to address the changes wrought by this technology. Many first principles of constitutional law on freedom of speech have to be recast to adapt fundamental freedoms to this new form of technology.

31. A propagandist scale of falsehoods regarding court proceedings poses a serious threat to the credibility of the judicial process and majesty of the Courts. The reputations of judges who discharge their judicial functions are built

over a lifetime in the profession, and falsehoods on social media can destroy them irreparably in a matter of seconds. There is no justice for judges who are prey to such social media propaganda. However in the instant case the threat to the institution of constitutional governance is so grave that individual reputations become insignificant. False propaganda on social media against a Constitutional Court was disseminated indiscriminately in this case.

32. The capacity of fake social media narratives to create disaffection against the constitutional organs of governance, paralyze functioning of constitutional institutions and create anarchical conditions cannot be underrated and the same was in full play in the instant case. Absence of mechanisms to prevent the dissemination of fake news on such large scale is not compatible with the constitutional mandate of the courts to find the truth and dispense justice and the process of law in general. Hence the Court will have to take measures to protect the judicial process from fake social media outpourings which are interfering in the process of law in the facts of this case.

33. When slander passes for truth, the civilization is in decay. When Courts cannot bring offenders to justice the State is in decline.

34. Analysis and criticism of judgements of Courts is a right and at times a duty of the legal fraternity and the citizenry at large. Criticism fosters debate. Debate impels

introspection. Introspection raises the quality of justice. However, there a red lines in the judicial discourse which need to be respected.

35. The Madras High Court in **R. Karthikeyan v. Union of India and others**[1] reiterated the well defined the boundary of criticism of judgements and personal abuse and threats against judges by holding:

> "9. The case at hand requires us to strike a careful balance between two fundamental constitutional values, to wit, the individual right to free speech and the institutional right to judicial independence.
> 10. True judicial independence means judges must be free to decide cases based solely on the law and the facts before them. The Supreme Court of India has reiterated that an independent judiciary is a part of the basic structure of our Constitution. If judges are subjected to personal abuse, hostile threats or coordinated intimidation because of their judicial decisions, it will strike at the root of the legal system.
> 11. Citizens have an undeniable right to disagree with a judgment. However, there is a clear legal line between criticizing a legal conclusion and attacking the individual judge who authored it. Coordinated actions that use abusive, defamatory or caste~based language to attack a sitting judge do not fall under protected free speech. They violate the reasonable restrictions set out under Article 19(2) of the Constitution of the India."

Founding ideals of the legal profession and constitutional values

36. The incitement to violence, the conspiracy to commit violence and the acts of violence and vandalism perpetrated in the Court have attacked foundations of a constitutional court and even questioned the founding principles of the legal profession.

1 **W.P. No.30622 of 2026**

37. A challenge to the founding ideals has created an uncertainty in institutional values which has cast the institution adrift. This is the apposite time and occasion to reaffirm the founding ideals of the legal profession, and anchor our conduct in constitutional values to secure the rule of law and assure justice to citizens.

Dignity of Bar – Dignity of All

38. Honour and dignity of the members of the Bar is the surest foundation, and the most enduring value on which the prestige of the judicial system rests. A foremost duty of the Court is to protect and uphold the dignity of the Bar. The Constitution has however enlarged the obligations of Constitutional Courts by making them the guardians of dignity of all citizens of the country. Officials and other persons attending court proceedings to assist the Court are equally entitled to protection of their dignity by the Court. Likewise Government Advocates cannot be denied the dignity and regard accorded to other lawyers. Infact Government Advocates are Advocates and officers of the Court first and then counsels for the State. Government Advocates do not stand at any lower pedestal than other Advocates.

39. Majesty of Courts is a self evident truth under the Constitution. Majesty of courts is premised in the unimperishable commitment under the Indian Constitution to the supremacy of law. Majesty of courts is not diluted by

a seating arrangement made in courtrooms for a government official/person who is assisting the Court. The Courts do not exhibit their independence or enhance institutional prestige by demeaning senior government officials who have appeared to assist the court. A constitutional court affirms its majesty by discharging its constitutional functions faithfully, and in that process the court sees all citizens with an equal eye.

Traditions of harmony between Bar and Bench and process of the Courts

40. The quest of truth and search for justice have shaped the traditions of the court and evolution of law. The court is that "heaven where the mind is without fear", where truth is inviolable but debate is free, where scholarly discourse elevates the human vision, where reason and logic do not submit to prejudice and hate. Free and frank exchange of views, knowledgeable submissions and logical arguments have traditionally informed and fortified the process of the court. The Court environment widens the human capacity for calm reflection to find the truth and serve justice.

41. Bar and Bench are the proverbial wheels of the chariot of justice. Bar and Bench have a symbiotic relationship where each respects the purpose of the other, and where both recognize their respective limitations. Bar and Bench are joined together by the founding ideals of the legal profession, shared values of the legal fraternity and the

common quest under the Constitution to uphold the rule of law and serve justice. Dialogue between the Bar and the Bench makes a most decisive contributions to the judicial process. The Bar has to speak truth to power, and the Bench has to decide without fear or favor affection or ill will. The manner and content of the dialogue between the Bar and Bench and other participants in the court process (if any) fosters development of law and determines the quality of justice. Constant and well spoken dialogue between the Bar and Bench is an unbroken tradition and an abiding strength of the judicial process.

42. Impeccable etiquettes, scholarly thoughts and logical arguments culminating in refined speech uplifts the process of the courts to give a clear understanding of facts and provides a lofty vision of justice.

43. The dialogue between the Bar and Bench and any other participants in Court proceedings (including government officials/experts if called upon to do so) is animated by mutual respect where differences do not degenerate into violence and strength is not defined by intimidation. The obligation of the Bar to speak truth to power is not a license to incite violence against individuals and disaffection against the institution. Anarchy is not a species of dissent. Freedom of speech at the Bar is not the freedom to slander the Bench. The legal process has robust traditions and structures for debate and dialogue between the Bar and Bench, but no space for intimidation and

violence. Incitement of violence and violence itself are not components of the legal discourse, they are ingredients of criminal offences.

44. The disruption of court proceedings and the perpetration of violence in court is a part of a deeper malaise in the judicial system. Criminalization of the Bar and instances of using violence to influence the process of Courts and brow beat the Courts are often coming to notice.

45. This Court, in **Mohammad Kafeel vs. State of U.P. and another**[2] took note of the large number of advocates with criminal backgrounds entering the profession without any system to curb this menace. The Court in **Mohammad Kafeel (supra)** also expressed its concern at the reluctance of learned Judges of the District Courts in such matters, and held thus:

> "A perusal of the said material discloses a disquieting state of affairs- while the data furnished by the police authorities reflects that a considerable number of criminal cases stand registered against advocates across various districts, the disciplinary proceedings initiated by the Bar Council of Uttar Pradesh are conspicuously limited to only a handful of advocates, suggesting that the institutional mechanism for internal regulation and discipline within the Bar has remained largely dormant and has not kept pace with the gravity and volume of the complaints and cases unreported.
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> The Bar Associations registered with the Office of the Registrar of Firms, Societies & Chits, Uttar Pradesh, have been functioning in contravention of their stated objectives and bye-laws. They have consistently failed to safeguard the interests of meritorious and professionally equipped Advocates and have neglected to take remedial measures against members who have turned into gangsters and mafia elements, or against gangsters and mafia elements who have taken the legal profession as a means of seeking safe refuge.

2 Matter under Article 227 No. 12231 of 2025

> In several Bar Associations- most notably in Gorakhpur and Kanpur- office-bearing positions are held by individuals with established criminal records. Furthermore, in nearly every District Court, organized gangs of law graduates registered with the Bar Councils have entrenched themselves for the purpose of executing court decrees, resolving disputes outside the court through coercive means, intimidating vulnerable litigants, and actively carrying out the forcible eviction of tenants and property occupants.
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> It is also a matter of grave concern that the judges of the District Courts have, by and large, refrained from taking any decisive action in such matters- or have chosen not to acknowledge the gravity of the problem- owing, it appears, to a belief that these socially and politically motivated gangs of law graduates enjoy protection from the pressure groups and centres of social and political power-brokerage."

46. The Lucknow Bench of this Court took suo motu cognizance of violence perpetrated by lawyers in the District Court, Lucknow on 21.07.2026, and a PIL was got registered as **Suo Motu Cognizance of incident dated 21.07.2026 in the Court Premises vs. State of U.P.**[3] In the aforesaid suo motu proceedings, the learned Division Bench of this Court noticed organized criminal gangs masquerading as advocates and who exercised influence upon the courts by various means. The observations made by the learned Division Bench in this regard merit reference:

> "17. We have perused the report of District Judge, Lucknow dated 21.07.2026. It is a very detailed report and mentions briefly about the contents of the footage and the events visible therein which clearly indicate an incident of misbehavior, manhandling and beating up of plaintiff No.1-Mohd. Shakir of Suit No.2933 of 2025. The report clearly mentions presence of Advocates in large number. CCTV footage shows Mohd. Shakir being dragged by Shri Saurabh Kumar Verma and others including Shri Abhay Pratap Verma being held by the neck and dragged. The main perpetrator i.e. Saurabh Kumar Verma is said to be Junior Vice-President of the Central Bar Association, Lucknow.
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> (emphasis supplied)

3 Criminal Writ – Public Interest Litigation No. 8 of 2026

20. The Commissioner of Police, Lucknow or whosoever is in-charge of security of District Court, Lucknow and supervises the functioning of the security personnel assigned such duties within the campus of District Court, Lucknow needs to inquire into the lapses in this regards as noticed in the report of the District Judge, Lucknow. Why the incident was not reported to the District Judge? Why suitable action was not taken? what were the handicaps? One can understand that within the court campus, the number of lawyers being huge, the police is hesitant to act but then a solution has to be found in this regard. Such handful of lawyers cannot be allowed to hold the justice delivery system to ransom. Strict measures are required while innocent and sincere lawyers should not be harassed and ill-treated. Those who are adamant to vitiate the atmosphere within the campus or outside have to be dealt with strictly.

21. Shri Saurabh Kumar Verma has as many as eight criminal cases against him in various police stations in Lucknow details of which have been provided by Dr.V.K. Singh, learned Government Advocate which are as under:

(emphasis supplied)

1. Case Crime No.478/2007 under Section 37/406/411/420/468/471 I.P.C., Police Station-Mahanagar, District Lucknow.

2. Case Crime No.566/2008 under Section 379/411/420/467/468/471 I.P.C., Police Station-Madiaon, District Lucknow.

3. Case Crime No.1021/2017 under Section 406/504/506 I.P.C., Police Station-Madiaon, District Lucknow.

4. Case Crime No.93/2024 under Section 186/188/504 I.P.C., Police Station-Hazratganj, District Lucknow.

5. Case Crime No.92/2025 under Section 115(2)/117(2)/126(2)/191(2)/351(3)/352/74 B.N.S, 2023, Police Station-Vibhuti Khand, District Lucknow.

6. Case Crime No. 95/2025 under Section 126(2)/132/189(2)/190/191(2)/223/270/285/292/324(4) /352 B.N.S.,2023 and Section 7 of Criminal Law Amendment Act Police Station-Vibhuti Khand, District Lucknow.

7. Case Crime No.429/2025 under Section 115(2)/191(2)/308(2)/318(4)/324(4)/351(2)/352 B.N.S., 2023, Police Station-Madiaon, District Lucknow.

8. Case Crime No.140/2026 under Section 191(2)/324(4)/329(3)/351(3)/352 B.N.S., 2023 Police Station-Dubagga, District Lucknow.

22. Such a person is Junior Vice President of the Central Bar Association, Lucknow. While we do not record any conclusive opinion about the guilt of Shri Verma in the aforesaid criminal cases but it is a moot point as to how and why so many criminal cases are lodged against an Advocate. The other person Shri Harshit Pandey who has

given the application against Mohd. Shakir has one criminal case against him.

(emphasis supplied)

26. We find that in the case at hand, lawyers ran amok freely, abused, humiliated & manhandled a litigant at will, threatened him with dire consequences, as alleged by the applicants and Mohd. Shakir-the informant of the F.I.R. The allegation is that they have cooked up a story to implicate the informant himself. We have already observed that the report of the Police Commissioner says there is no evidence of anybody carrying firearm on the part of the plaintiff or his accomplices nor of its being fired. No such thing is visible in the CCTV footage. The allegations of the applicants during court proceedings was that they are powerful people and will implicate the plaintiffs.

(emphasis supplied)

27. The F.I.R. is against Shri Saurabh Kumar Verma, Shri Harshit Pandey, Shri Yash Pandey and Shri Abhay Pratap Verma and unknown male and female Advocates numbering about 10 to 20. As already stated earlier it is for the police authorities to identify these 10 or 20 or more, as the case may be, female and male Advocates and make them accountable in law. Any dithering in this regard will not be tolerated. Investigation should be taken to its logical conclusion strictly and in accordance with law without any fear or favour. We will consider the status of the investigation on the next date.

(emphasis supplied)

28. Several members of the Bar earlier and on 21.07.2026 have alleged that in District Court, Lucknow there are group of lawyers who act like goons and use their status as Advocates and their influence in the district court premises, to grab property. In this process, they fabricate documents, initiate suit proceedings to facilitate aforesaid grabbing of property. They pressurize the courts also. They prevent the parties in a suit who are against them from putting in appearance through an Advocate and contesting the matter to defend their rights thereby compromising the entire justice delivery system. It is informed at the Bar and as has also been noticed in our earlier orders passed in bunch of petitions leading being C.R.L.P. No.8810 of 2023 that, in District Court, Lucknow there are groups of Advocates who indulge in property delaing and grabbing and in that process also manipulate and influence court proceedings in their favour or in the favour of litigants who approach them and use all means to ensure the same including pressurizing and threatening Advocates from appearing on behalf of the contesting parties and some time attempting to exercise influence upon the court itself by various means. These Advocates create a ruckus in the court room and outside but within the court campus taking advantage of their numbers and aggressive attitude thereby influencing the entire atmosphere adversely in the court campus. We only have to refer to the earlier orders passed by us in a bunch of petitions leading petition being CRLP

No.8810 of 2023 on several dates to emphasize the gravity of the situation which is prevailing in District Court at Lucknow. We are conscious that such persons are few and most of the lawyers are sincere not only to their clients but also to the cause of justice but it is these few black sheep who are more vocal, assertive and dominant. Our earlier orders it seems have not had the desired effect. We have already observed in our earlier orders passed in these bunch of petitions about a possible nexus between the lawyers, police and other powerful persons. How to break this nexus and how to restore sanctity and faith in judicial proceedings is the million dollar question and a humongous task before us. We cannot achieve anything unless the police and all other stakeholders including the Bar Associations and the Advocates put their heads together to stand up against such malpractices to defend the cause of the litigants so that purity which is attached to justice delivery system is restored and maintained. The time for harsh words appears to be over as these have not have had the desired effect. It is now time for action for the police and all other stakeholders who can remedy the situation.

(emphasis supplied)

29. We must put in on record that when this case was being taken up, one of the Advocates mentioned that he has filed a P.I.L. on 22.07.2026 where about 200 lawyers trespassed a premises, vandalized and took over the same in the presence of police personnel and the name of Shri Saurabh Kumar Verma also figures among these 200 persons. The said W.P.I.L No.682 of 2026 was taken up on 22.07.2026 and a detailed order has been passed. Several lawyers who reside in the said locality submitted that there is a premises where cricket net practice is being done and it is used for marriage lawn but on account of the aforesaid presence of hundreds of lawyers who virtually took over the premises, people have stopped going to the said premises.

(emphasis supplied)

41. We, therefore, need to set the house in order and have to take some stern action. Several orders have already been passed by us in this regard in the bunch of writ petitions leading petition C.R.L.P. No.8810 of 2023. We need to identify the black sheep and make them accountable at the earliest, we, however, hasten to add that our order should not be construed to mean nor should it be made the basis for harassment or ill treatment of any innocent and well meaning Advocate, who himself deserves to be protected as he appears to be visibly afraid against the might of these handful of aggressive Advocates.

(emphasis supplied)

43. The local office of the Intelligence Bureau of the Central Government at Lucknow which as informed by Shri S.B. Pandey, learned D.S.G.I. is headed by an officer of the rank of Joint Director shall get a discreet inquiry conducted with regard to the antecedents and activities of the aforesaid Advocates and the result thereof shall be

presented in the form of a report to this Court in a sealed cover, if possible, by the next date of listing. Shri S.B. Pandey, learned D.S.G.I. shall do the needful in this regard.

46. Considering the gravity of the situation, we will not be bound by technicalities and procedural niceties as we need to ensure that order and not chaos prevails in the District Court Campus, Lucknow and the courts are able to render justice unhindered without any obstruction and interference from any quarter. The litigants should feel safe to enter into the portals of the District Court at Lucknow.

49. From the facts and material on record before us prima facie a case of gross professional misconduct, abuse of process of law, gross interference with due course of judicial proceedings, interference and obstruction in the administration of justice has occurred for which the aforesaid Advocates mentioned in this order appear to be liable.

50. Considering what has been noticed by us in our earlier order dated 21.07.2026 and in this order especially the material before us in the form video footage which we had seen on 21.07.2026 a copy of which is available which shall be placed on record suitably, the CCTV footage sent by the District Judge, Lucknow, the report of the District Judge, Lucknow in this regard, the report of the Commissioner of Police, Lucknow, the gravity of the allegations against the Advocates, who have been identified as of now, we are constrained to order that Shri Saurabh Verma or Saurabh Kumar Verma, Shri Harshit Pandey, Shri Yash Pandey and Shri Abhay Pratap Verma are prohibited from entering any Court premises in District Lucknow till the next date of listing. This order, however, shall not come in their way in appearing in these proceedings on the date fixed, if they so choose. This order will also not come in their way if they have to appear or are to be produced in any court in connection with any criminal case, as per law."

(emphasis supplied)

47. The decisive action by this Court in exercise of PIL jurisdiction in **Suo Motu Cognizance of incident dated 21.07.2026 in the Court Premises (supra)**, is a reliable guide for the Courts to effectively address the menace of violence in Courts and disruption of Court proceedings.

48. The courts have set their face strongly against lawyers who commit criminal offences and have declined to give any quarter to criminals who masquerade as lawyers. The

Delhi High Court in **Vikas Yadav vs. State of NCT of Delhi and another**[4] held as under:

> "During arguments, learned senior counsel for the accused/applicant also projected that the accused/applicant being a practicing advocate in itself is a circumstance favouring grant of anticipatory bail. Of course, all advocates, being officers of the court, deserve respect. But that tenet cannot be extended to an advocate, who indulges in such brazen lawlessness, that too publicly and with such impunity. The accused/applicant not only participated in the assault of the injured persons, but also had the audacity to tape record in audio visual form his own interrogation in the police station, that too when he was already under non-bailable warrants, though proceedings under Section 84 BNSS had been stayed. Resultantly, a departmental enquiry has been initiated against the earlier IO/SI Shah Faisal and he has been suspended, because despite the non-bailable warrants being alive, he did not arrest the accused/applicant after interrogation. That amply establishes his mindset of exhibiting might of being an advocate."

49. Criminalization of the Bar, as noticed by this Court in the mentioned cases below as well as the instant case is a faultline that is tearing at the very foundations of the judicial system in the State of Uttar Pradesh. When the house is on fire, rearrangement of furniture cannot be the highest priority.

50. The failure to regulate entry into the courts and the decline of chamber system are some of the inadequacies which have brought things to such a pass. The younger members of the Bar in particular need to be guided with correct values and to develop professional competencies on the lines of excellence. The young members of the Bar have to be nurtured in the traditions of this Court, and schooled in the rites of the Chambers of seniors members of the Bar. These issues need to be addressed by the judicial system on

4 Bail Application No. 3394 of 2026, CRL.MA No. 25327/2026 and 25330/2026

an urgent basis in appropriate forums and proceedings and should top the institutional agenda for action.

Conclusions:

51. In wake of the preceding discussion, prima facie commission of criminal offences of instigating violence, conspiring to commit violence, and perpetrating violence and vandalism in court and preventing the government officials from discharging their duties are disclosed against the aforesaid lawyers.

52. The actions of the said lawyers as discussed earlier, scandalized and lowered the authority of the court. The aforesaid actions of the said lawyers also interfered with the due course of judicial proceedings and obstructed the administration of justice. The aforesaid actions of the said lawyers prima facie constitute to criminal contempt of this court.

53. The Court cannot turn a blind eye to the incident in the name of harmony between the Bar and Bench. Appeasement of violence in Court will make the Courts vulnerable to blackmail and not prevent recurrence of violence. Violence is not sated by appeasement. Violence can be curbed by bringing the perpetrators to justice and by establishing the deterrence of law.

54. The majesty of this Court can be redeemed and the rule of law can be upheld by issuing the following directions:

I. Criminal contempt proceedings are liable to be drawn against the concerned lawyers by this Court for prima facie criminal contempt before this Court.

II. Let the matter be placed before Hon’ble The Chief Justice for transmitting the same to the appropriate Bench for prosecution of criminal contempt proceedings against the concerned lawyers as per law.

III. In view of the prima facie disclosure of commission of criminal offences by the concerned lawyers in the Court, the matter be placed before Hon'ble The Chief Justice with a request to take appropriate action as per law, and for consideration of issuance of following directions:

A. Registrar General of the Allahabad High Court may be directed to ensure that FIR is registered against the concerned lawyers for incitement to violence, conspiracy to commit violence, perpetration of violence and vandalism in Court and any other criminal offences which are made out.

B. Registrar General of the Allahabad High Court may also be directed to register an FIR against the persons who put out false posts on social media pertaining to the aforesaid incidents in the High Court and to ensure that false posts on social media platforms pertaining to the

incident in the Court on 27/10/2026 and 28/10/2026 are blocked and deleted.

IV. Report of the Registrar General of Allahabad High Court dated 28.10.2026 be placed in a sealed cover in the record of this case.

55. Before parting this Court would like to bring on the record its appreciation of a few members of the Bar. Shri V.P. Srivastava learned Senior Counsel and Sri Paritosh Kumar Malviya, learned AGA-I; Shri Sanjeev Pandey, learned AGA; Shri Pradeep Jaiswar, learned AGA; Shri Shehnawaz Khan, learned AGA; and Shri Sandeep Tripathi, learned AGA. Shri V. P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel and learned AGAs stood on the burning deck to tell the truth and to uphold the process of this Court. Their numbers may be small but we would do well to remember that one wick of a burning candle can dispel all darkness. It is on the strength of such members of the Bar, that this Court can still say with confidence to our fellow citizens that the Allahabad High Court will leave nothing undone for the historians of the future to say that we left something undone which ought to have been done.

56. Shri V. P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel is a stalwart of the criminal Bar who has distinguished himself with his deep knowledge of criminal law and sterling character. Shri V.P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel is a legendary stalwart on the criminal side, and has risen to eminence through the dint of hardwork, scholarship and

irreproachable conduct. Shri V. P. Srivastava, learned Senior Counsel, has also been the President of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association and is an inspiration for the Bar.

57. The Court would be failing in its duty if it did not emphasize the duty of the State to protect its own law officers. It would be a travesty of law and justice if the State fails to protect its own law officers who are threatened and attacked for discharging their duties for the State before this Court.

(Divesh Chandra Samant, J.) **(Ajay Bhanot, J.)**

October 29, 2026
V.D.A.