2026 INSC 1264

REPORTABLE

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA**
**CRIMINAL APPELLATE JURISDICTION**

**CRIMINAL APPEAL NO._____OF 2026**
**(ARISING OUT OF SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION (CRIMINAL) NO. 5478 OF 2026)**

**DEEPTI SINGH** **...APPELLANT(S)**

**VERSUS**

**STATE OF U.P. & ANR.** **...RESPONDENT(S)**

**J U D G M E N T**

**SHREE CHANDRASHEKHAR, J.**

Leave granted.

2. The appellant assails the Order dated 18th February 2026 passed by a learned Single Judge of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad by which Application No. 13044 of 2025 seeking quashing of the Order dated 25th March 2025 taking cognizance of offence in Case No. 844/12/2023 titled "*State v. Gaurav Singh*" has been dismissed. The appellant who was not sent up for trial in Crime No. 487 of 2022 seeks to impugn the said Order of the High Court primarily on the ground that the trial Magistrate cannot take

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Reason:

cognizance on a Protest Petition and issue summons to the proposed accused to face the trial without following the procedure under Chapter XV of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

3. Crime No. 487 of 2022 was registered on 19th June 2022 under sections 302, 352 and 504 of the Indian Penal Code based on a written information of Smt. Pratima Singh who is the sister of Abhishek Singh alias Mohit. The informant alleged that around 17:30 hrs. on 18th June 2022 an altercation took place between her brother and the neighbor Gaurav Singh who is the husband of the appellant. The cause of the occurrence was that Gaurav Singh was trying to divert the flow of drainage. She further alleged that the appellant instigated her husband who started abusing her brother in vulgar language. The appellant and her husband both were carrying a stick, and one unknown person who was carrying a spade, surrounded her brother and assaulted him mercilessly with an intent to kill. In the meantime, the villagers including Bharat Singh who is the uncle of the informant rushed there and intervened but by that time her brother had succumbed to the injuries on the spot. The post-mortem report disclosed two abrasions on the right side of forehead and one abrasion over left elbow of Abhishek Singh. The post-mortem doctors found clotted blood in both chambers of the heart of the deceased but they were unable to ascertain the cause of death. In the opinion of the doctors the immediate cause of death of Abhishek Singh

was asphyxia due to antemortem hanging. Later, expert view of Dr. G. Khan who was the Joint Director at State Medico-Legal Cell, Lucknow was obtained. He rendered an opinion that the presence of clotted blood confirms thrombo-embolism and the cause of death was post-traumatic cardio-pulmonary thrombo-embolism precipitated by antemortem trauma.

4. On 24th August 2022 the investigation of the case was transferred to Crime Branch, Mahoba and the Chargesheet No. 01 of 2023 came to be filed against Gaurav Singh under sections 323, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code. For the appellant, a remark was made in the chargesheet as "Suspicion approved: Not". The chargesheet narrated the initial steps during investigation and stated that no evidence was found to support the allegation of chasing the deceased towards main road and beating him with intention to kill. The police report disclosed that two eyewitnesses, namely, Surendra Chandra Mishra and Anuruddh Kumar Shrivastava had made statements to the Investigating Officer that the deceased fell on the ground on his own and that was visible on the CCTV footage. It also referred to the statement of Indrajeet Singh, Majhla alias Ram Naresh Verma and Nanku Raikwar and the CCTV footage in which the deceased was seen running away with a stick. The chargesheet recorded the opinion of post-mortem doctors that the injuries found on the dead body of Abhishek Singh were not sufficient to cause

death; the expert opinion was that the deceased died a natural death. It finally recorded that involvement of the appellant and one unknown person was not established in the occurrence.

5. Aggrieved by dropping of the offence under section 302 of the Indian Penal Code against Gaurav Singh and dropping of the name of the appellant in the chargesheet, the informant lodged a Protest Petition on 14th December 2023 alleging that the post-mortem report did not reflect the correct cause of death and it was contrary to the inquest report which recorded red-blue marks from the back to waist over the dead body of her brother. The informant claimed that she and her uncle Bharat Singh were the eyewitness but the Investigating Officer did not record their statements correctly. According to her, it was an unfair investigation from the start and the Investigating Officer fabricated the accused-sponsored evidence to save them. On an application made by the informant-turned-complainant on 3rd January 2025, a report was called for from the DIG of Police, Chitrakoot Dham Region, Banda who informed the Court that investigation in the case was transferred to Mahoba on her request.

6. By an order dated 25th March 2025 the Chief Judicial Magistrate took cognizance of offence and issued summons to a number of persons, observing as under:

> "This Court also considers the principle laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Hardeep Singh v. State of Punjab (2014) 3 SCC 92, Mohammed Ispahani v. Yogendra Chandak (2017) 16 SCC 226, Rajesh v.

The State of Haryana (2019) 6 SCC 368, and Nahar Singh v. State of U.P. & Anr. (2022) 5 SCC 295 as applicable/followable in the present case that Hon'ble Supreme Court has held that when a person is named in the FIR by the complainant, but police, after investigation, finds no role of that particular person and files the chargesheet without implicating him, the Court is not powerless, and at the stage of summoning, if the trial court finds that a particular person should be summoned as accused, even though not named in the chargesheet, it can do so. At that stage, chance is given to the complainant also to file a protest petition urging upon the trial court to summon other persons as well who were named in the FIR but not implicated in the chargesheet.

Based on the above analysis, in the considered opinion of this Court, on the basis of the evidence available on the record, there is sufficient ground for taking cognizance of the punishable offences under Sections 302, 201, 218, 504 read with Section 34 and Section 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 in the present case, and for proceeding further against the accused persons Gaurav Singh son of Balwan Singh and Deepti Singh wife of Gaurav Singh, both residents of Awas Vikas Colony, B-Block, Kotwali Nagar, District Banda, under Sections 302/34, 201/34, 504 read with Section 120B IPC, 1860; and against Dr. Vagesh Kumar Srivastava son of late Shivanath Prasad, resident of Harjendra Nagar, Chakari, East Commissionerate, Kanpur Nagar, Dr. Arvind Kumar son of Ganesh Ram, resident of Dangoli, Mohammadabad, Mau, Rajendra Singh (PNO 902411326), then Incharge Inspector, Police Station Kotwali Nagar, Banda, Raghavendra Singh (PNO 012233327), then Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba, Rajesh Kumar Singh (PNO 072030439), then Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba, Ishwar Sharan Rai (PNO 860690250), then Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba, Dharmendra Singh (PNO 152101844), then Sub-Inspector, Police Station Kotwali Nagar, Banda, Ambuj Trivedi, then Circle Officer Nagar, Banda, Shri Ajay Kumar Agarwal, then Circle Officer Charkhari/Line, Mahoba, Ms. Harshita Gangwar, then Circle Officer Line, Mahoba, Umesh Chandra, then Circle Officer Line, Mahoba, and Ram Pravesh Rai, then Circle Officer Nagar, Mahoba, under Sections 201, 218, 34 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. Accordingly, both the aforesaid questions under consideration are answered in the affirmative. As regards the question of any involvement of the Superintendent of Police, Banda and Mahoba or any other person in the case, the same can be decided by the trial court after detailed evidence. Thus, both the issues framed for consideration are answered accordingly.

Therefore, cognizance is taken of the offences punishable under Sections 34, 302, 201, 218, 504 read with Section 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 in the present case. Accused persons Gaurav Singh son of Balwan Singh and Deepti Singh wife of Gaurav Singh, both residents of Awas Vikas Colony, B-Block, Kotwali Nagar, District Banda, are summoned to appear on 02.04.2025 for trial under Sections 302/34, 201/34, 504 read with Section 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. Further, Dr. Vagesh Kumar Srivastava son of late Shivanath Prasad, resident of Harjendra Nagar, Chakari, East Commissionerate, Kanpur Nagar; Dr. Arvind Kumar son of Ganesh Ram, resident of Dangoli, Mohammadabad, Mau; Rajendra Singh (PNO 902411326), then Incharge Inspector, Police Station Kotwali Nagar, Banda; Raghavendra Singh (PNO 012233327), then Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba; Rajesh Kumar Singh (PNO 072030439), then

Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba; Ishwar Sharan Rai (PNO 860690250), then Inspector, Crime Branch, Mahoba; Dharmendra Singh (PNO 152101844), then Sub-Inspector, Police Station Kotwali Nagar, Banda; Ambuj Trivedi, then Circle Officer Nagar, Banda; Shri Ajay Kumar Agarwal, then Circle Officer Charkhari/Line, Mahoba; Ms. Harshita Gangwar, then Circle Officer Line, Mahoba; Umesh Chandra, then Circle Officer Line, Mahoba; and Ram Pravesh Rai, then Circle Officer Nagar, Mahoba are summoned to appear on 02.04.2025 for trial under Sections 201, 218, 34 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.
The case shall be put up on the fixed date."

7. Ms. Aarushi Singh, the learned counsel for the appellant contended that the Magistrate has no power to add a new offence in the order taking cognizance in relation to which a police report has been filed and accepted by the Magistrate. As to the Protest Petition, the Magistrate took a wrong route and did not follow the procedure under the Code of Criminal Procedure to deal with a complaint case and issued summons to the appellant on mere *ipse dixit.* The learned counsel further submitted that she was not raising any doubt on the power of the Magistrate to take cognizance on the police report or to proceed with the Protest Petition but the Magistrate cannot refer to and rely on the investigation report to take cognizance on the Protest Petition. Mr. Akshay Amritanshu, the learned State counsel and Mr. Ajay Pal, the learned counsel for the respondent No. 2 reiterated the power of the Magistrate to take cognizance on a police report or a Protest Petition and cited a few judgments in support thereof.

8. There are marked differences in the powers and procedure for taking cognizance under clause (b) of sub-section 1 of section 190 of the Code of Criminal Procedure on a police report and under section

200 when a complaint is made to the Magistrate. The provisions under section 190(1)(b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure empower a Magistrate of the First class and any Magistrate of the Second class specially empowered in this behalf to take cognizance of any offence upon a police report of such facts. A police report is forwarded to a Magistrate empowered to take cognizance of the offence after completing the investigation and it requires several information and details as indicated under sub-section 2 to section 173. It needs no clarification that the power of the Magistrate to take or not to take cognizance or to direct further investigation when a police report is forwarded to him is no longer *res integra*. The Magistrate has to independently apply his mind to the facts emerging from the police report and he can differ with the conclusions in the police report. The Magistrate takes cognizance of the offence under sub-section 1 to section 190 when he decides to accept the police report which is generally described as a chargesheet. There is also a catena of judgments[1] that has approved the power of the Magistrate to take cognizance or direct further investigation where the police report is a closure report. However, it is beyond the power of the Magistrate to

[1] (a) Abhinandan Jha & Ors. v. Dinesh Mishra : (1967) SCC OnLine SC 107
(b) H.S. Bains, Director, Small Saving-cum-Deputy Secretary Finance, Punjab, Chandigarh v. State (Union Territory of Chandigarh) : (1980) 4 SCC 631
(c) Bhagwant Singh v. Commissioner of Police & Anr. : (1985) 2 SCC 537
(d) Gangadhar Janardan Mhatre v. State of Maharashtra & Ors. : (2004) 7 SCC 768
(e) Vishnu Kumar Tiwari v. State of Uttar Pradesh & Anr. : (2019) 8 SCC 27
(f) Hardeep Singh v. State of Punjab & Ors. : (2014) 3 SCC 92

add any offence in the order taking cognizance when he accepts the chargesheet in toto.

9. The Magistrate is also vested with the power to entertain a complaint and take cognizance thereof following the procedure under Chapter XV of the Code of Criminal Procedure which starts with section 200 laying down as under:

> "200. Examination of complainant.—A Magistrate taking cognizance of an offence on complaint shall examine upon oath the complainant and the witnesses present, if any, and the substance of such examination shall be reduced to writing and shall be signed by the complainant and the witnesses, and also by the Magistrate:
> Provided that, when the complaint is made in writing, the Magistrate need not examine the complainant and the witnesses—
> (a) if a public servant acting or purporting to act in the discharge of his official duties or a Court has made the complaint; or
> (b) if the Magistrate makes over the case for inquiry or trial to another Magistrate under section 192:
> Provided further that if the Magistrate makes over the case to another Magistrate under section 192 after examining the complainant and the witnesses, the latter Magistrate need not re-examine them."

10. Section 200 of the Code of Criminal Procedure gives power to the Magistrate to take cognizance of an offence after examining the complainant and his witnesses, if any. However, when a complaint in writing is made to a Magistrate who is not competent to take cognizance of the offence he is required to return the complaint with an endorsement thereon for its presentation to the proper Court. Where the complaint is not in writing the Magistrate shall simply direct the complainant to approach the proper Court. The Magistrate, before whom a complaint in writing is made of which he is authorized to take cognizance or which has been made over to him under section

192, has different options available to him. The Magistrate in his discretion can cause an inquiry under sub-section 1 of section 202 and take evidence of the witness on oath, if he thinks fit. The Magistrate can also direct the complainant to produce all his witnesses and examine them on oath if it appears to him that the offence complained of is triable exclusively by the Court of Sessions. The Magistrate can postpone the issue of process against the accused person and may inquire into the case himself or direct an investigation to be made by the police or by such other person as he thinks fit, for the purpose of deciding whether or not there is sufficient ground to proceed against the accused person. In all situations the Magistrate is duty bound to act justly and judiciously. He is required to apply his mind to the materials laid by the complainant and then to take a decision in the matter.

11. However, in the case at hand the Chief Judicial Magistrate adopted a procedure which is not prescribed in the Code of Criminal Procedure. In the order taking cognizance which runs into Seventy typed pages of the paper book, the learned Magistrate embarked upon an exercise to find fault with the investigation. In some cases a faulty investigation may give rise to a situation where the Magistrate exercises his power under sub-section 8 of section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to direct further investigation. However, a defective investigation is not a ground for taking cognizance on a

complaint which does not provide sufficient evidence to proceed further in the matter. In a police case the Magistrate takes cognizance of the offence on the basis of the investigation report forwarded to him under sub-section 2 to section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. But if there is no material against the accused in the police report, maybe on account of a defective investigation, the Magistrate naturally would have no material before him based on which he can take cognizance of the offence and the only option available to him would be to direct further investigation if he deems necessary.

12. However, in a matter where the learned Magistrate was required to take a decision whether or not to accept the police report and then turn to the Protest Petition, he proceeded to write a dissertation on duty of the Police and the Court appended with a catalogue of judgments. It is really surprising that on a Protest Petition filed by the informant about 12 months after the chargesheet was filed against Gaurav Singh under sections 323, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code and exonerating the appellant, the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Banda without following the procedure in law issued summons to the appellant and her husband to face the trial under section 302 r/w section 34, section 201 r/w section 34 and section 504 r/w section 120B of the Indian Penal Code. He has also issued summons to two Doctors, four Investigating Officers, one Sub-Inspector and, five Supervising Officers under sections 201 and 218

r/w section 34 and section 120B of the Indian Penal Code. In our opinion the order taking cognizance passed by the Chief Judicial Magistrate is an astonishing exercise of power by him. In the order taking cognizance the Chief Judicial Magistrate framed issues and extensively referred to the statement of witnesses recorded by the Investigating Officer, the expert opinion and the post-mortem report. He has also referred to the statement of witnesses in Cross-case and the injury report of Gaurav Singh who had suffered two lacerated wounds on his skull. In that case, Chargesheet No. 322 of 2023 has been forwarded against Saurabh Singh alias Rinku under sections 323, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code. The learned Magistrate has also referred to various decisions[2] on the duty of the police to conduct fair investigation and not to fabricate evidence. He then again referred to a series of judgments in paragraph nos. 13, 14, 15 and 16 to inform himself that this is the immediate requirement of rule of law that the investigation in a criminal case is fair and transparent and it is conducted in a judicious manner.

13. Apparently, it was a sheer waste of judicial time to write a Seventy-page cognizance order. In the legal parlance the expression

[2] (a) Amar Nath Chaubey v. Union of India & Ors. : (2021) 11 SCC 804
(b) Manohar Lal Sharma v. Principal Secretary & Ors. : (2014) 2 SCC 532
(c)Nathi Lal & Ors. v. State of U.P. & Anr. : 1990 SCC(Cri) 638
(d) Sudhir & Ors. v. State of M.P. : 2001 SCC(Cri) 387
(e) State of M.P. v. Mishrilal (Dead) & Ors. : AIR 2003 SC 4089
(f) Nirmal Singh Kahlon v. State of Punjab & Ors. : (2009) 1 SCC 441
(g) V.K. Sasikala v. State : (2012) 9 SCC 771

cognizance refers to a process of application of mind by a Judge to the facts of a suspected commission of offence. The term cognizance is not defined in the Code of Criminal Procedure or the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. But it has received judicial interpretation largely conveying a process of taking judicial notice by a Court of law on a cause or matter. It is well known that an order taking cognizance need not be a reasoned order, leave alone an elaborate order. In "*R.R. Chari v. State of Uttar Pradesh"*[3] this Court made a pertinent observation that taking cognizance does not involve any formal action or indeed action of any kind but occurs as soon as the Magistrate as such applies his mind to the suspected commission of an offence. In "*Kanti Bhadra Shah & Anr. v. State of W.B."*[4] this Court held that there is no requirement in law to give reasons for taking cognizance of the offence. The decision in "*Kanti Bhadra Shah*" has been consistently followed by this Court in "*Bhushan Kumar & Anr. v. State (NCT of Delhi) & Anr."*[5], "*Mehmood Ul Rehman v. Khazir Mohammad Tunda & Ors."*[6], "*State of Gujarat v. Afroz Mohammed Hasanfatta"*[7], *"Rakhi Mishra v. State of Bihar & Ors."*[8] and *"Sonu Gupta v. Deepak Gupta & Ors."*[9]. In "*Kanti Bhadra Shah"*[4] this Court held as under:

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[3] R.R. Chari v. State of Uttar Pradesh : AIR 1951 SC 207
[4] Kanti Bhadra Shah & Anr. v. State of W.B. : (2000) 1 SCC 722
[5] Bhushan Kumar & Anr. v. State (NCT of Delhi) & Anr. : (2012) 5 SCC 424
[6] Mehmood Ul Rehman v. Khazir Mohammad Tunda & Ors. : (2015) 12 SCC 420
[7] State of Gujarat v. Afroz Mohammed Hasanfatta : (2019) 20 SCC 539
[8] Rakhi Mishra v. State of Bihar & Ors. : (2017) 16 SCC 772
[9] Sonu Gupta v. Deepak Gupta & Ors. : (2015) 3 SCC 424

> "12. If there is no legal requirement that the trial court should write an order showing the reasons for framing a charge, why should the already burdened trial courts be further burdened with such an extra work. The time has reached to adopt all possible measures to expedite the court procedures and to chalk out measures to avert all roadblocks causing avoidable delays. If a Magistrate is to write detailed orders at different stages merely because the counsel would address arguments at all stages, the snail-paced progress of proceedings in trial courts would further be slowed down. We are coming across interlocutory orders of Magistrates and Sessions Judges running into several pages. We can appreciate if such a detailed order has been passed for culminating the proceedings before them. But it is quite unnecessary to write detailed orders at other stages, such as issuing process, remanding the accused to custody, framing of charges, passing over to next stages in the trial..."

14. The Chief Judicial Magistrate committed a serious error in law in taking cognizance of the offence and issuing summons to the appellant without satisfying himself whether the Protest Petition satisfies all requirements of a complaint which is defined under section 2(d) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. A complaint does not include a police report and it means an allegation made orally or in writing to a Magistrate that some person, whether known or unknown, has committed an offence and invites the Magistrate to take action under the law. The Magistrate may treat a Protest Petition as a complaint to be dealt with under Chapter XV of the Code of Criminal Procedure but it should contain a specific allegation against the accused person of committing the crime and a list of witnesses. Merely summing up the objections to investigation carried by the police does not take the form of a complaint as defined under section 2(d) of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The procedure to be adopted by the Magistrate when a complaint is made before him or when he treats a Protest Petition as a complaint is entirely different from the procedure

prescribed under section 190. The Magistrate is required to follow the procedure under Chapter XV when a complaint is made before him. The power to take cognizance is preceded by a duty of the Magistrate to find truth. Section 202 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is intended at ascertaining the truth and falsehood of the complaint. The Magistrate causes an inquiry to find out whether there is evidence in support of the complaint so as to justify the issue of process and commencement of proceedings against the proposed accused. The Magistrate is not a machine making pro forma orders issuing process. He is required to apply his mind to the materials brought before him by the complainant at pre-summoning stage. He makes inquiry with reference to intrinsic quality of the statements made before him by the complainant and his witnesses. After the amendment in section 202 by Act No. 25 of 2005, it is mandatory that the Magistrate causes an inquiry in cases in which the accused is residing at a place beyond the area in which the Magistrate exercises his jurisdiction. The Magistrate is also vested with the power under section 203 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to dismiss the complaint where no sufficient ground is made for proceeding against the proposed accused person. Once the Magistrate decides to take cognizance, the further proceedings before him start with summons or warrant to the accused person as provided under Chapter XVI. This starts with section 204 which divides the cases into two categories, namely, summons-case

and warrant-case, and provides that no summons or warrant shall be issued against the accused until a list of prosecution witnesses has been filed. The order dated 25th March 2025 by which cognizance of the offence has been taken does not indicate any compliance of the mandatory procedures by the Magistrate. There is not even a hint in the said order that the Protest Petition conforms to the requirements of a complaint as envisaged in law. The order taking cognizance which merely recites several dozen judgments and picks up holes in the investigation is clearly an unwarranted exercise of power by the Magistrate.

15. The High Court, however, proceeded on a wrong premise and held that this is not the stage at which the Court can decide whether any offence was committed by the appellant. The High Court did not examine the procedure followed by the Magistrate in entertaining the Protest Petition and dismissed Application No. 13044 of 2025 on the ground that a disputed question of fact cannot be adjudicated in a petition under section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. It is well remembered that the High Court exercises revisional jurisdiction over all inferior Criminal Courts within its local jurisdiction and it was the duty of the High Court to call for the records and set the procedure right. When the High Court is satisfied that the process of any Court has been abused it should exercise its inherent power to secure the ends of justice and one such case would

be a criminal proceeding without jurisdiction. It is well known that section 561-A was incorporated in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 by Act XVIII of 1923 as a statutory recognition of the inherent powers possessed by the Judges of the High Court and this does not confer any new powers on the High Court. The Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to Act XVIII of 1923 recites that: "By this section, it is proposed to give a statutory recognition to the inherent powers of the High Court, the principle which is already well recognized." The power of the High Court under section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure which is preserved under section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita transcends all technical barriers and must be exercised where the trial Judge is found to have acted illegally and without jurisdiction. The learned counsel for the respondents contended that the appellant may move a discharge petition as permitted by the High Court, where she can raise all the grounds. We are, however, not inclined to approve the manner in which the Magistrate proceeded on the Protest Petition and acted beyond his jurisdiction in issuing summons to the appellant. The Order dated 25th March 2025 issuing summons to the appellant to face the trial under section 302 r/w section 34, section 201 r/w section 34, and section 504 r/w section 120B of the Indian Penal Code suffers from serious procedural irregularities which vitiate the entire proceedings against her.

16. After having examined the materials on record, we are satisfied that Application u/s 528 BNSS bearing No. 13044 of 2025 filed by the appellant deserves to be allowed. Therefore, the Order dated 18th February 2026 passed by the High Court is set aside and this Criminal Appeal is allowed. Consequently, the Order taking cognizance dated 25th March 2025 *qua* the appellant is set aside and the entire criminal proceedings in Case No. 844/12/2023 *qua* the appellant are also quashed. Pending application, if any, stands disposed of.

**……., J.**
**(PRASHANT KUMAR MISHRA)**

**……., J.**
**(SHREE CHANDRASHEKHAR)**

**NEW DELHI;**
**NOVEMBER 25, 2026.**