

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

Writ Petition(s) (Criminal) No(s). 241/2026

AJAY KUMAR RAI & ANR.

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

SHRI RAM JANMBHOOMI TEERTH KSHETRA TRUST & ORS.

Respondent(s)

WITH

ITEM NO. 42

Writ Petition(s) (Civil) No(s). 790/2026

IA No. 189012/2026 - APPROPRIATE ORDERS/DIRECTIONS

ITEM NO. 43

Writ Petition(s) (Criminal) No(s). 256/2026

IA No. 190845/2026 - STAY APPLICATION

ITEM NO. 44

Writ Petition(s) (Civil) No(s). 827/2026

Date : 21-09-2026 These petitions were called on for hearing today.

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

For Petitioner(s) : Petitioner-in-person

in Item 43 Mr. Devdutt Kamat, Sr. Adv.
 Mr. Satayam Singh, Adv.
 Ms. Pooja Kushawala, Adv.
 Ms. Sakshi Singh, Adv.
 Ms. Karnika Bhaguna, Adv.
 Ms. Muskan Singh Bankura, Adv.
 Miss Jaswanthi. A, AOR

in Item 44 Mr. C.R. Jaya Sukin, Adv.
 Ms. Yashika Anand, Adv.
 Ms. Seerat Nissar Bhat, Adv.
 Ms. Pallavi Talwar, Adv.
 Ms. Sangita Malhotra, Adv.
 Mr. Pradeep Chandra Sati, Adv.
 Mr. A.balaji, Adv.
 Mr. Roshan Chapagain, Adv.
 Mr. Narender Kumar Verma, AOR

For Respondent(s) : Mr. Bhakti Vardhan Singh, Adv.

Mr. Anirudh Sharma, AOR
Mr. Varun Kesharwani, Adv.
Mr. Arayan Khare, Adv.

Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
Mr. Sharan Dev Singh Thakur, Sr. A.A.G.
Ms. Ruchira Goel, AOR
Mr. Siddharth Thakur, Adv.
Mr. Shantanu Singh, Adv.
Mr. Ravi Sehgal, Adv.

Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
Mr. K.M. Nataraj, A.S.G.
Mr. Vatsal Joshi, Adv.
Mr. Sharath Nambiar, Adv.
Mr. Bhuvan Kapoor, Adv.
Mr. Arvind Kumar Sharma-aor, Adv.
Dr. N. Visakamurthy, AOR

Mr. Ravi Shankar Jandhyala, Sr. Adv.
Mr. Shariq Ahmed, Adv.
Ms. Baani Khanna, AOR
Mr. Robin Singh, Adv.
Mr. Kapil Balwani, Adv.
Ms. Komal Thakkar, Adv.
Ms. Tejal Tapaswani Nagauri, Adv.

Mr. Vivek Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Prabhat Chowdhary, Adv.
Mr. Surendra Gautam, Adv.
Mrs. Ankur Gulyani Panda, Adv.
Ms. Shivani Nagpal, Adv.
Mr. Avnish Kumar, Adv.
Mr. Lokesh Kumar Choudhary, AOR

in Item 42

Mr. Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General
Mr. K.M. Nataraj, A.S.G.
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Mr. Arayan Khare, Adv.

Mr. Barun Kumar Sinha, Adv.
Mrs. Pratibha Sinha, Adv.
Mr. Sneh Vardhan, Adv.
Mr. Vaibhav Singh, Adv.
Mr. Rakesh Mudgal, Adv.
Mr. Pankaj Kumar Shukla, Adv.
Mr. Chhail Bihari Singh, Adv.
Mr. Ritu Raj, Adv.
Mrs. Kanika, Adv.
Mr. Anantha Narayana M.G., AOR

in Item 43

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Mr. Ravi Sehgal, Adv.

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

1. In accordance with the order dated 27.07.2026, subsequently followed by the order dated 17.08.2026, the State of Uttar Pradesh

and the Special Investigation Team (SIT) have submitted their respective status reports. The most recent status report, filed by the SIT on 16.09.2026, is taken note of, and the relevant facts are recorded from this document.

2. It has been submitted that the investigation concerns allegations pertaining to the unauthorised removal and misappropriation of offerings and donations received at Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, Ayodhya. The case in this regard was registered on 25.06.2026 at Police Station Ram Janmabhoomi, District Ayodhya, against eight accused persons. The investigation was initially taken up by the Circle Officer, Ayodhya, who, during the course of the investigation, collected evidence comprising CCTV footage, witness statements, searches and recoveries, bank and financial records, property-related documents, mobile data, call detail records, forensic examination, and other documentary and electronic material.

3. The aforesaid investigation is now being supervised by the SIT constituted under the orders of this Court, and details whereof are given in paragraph 5 of the status report.

4. In this light, it has been stated that ASA & Associates LLP, appointed as the Forensic Auditor, has been associated with the SIT for examination of the relevant financial and other material. The scope of the forensic audit has been expanded, *inter alia*, to include analysis of bank accounts of accounting personnel and other relevant persons; physical verification of valuable articles; examination of CCTV footage; forensic analysis of mobile data of the accused persons; examination of the relevant procedures/SOP

concerning receipt, accounting and deposit of donations; analysis of online deposits in the bank accounts of the Trust; and reconciliation of available financial information with the audited financial statements.

5. It has been averred in this vein that the investigation has proceeded simultaneously on multiple aspects, including identification of the suspected acts of misappropriation, identification and examination of the persons involved, tracing of the suspected proceeds thereof, financial and property investigation, examination of electronic evidence, verification of valuable articles and reconciliation of the relevant donation and banking records.

6. It has also been canvassed that CCTV footage from the counting room situated in the PFC building, along with other relevant digital data, have been secured and subjected to detailed examination. That examination has revealed 105 instances of unauthorized currency removal or concealment from the counting room, involving assistance from other individuals participating in the counting process. Some of the accused have been identified along with details provided on the number of times they engaged in misappropriation, etc., along with other related information, as outlined in paragraph 12 of the report.

7. The status report details the analysis of CCTV footage and other materials to identify the eight accused persons. It also presents a tabulated summary of the unexplained deposits in their accounts and information about the immovable and movable assets

where the stolen money was invested. Additionally, the report includes a chart showing the recovery efforts made so far.

8. The status report further emphasises the estimated amount misappropriated by each accused individual, also noting that existing evidence suggests the suspected misappropriation of currency took place within the counting room during the process of counting and handling the currency.

9. Additionally, the said report discloses that the receipts generated by the TCS software for 803 valuable articles have been verified, and their relevant records have been found to be with the Trust. These articles are stored in a State Bank of India locker, which was physically checked. In so far as these 803 articles are concerned, no discrepancies were found during the verification.

10. There are 86 valuable articles in respect of which receipts have not been issued. These articles have been separately identified and physically verified.

11. The records relating to approximately 944.411 kilograms of white metal (supposed to be silver) have been sent by the Trust to Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited for melting. The report pertaining to the said white metal has also been examined, and the relevant records scrutinised.

12. The status report further indicates that particular allegations regarding valuable donations reported in the media and on social media have been duly verified. These allegations included the alleged donation of 200 kilograms of silver bricks, 38.288 kilograms of silver bricks, a silver necklace, Charan Paduka, and a

donation related to the Ramcharitmanas. The involved individuals have been interviewed, and the pertinent materials have been examined by them. No discrepancies were identified during this verification process.

13. The statements of 173 witnesses have been recorded as of 14.09.2026. These witnesses include Trust functionaries, accounting personnel, banking officials, security personnel, CCTV operators, Chartered Accountants, vendors, persons connected with property transactions and other persons relevant to the matters under investigation.

14. According to the status report, relevant Standard Operating Procedures and records relating to the counting and handling of donations, security arrangements, CCTV recordings and reconciliation records have been duly examined to the extent relevant to the present investigation. The investigation is reported to have proceeded on the basis of multiple sources of evidence, including CCTV footage, recoveries, bank and financial records, property and vehicle records, mobile data, call detail records, witness statements, forensic examination and forensic audit.

15. It is pointed out in the penultimate paragraph that the investigation has been substantially completed and upon completion thereof, the police report/charge sheet under Section 193 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS) shall be filed before the competent court. However, even after filing of that report, further investigation as permissible under Section 193(9) of the BNSS shall remain open, and if any further evidence or

material comes to light, it shall also be undertaken in accordance with the directions that may be issued by this Court.

16. The report confirms that SIT is conducting the investigation independently and impartially, with each individual's role evaluated based on the evidence gathered.

17. We are informed by the Solicitor General of India, representing the State of Uttar Pradesh, that the investigation is now complete and the SIT is inclined to file the charge sheet on or before 25.09.2026, i.e., before completion of 90 days from the date of the first arrest.

18. The Court will ensure no order or directive that could directly or indirectly impact the jurisdictional court's authority is affected. However, to satisfy the Court's review, we would like to examine the contents of the charge sheet. Therefore, a copy of it, after filing, should be provided to this Court. Petitions or any other public-spirited individuals may also highlight any other issues requiring the SIT's attention, so that the learned Additional Sessions Judge or Special Judge can issue suitable directions, keeping in mind Section 193(9) of the BNSS.

19. Post these matters for further consideration on 02.11.2026.

(NITIN TALREJA)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(PREETHI DILEEP KUMAR)
DY. REGISTRAR