



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
BENCH AT AURANGABAD**

SUO-MOTO PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO.08 OF 2020

The Registrar (Judicial) High Court of Judicature of Bombay,
Bench at Aurangabad.

VERSUS

The State of Maharashtra and Others

.....

Mr. Satyajeet S. Bora, Amicus Curiae
Mr. S.K. Tambe, Addl. G.P. for Respondents No.1, 4, 5, 6 and 7
Mr. A.G. Talhar, Dy. Solicitor General of India for Respondent No.2
Mr. A.P. Bhandari, Advocate for Respondent No.8
Mr. K.N. Lokhande, Advocate for Respondent No.33

.....

**CORAM : SMT. VIBHA KANKANWADI AND
HITEN S. VENEGAVKAR, JJ.**

RESERVED ON : 16 DECEMBER, 2025

PRONOUNCED ON : 09 JANUARY, 2026

ORDER [Per Hiten S. Venegavkar, J.] :-

1. This suo-motu Public Interest Litigation has been pending since the year 2020 and concerns the continuing menace posed by the manufacture, sale and use of nylon *manja*, notwithstanding an express statutory and executive prohibition. We have considered the material placed on record, the affidavits filed by the State Government, the police authorities, and the Municipal Corporation, the submissions advanced by the learned counsel appearing for the parties, and the learned Amicus Curiae.

{2}

2. At the outset, we are constrained to record our serious dissatisfaction with the manner in which the authorities have addressed the issue. The record reveals a disturbing pattern. Whenever a serious incident is reported in the media or the matter is listed before this Court, assurances are tendered, raids are conducted and so-called “special drives” are undertaken. Once the immediate spotlight fades, enforcement recedes into inertia. Such an approach is episodic, reactive, and ritualistic, and wholly inconsistent with the constitutional obligations of the State.

3. Despite an unequivocal ban, nylon *manja* continues to be freely available and widely used. The affidavits filed from time to time, including the most recent ones, do not inspire confidence. They are repetitive, generic and bereft of any indication of sustained, intelligence-driven or technology-enabled enforcement. This continued failure of governance directly impacts the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution. The danger posed by nylon *manja* is not confined to human beings alone; it results in horrific injuries and deaths of birds and other living creatures, whose protection flows from the constitutional mandate under Articles 48A and 51A(g).

{3}

4. The incidents placed on record before this Court, including the grievous neck injury caused to a minor child requiring twenty stitches and the injury caused to a motorcyclist, cannot be dismissed as isolated occurrences. Judicial experience compels us to observe that such reported cases represent only a fraction of the actual harm caused. The risk posed by nylon *manja* is inherent, foreseeable, and well-documented. The State, being fully aware of this danger, is under a non-delegable duty to prevent such harm. Merely prosecuting petty vendors or users does not discharge this obligation.

5. What is conspicuously absent from the record is any serious attempt to dismantle the illegal supply chain. There is little or no evidence of action against manufacturers, bulk suppliers, wholesalers, financiers or organized networks engaged in this clandestine trade. Equally, alarming is the continued availability of nylon *manja* on online marketplaces and social media platforms. In an era dominated by digital commerce, enforcement that ignores the online dimension is plainly ineffective. The State cannot plead helplessness on the ground of technological complexity; rather, it must proactively deploy technical expertise and exercise its statutory powers against intermediaries operating within its jurisdiction.

6. In these circumstances, we are satisfied that immediate, structured and continuous intervention is imperative to prevent further loss of life and serious injury. Accordingly, in exercise of our jurisdiction under Articles 226 and 227 of the Constitution, we issue the following interim directions:

A] Constitution of Special Task Force:

7. The Director General of Police shall forthwith constitute a dedicated, State-level Special Task Force exclusively to deal with offences relating to the manufacture, storage, transportation, sale, online marketing and use of nylon *manja*. The Task Force shall be headed by an officer not below the rank of Inspector General of Police and shall include officers from the Cyber crime wing and other specialized units.

8. The said Task Force shall, within a period of **four weeks**, prepare and place before this Court a comprehensive action plan identifying:

- manufacturing units, whether licensed or clandestine;
- bulk procurement channels and supply routes;
- storage hubs and wholesale distribution points; and
- online platforms, social media accounts and digital channels used for sale or promotion.

{5}

9. The Task Force shall ensure coordinated, State-wide action so that enforcement is not confined to isolated police stations or districts.

B] Intelligence-Based Enforcement

10. All Commissioners of Police and Superintendents of Police shall ensure continuous surveillance and intelligence-based operations. Action shall be directed primarily against the upper tiers of the supply chain, including manufacturers, financiers, bulk distributors and organized networks, and not merely against end-users or street-level vendors.

C] Inter-Departmental Coordination

11. The State Government shall, within **two weeks**, issue binding directions to all concerned departments, including the Home Department, Urban Development Department and Information Technology Department, to ensure seamless coordination and accountability in enforcement.

D] Role of Municipal Corporations and Local Bodies

12. Municipal Corporations and local authorities shall conduct continuous inspections of shops, godowns and markets. Where prohibited nylon *manja* is found, authorities shall not restrict themselves to seizure alone, but shall initiate:

- cancellation of licences;

{6}

- sealing of premises; and
- prosecution of the persons concerned, strictly in accordance with law.

E] Online Sale and Digital Monitoring

13. The State shall, within **three weeks**, designate a nodal officer of appropriate seniority and engage qualified information technology professionals to monitor e-commerce platforms, social media marketplaces and messaging applications.

14. The nodal officer shall establish a formal mechanism for immediate takedown of listings, advertisements and content relating to nylon *manja*. Where platform operators or intermediaries permit the sale or promotion of the prohibited product despite notice, appropriate prosecution shall be initiated in accordance with law.

F] Precautionary and Preventive Measures

15. The authorities shall undertake sustained public awareness measures, particularly prior to and during festival seasons, highlighting the dangers of nylon *manja* and the penal consequences of its manufacture, sale or use. Such measures shall be continuous and not event-driven.

G] VICTIM COMPENSATION

16. The injuries suffered by the 03 victims referred to in these

proceedings are a direct consequence of the failure of the State machinery to effectively enforce a known prohibition. The doctrine of public law compensation, evolved to remedy violations of fundamental rights, squarely applies.

17. Accordingly, we direct the State Government to pay interim compensation of Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rupees Two Lakhs) each to;

- The minor child namely Swaransh Sanjiv Jadhav, R/o. Harsul, who sustained grievous neck injuries; and
- The man namely; Shoaib Kadri, R/o. Jinsi, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, who had suffered injury due to nylon *manja*, and underwent 19 stitches.
- The motorcyclist namely Mohammad Haidar Ali, R/o. Sanjay Nagar Bayajipur, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, and underwent 9 stitches.

Payment of compensation be made after due verification of each of the victim within a period of four weeks from today. This payment shall be without prejudice to their right to seek higher compensation in appropriate proceedings. The State shall be at liberty to recover the said amounts from the persons found guilty, after due adjudication and in accordance with law.

18. Creation of victim compensation fund by State, and policy and procedure to claim such compensation who would suffer injuries in future to be laid down by State within a period of four weeks.

COMPLIANCE AND FURTHER ORDERS

19. This Public Interest Litigation shall remain pending. The Director General of Police and the concerned Municipal Commissioner shall file detailed compliance affidavits within six weeks, setting out concrete steps taken in compliance with these directions, supported by verifiable data and not vague or general assertions.

20. We make it clear that continued non-compliance or cosmetic compliance will invite stringent orders, including fixation of personal accountability of senior officers.

21. Aforesaid observations are made in respect of illegal use of nylon *manja* only and not for permitted uses.

22. The matter shall be listed for further consideration after 8 weeks.

[HITEN S. VENEGAVKAR]
JUDGE

[SMT. VIBHA KANKANWADI]
JUDGE