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EC restores oversight of its top IT officer

continued putting up files through Senior DEC Garg, who had been in charge of IT as the link officer after DEC Kumar left the EC in August.

"The work allocation order is as per unanimous decision of the Commission. There is no change in the reporting structure of DG IT. She has always been reporting to a DEC level officer," an EC source said Thursday.

After *The Indian Express* investigation on September 23 revealed that the two ECs had written to the Cabinet Secretary, the EC had in a September 26 press note said, "The letter to the Cabinet Secretary was not related to any policy matter of the Commission or IT division, but related to working of an officer on deputation to ECI. The work re-distribution orders issued by the concerned officer were not actually implemented after the orders of the two Commissioners and the oversight over the IT division by the DEC was never actually withdrawn."

On October 26, in an affidavit before the Supreme Court, the EC said, "In view of the joint direction dated 30 July 2026 by the two Election Commissioners, the order of 28 July 2026 was never implemented."

In his letter to the Cabinet Secretary, Joshi had pointed out that the July 28 order issued by Garg was not approved by the Commission and that when he had asked for the relevant files, it was not provided to him.

"In the said order, he allocated work to himself as well as to officers who are senior and equivalent to him," Joshi had written.

Apart from the change in the work allocation for IT, Wednesday's order also took into account the recently-appointed Deputy Election Commissioner, Prakash Rajpurohit, who was given the subjects of election planning, Model Code of Conduct and delimitation, among others. On election planning, he will support Senior DEC Garg, it stated.

UGC equity rules

after drawing objections from both general category groups and sections of Dalit and OBC communities. In the eye of the storm is regulation 3(1)(c) which defines caste-based discrimination as discrimination on the basis of caste or tribe against members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

Petitioners who challenged it said this excludes general category students and faculty from specific protection against caste-based discrimination. At the same time, the regulations' broader definition of "discrimination" covers unfair or differential treatment on the ground of caste against any stakeholder, they said.

The regulations stem from a 2019 petition filed in the Supreme Court by the mothers of Payal Tadvi and Rohith Vemula, who died by suicide over alleged caste-based discrimination in 2019 and 2016, respectively. They had sought the enforcement of robust anti-discrimination mechanisms across higher education institutions.

Staying the notified regulations on January 29, the court put forward a set of questions:

- Whether Clause 3 (1) (c) "bears a reasonable and rational nexus to subserve the object and purpose of the 2026 UGC Regulations, particularly in light of the fact that no distinct or special procedural mechanism has been prescribed to address caste-based discrimination, as opposed to the exhaustive and inclusive definition of "Discrimination" provided under Clause 3(e)".
- Would the introduction of the term "caste-based discrimination... have any bearing on the existing constitutional and statutory sub-classification of the Most Backward Castes within the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, and whether the (new rules) provide adequate and effective protection and safeguards to such Extremely Backward Castes against discrimination and structural disadvantage".
- Whether the inclusion of the expression "segregation... in the context of allocation of hostels, classrooms, mentorship groups, or similar academic or residential arrangements.

OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - II
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, CHANDIGARH
SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17A, Chandigarh-160017

RC No. 691/2018 Date of Auction Sale: 14.12.2026

PROCLAMATION OF SALE UNDER RULES 37,38 AND 52 (1), (2) OF SECOND SCHEDULE OF THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993 as amended from time to time.

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK
Versus
RAJEEV DUA

(CD-1) Sh. Rajeev Dua son of Sh. Sohan Lal Dua, resident of House No. 1420, Sargodha Colony, Jagadhri, District Yamuna Nagar.

1. Whereas Recovery Certificate, i.e. **RC No. 691/2018 in O.A. No. 688/2017** was issued for recovery of sum of **Rs. 16,88,773.95** jointly and severally with costs, current and future with simple interest of **@12% p.a.** from **16.04.2015** till the date of realization of the amount due to the Applicant Bank/Certificate Holder from the Certificate Debtors.
2. Whereas the undersigned has ordered the sale of the Mortgaged/Attached properties of the Certificate Debtor as mentioned in the Schedule hereunder towards satisfaction of the said Recovery Certificate. Notice is hereby given that in absence of any order of postponement, the said property(s) shall be sold on **14.12.2026 between 14:00 PM to 15:00 PM** by auction and bidding shall take place Online through the website: **https://www.bankeauctions.com.**
3. The details of authorised contact person for auction service provider are Name: **Mr. Mithalesh Kumar-Assistant Manage, www.clindia.com Plot No. 68 3rd Floor, Sector-44, Gurgaon-122003, Haryana (India) Website-https://www.bankeauctions.com Direct:0124-4302000| Mobile: +917080804466 E-mail: delhi@c1india.com C1 India: 2nd mail i'd-mithalesh.kunmar @c1india.com**
4. The details of authorised bank officer for auction service provider is **Name: Sh. Vishal, Manager, Mobile Number (89305-95759), Email Id: coknlsamd@pnb.bank.in.**
5. The sale will be of the properties of defendants/CDs above named, as mentioned in the schedule below & the liabilities and claims attaching to the said properties, so far as they been ascertained, are those specified in the schedule against each lot.
6. The property will be put up for sale in the lot specified in the schedule. If the amount to be realized is satisfied by the sale of portion of the property, the sale shall be immediately stopped with respect to the remainder. The sale will also stop if, before any lot is knocked down the arrears mentioned in the said certificate+interest+costs (including cost of sale) are tendered to the officer conducting the sale or proof is given to his satisfaction that the amount of such certificate, interest and costs has been paid to the undersigned.
7. The sale shall be subject to conditions prescribed in the second schedule to the Income Tax Act 1961 and the rules made thereunder and to the following further conditions:-

I. The particulars specified in the annexed schedule have been stated to the best of the information of the undersigned shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in the proclamation.
II. The Reserve Price below which the property shall not be sold is as mentioned in the schedule.
III. The amount by which the bidding is to be increased. In the event of any dispute arising as to the amount bid or as to the bidder the lot shall at once be again put up for auction or may be cancelled.
IV. The highest bidder shall be declared to be the purchaser of any lot provided always that he/she/they are legally qualified to bid and provided further the amount bid by him/her/them is not less than the reserve price. It shall be in the discretion of the undersigned to decline acceptance of the highest bid when the price offered appears so clearly inadequate as to make it inadvisable to do so.
V. Each intending bidders shall be required to pay Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) by **11.12.2026, 17:00 hrs by way of DD/Pay order in favour RECOVERY OFFICER-I, (DRT-2) CHANDIGARH, A/c R.C. No 691/2018** to be deposited with R.O. and with details of the property alongwith copy of PAN Card, address proof and identity proof, e-mail ID, Mobile No. and in case of the company or any other document confirming representation/attorney of the company and the receipt/counter foil of such deposit. EMD deposited thereafter shall not be considered eligible for participation in the auction.

The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD), Reserve Price & Bid increase, be fixed as follows :

No.	Description of Property	Reserve Price	EMD	Increase
1.	Land measuring 11K-05M out of 32K-15M - being 11/32 share in Khewat no. 61/53, Khatauni no. 79 and 80, Khasra No. 8//21(8-0), 18//2(6-16), 3(7-7), 8(6-4),=28K-7M, 18//9(4-8)=32K-15M situated at village Singpura, HB No. 205, Teh. Chhachhrauli, Distt. Yamunanagar, vide Jamabandi for the Year 2002-2003, read with Mutation No. 419 and 420 sanctioned on 04.01.2008.	**Rs. 24,48,000/-**	**Rs. 2,44,800/-**	**Rs. 50,000/-**

8. EMD received after due date & time shall be rejected & the amount paid towards the EMD shall be returned to them by way of option given by them in the E-Auction Form. Any person desirous of participating in the bidding process is required to have a valid digital signature certificate issued by the competent authority. It is the sole responsibility of the bidder to obtain the said digital signature certificate, active e-mail id and a computer terminal/system with internet connection to enable him/her to participate in the bidding. Any issue with regard to digital signature certificate and connectivity during the course of bidding online shall be the sole responsibility of the bidder and no claims in this regard shall be entertained.
9. If the bid is increased within the last 5 minutes of the given time of auction, the auction time is further extended by additional time for 5 minutes to enable the other bidders to increase their bids & the auction process comes to an end if no further increment(s) is/are made within the extended time of 5 minutes. In case of movable/ immovable property the price of each lot shall be paid at the time of sale or as soon after as the officer holding the sale directs, and in default of payment the property shall forthwith be again put up for auction for resale.
10. The successful/highest bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the sale proceeds after adjustment of EMD by next day in the said account/Demand draft/Banker Cheque/ Pay order as per detail mentioned above. If the next day is Holiday or Sunday, then on next first office day.
11. The highest bidder/purchaser shall deposit the balance 75% of the sale proceeds on or before 15th day from the date of sale of the property, exclusive of such day or if the 15th day being Sunday or other holiday, then on the first office day after the 15th day by the prescribed mode as stated above. In addition to the above, the highest bidder shall also deposit Poundage fee @ 2% upto Rs. 1,000/- and @ 1% on balance sale proceed amount immediately before **Recovery Officer-I, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, CHANDIGARH through DD in favor of Registrar, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II CHANDIGARH.**
12. In case of default of payment within the prescribed period, the deposit after defraying the expenses of the sale, may, if the undersigned thinks fit, be forfeited to the Government and the defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claims to the property or to any part of sum for which may subsequently be sold. The property shall be resold, after the issue of fresh proclamation of sale.
13. Highest bidder shall not have any right/title over the property until the sale is confirmed by the **Recovery Officer-I, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, CHANDIGARH (DRT 2).**
14. The prospective buyer may inspect the site and may verify the details of the property on the basis of the revenue record and all support would be provided by the local commissioner when contacted well in advance for the same.
15. The **Recovery Officer-II, Debts Recovery Tribunal-II, Chandigarh** is empowered to add any part or take out any part of the property from the auction proceedings at any stage.
16. The unsuccessful bidder shall take the EMD directly from the Office of **Recovery Officer-II, DRT-II, Chandigarh/CH Bank,** immediately on closure of the e-auction sale proceedings. Original ID proof of the photocopy sent with the E-Auctjon EMD Form has to be brought. No interest shall be paid on EMD amount.
17. No request for inclusion/ substitution in the sale certificate of names of any person(s) other than those mentioned in the E-Auction EMD Form shall be entertained Unless it is absolutely reasonable and to the satisfaction of the **Recovery Officer-I.**
18. In case of more than one items of property brought for sale, the sale of such properties will be as per the convenience and it is not obligatory to go serially as mentioned in the sale notice.
19. NRI Bidders must necessarily enclose a copy of photo page of their passport & route their bid duly endorsed by Indian Mission (Embassy). The movable/immovable property is being sold on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS", "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" AND "NO RECOURSE BASIS"** and is subject to Publication charges, revenue and other Encumbrances as per rules.
20. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, if found unreasonable or may postpone the auction at any time without assigning any reason.

Details of this Proclamation of sale can be viewed at the website **www.drt.gov.in.**

Schedule of Property

Sr. No.	Description of Property	Revenue assessed upon the property or part thereof	Details of any encumbrances to which the property is liable	Claims any, which have been put forward to the property
1.	Land measuring 11K-05M out of 32K-15M - being 11/32 share in Khewat no. 61/53, Khatauni no. 79 and 80, Khasra No. 8//21(8-0), 18//2(6-16), 3(7-7), 8(6-4),=28K-7M, 18//9(4-8)=32K-15M situated at village Singpura, HB No. 205, Teh. Chhachhrauli, Distt. Yamunanagar, vide Jamabandi for the Year 2002-2003, read with Mutation No. 419 and 420 sanctioned on 04.01.2008.	**Not known**	**Not known**	**Not known**

Note The property is being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" & "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and before participating in the auction process, **the Prospective Buyers are advised to inspect the property and also to read carefully all the general terms and condition of the auction attached herewith as Annexure 'A'**

To ensure maximum competition, the Certificate Holder bank is directed to act promptly on the request by any potential bidders for inspection of the properties. However, in the event of any difficulty, the prospective bidders can approach this office through **email: drt2chandigarh-dfs@nic.in**

Given under my hand and seal on this date 08.10.2026.

RECOVERY OFFICER-I
DRT-II, CHANDIGARH

Medical devices

Commissioner Jaya Varma Sinha also cited the plea by the IPC that public disclosure of the category of medical device involved and its manufacturer would be a violation of "commercial confidence".

The order stated that brand details and a description of every medical device for which an MDAE has been logged could not be disclosed since "it is not conclusively established whether they arose due to a procedural lapse or due to the medical device itself".

The IPC's plea before the CIC stated that "the information sought regarding the name of the manufacturer of the medical device is exempted from disclosure under Section 8(1)(d) of the RTI Act, 2005, as it relates to commercial confidence and third-party information, the disclosure of which may harm the competitive position of the concerned entity".

In 2018, as part of Implant Files, the investigative series on the medical devices industry and its nexus with doctors and hospitals, *The Indian Express* first reported on the categorisation of MDAEs, which showed that coronary stents manufactured by the pharma major Abbott accounted for over 50 per cent of the entries. In all, 566 MDAEs had been logged that year, 290 of them for the coronary stents of the global major. Abbott had said at the time that its stents were recognised as "among the world's most used and studied" with "an unparalleled safety record".

The Indian Express subsequently filed several RTI requests for an update of the 2018 dataset, but the information was denied, citing provisions of the Act. The six-year dataset was released following a final appeal filed by this newspaper before the CIC in 2025.

The IPC contended before the CIC bench that details such as category and manufacturer of each and every MDAE were "too voluminous" and that their dissemination "requires collection and collation which would divert the time and resources of the public authority".

According to the IPC's annual reports, it logged 14,584 MDAEs for the financial year 2024-2025, with only 22 cases forwarded to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) for "necessary action". The list of 22 "suspected devices" mainly comprised relatively minor articles such as surgical gloves, syringes and urine bags along with one instance each of a mechanical ventilator and blood transfusion set.

Similarly, for 2023-2024, the IPC listed 10,269 MDAEs, forwarding a list of only 16 cases to the CDSCO. This list contains "suspected" faulty medical devices, such as pregnancy test kits, catheters and BP monitors, and one instance of a drug-eluting stent.

A total of 3,868 MDAEs were listed for 2022-2023, when 12 cases were forwarded to CDSCO, along with one case of a "suspect" inhaler, an incubator and a coronary stent. The 12 "suspect" medical devices that required "further action", the IPC committee said, included a male condom that appeared to be a "counterfeit device".

The compilation of MDAEs is done by the IPC under the Materiovigilance Programme of India (MvPI) launched in 2015. The IPC has developed the Adverse Drug Monitoring System (ADRMS), an online portal to streamline reporting of adverse events related to medical devices.

All SAEs are required to be reported to the IPC within 15 days, with global norms requiring that it be classified as "serious" if the event leads to death, extended hospitalisation, life-threatening situation and disability, among others.

At the global level, for instance, the USA has the Manufacturer and User Facility Device Experience (MAUDE) database, a public repository that contains reports of adverse events and problems associated with all categories of medical devices.

It contains granular information on medical device-related deaths and injuries, and allows users to access details such as brand, manufacturer, model and type of adverse event reported.

Nithya Raman

father, Venkitaraman, worked at KELTRON, a state-run public enterprise, and her mother, Sudha Kechery, worked with India Overseas Bank. A few years later, when her father flew to the US for higher studies, the family moved back to Thrissur, where she attended kindergarten.

Raman's family moved to the US when she was around six and initially settled in Burlington, Massachusetts. She eventually secured a degree in social studies from Harvard University, where she met her future husband, Vali Chandrasekaran, a TV screenwriter from Tamil Nadu.

"Thrissur is her mother Sudha's hometown," Prof Devanarayanan, a close relative in Thrissur, said. "The family migrated to the US when Nithya was in Class I. She's still in touch with us and came down for a family event in 2019. She can understand Malayalam."

Another cousin, Vidhya Shankar, added: "It was an academic ambition, rather than career growth, that transplanted R Venkataraman to the US. Nithya's younger brother Akash, who works in the financial sector, is 15 years her junior."

When Raman returned to India in 2010, she did the unexpected — she worked with NGOs engaged with slum dwellers and led movements against their eviction ahead of the 2010 Commonwealth Games. Later that year, Raman moved to Chennai, where she founded the nonprofit Transparent Chennai. Together with co-founders, she pushed the city to invest in sanitation facilities in unmapped slums using data, mapping public toilets in the city's poorest neighbourhoods, documenting bus routes and campaigning against policies that led to slum evictions.

For Raman, these movements were significant – they set the stage for her future political career and interventions in Los Angeles.

In 2013, Raman returned to Los Angeles, where she initially worked as a management trainee at the city administrative office. There, she was tasked with preparing a report examining the city's expenditure on homelessness to help address the issue. In 2017, her work led her to found the SELAH Neighborhood Homeless Coalition, a nonprofit organisation addressing homelessness at the neighbourhood level in Los Angeles.

Soon, that engagement drew her into local politics. In 2020, she made history by defeating incumbent David Ryu to become the first challenger in 17 years to unseat a sitting Los Angeles City Council member. She retained her District 4 seat in 2024.

Foreign stocks

importantly, the $1.73 billion invested abroad in the first five months of the fiscal is more than double the $823 million in the same period last year. For 2025-26 as a whole, the figure was $2.65 billion — these numbers are much smaller than what individuals invest domestically. In September alone, around $3.4 billion was put in the domestic stock market via Systematic Investment Plans, or SIPs, of mutual funds.

Viram Shah, Founder and CEO, said business is brisk for global investment platforms such as Vested, which saw its new active users rise by 133% in 2024 and 79% in 2025, with the figure for 2026 until October already 33% higher than that of 2025. In terms of deposits, the rise has been similarly rapid: 250% in 2024, 140% in 2025, and 20% until October this year.

"Overall, annual deposits have grown nearly 10-fold since 2023, reflecting the increasing adoption of global investing among Indian investors. This suggests that international equities and other global assets are gradually becoming a more meaningful part of portfolio diversification," Shah told *The Indian Express*.

Vested manages $1.5 billion worth of assets and has around 1.5 lakh active investors. But it's not just individuals who have been investing abroad heavily in recent years. Even Indian companies' direct investments abroad — or, outward Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) — have shot up. From $85 billion in the six years from 2018-19 to 2023-24, FDI by Indian companies has jumped to $82 billion in the subsequent two years and five months due to geopolitics and reshoring of production by developed economies.

Add these two outflows to foreign investors booking profits on past FDI into India and the widening trade deficit due to elevated energy prices, and the sharp weakening of the rupee over the last year-and-a-half is not hard to explain.

Which is why the authorities have looked to encourage inflows: eliminating withholding and capital gains taxes for foreign investments in government debt, bearing the exchange rate risk of banks' Foreign Currency Non-Resident deposits, and floating the idea of removing long-term capital gains and transaction taxes on equities too.

Pressure on the rupee has also been alleviated through certain regulatory measures which have made it more expensive to get protection from a weaker rupee. But how tenable would it be to reduce the $250,000 per-year-limit on outward remittances under LRS?

Introduced in February 2004 with an initial annual cap of $25,000 per individual, only once has the RBI ever reduced the limit. This was back in August 2013, in the midst of the global turmoil caused by the US Federal Reserve's taper tantrums. The move led to the RBI being accused of implementing 'capital controls' – or imposing restrictions on the outflow of money, something which no economy hoping to attract foreign funds wants to be seen doing.

Indians putting their money to work in overseas markets is not just to make higher returns but to diversify their portfolio with assets from across the world – no one wants to put all their eggs in one basket. And while foreign stocks are crucial, "there is growing interest in fixed-income strategies, private credit, private market funds and other alternative investments available through the GIFT City ecosystem", said Gautami Gavankar, President, Kotak Mahindra Bank.

"Investors are using GIFT City or other routes to complement their India exposure by accessing global opportunities, diversifying currency risk and participating in sectors and themes that may not be readily available in domestic markets like AI infrastructure, semiconductor, defence technology, chip making, biotechnology, and space tech either through fund route or direct exposure to unlisted or listed companies," Gavankar said.

The movement of non-stocks investments also shows up in data. With the US Federal Reserve raising interest rates sharply from nearly zero at the start of 2022 to over 5% by mid-2023, global interest rates surged. Consequently, Indians put in nearly $2 billion in foreign deposits in 2022-23 and 2023-24 combined.

Immovable property has also been a key asset of interest, with purchases worth a record $529 million being made under the LRS route in 2025-26.

There is also the fact that incomes in India are rising. And as people grow richer, their horizons extend beyond the domestic economy. Consider tourism: Indians spent $7 billion on foreign travels in 2019-20. After the coronavirus pandemic induced lull of 2020-21 ($3.2 billion) and 2021-22 ($6.9 billion), 2022-23 saw the amount almost doubling to $13.7 billion before rising to a record $17 billion in 2023-24.

24-hr deadline begins with detention, not formal arrest: SC

detained when his liberty stands curtailed and not from the time of his formal arrest."

Article 22 guarantees protection against arrest and detention and requires that such a person be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours. It bars detention beyond that period without a magistrate's approval.

The top court's judgment came during the hearing of appeals filed by accused booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985.

"The Constitution does not recognize any detention dehors arrest," the Supreme Court said. "Any attempt to draw an artificial distinction between 'arrest' and 'detention' would dilute or negate the fundamental protection guaranteed by the Constitution under clause (2) of Article 22." Rejecting this distinction, the top court said that Article 22(2) did not permit investigating agencies to keep an individual in custody without formally recording an arrest and thereby postpone the start of the 24-hour period. "Article 22(2) does not sanction creation of any buffer zone where the liberty of an individual is curtailed for investigating purposes but not formally shown as arrested. Creation or contemplation of such buffer zone is unconstitutional," it said

The Bench said that "arrest" and "detained in custody" under Article 22(2) have to be read together, and that the protection begins when a person's liberty is curtailed. "Therefore, the declaration that the period of 24 hours for the purposes of Article 22(2) commences from the completion of such search and seizure and only from the time of arrest recorded by the arresting authority is not only unsustainable in law but is entirely unconstitutional," it said.

The court directed the magistrates to record the actual date and time when an accused's liberty was first curtailed and calculate 24 hours from that point. If the deadline has been breached, the magistrate must order the person's immediate release, it said. The magistrate can refuse remand if they believe that the investigating agency has kept an accused in custody for longer than necessary, even if the 24-hour deadline has not expired.

In the NDPS Act case, the bench set aside the Tripura High Court order, and directed that the accused be produced before a Special Court within seven days and released on bail.

On September 29, 2025, the police, after intercepting the accused, seized methamphetamine tablets known as Yaba in Tripura. The persons were detained from around 2 pm that day, with the authorities formally recording their arrest only after 11 am on September 30. They were produced before the magistrate at 4.45 pm.

In March, a special judge rejected their bail applications. In April 2026, Tripura High Court also denied them bail, stating that under Section 37 of the NDPS Act — which imposes strict conditions for bail involving commercial quantities — the right to personal liberty can be considered within the framework of Section 37.

The accused said they had been detained for more than 24 hours before being produced before the magistrate. The State submitted that the accused were "merely intercepted...and not formally detained," and that the hours before their arrest were spent on search, seizure and questioning.

Rejecting the argument that the time spent on search, seizure and other procedures under the NDPS Act could be excluded from the 24-hour deadline, the top court said, "The only period which is permitted to be deducted from the 24 hours mandate is the time necessary for the journey from the place of arrest to the court of the magistrate. The Constitution does not permit any other time period to be excluded from the 24 hours period."

The top court disapproved of the views taken by the Orissa High Court in the Aryaman Pattanaik case, the Madras High Court in the Kannan case and the Kerala High Court in the Arun K Thomas case, which had permitted the period of detention before formal arrest to be excluded while calculating the 24-hour deadline.