



HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

WPPIL No. 109 of 2024

In The Matter Of Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation Based On News Item Published In Daily News Paper Dainik Bhaskar, Bilaspur Bhaskar Chhattisgarh, Dated 24.12.2024 The News Items As Follows, “Gaon Me Nal Hai Par Jal Nahi - Jal Jivan Mission Me Sabse Vivadit Bilaspur, Fir Bhi Sabak Nahi Le Rahe Afsar”, “Jal Bin Mission Pura - Ek Hi Mohalle Me Pani Supply Aur Gram Sabha Ka Farji Anumodan Kar Pure Gaon Ko Certify Kiya”.

... Petitioner(s)

versus

- 1 - State Of Chhattisgarh Through Chief Secretary, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur, Chhattisgarh.**
- 2 - State Of Chhattisgarh Through Secretary, Public Health And Engineering Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nava Raipur, Chhattisgarh.**
- 3 - State Of Chhattisgarh Through Mission Director, Jal Jivan Mission, PHE Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nava Raipur, Chhattisgarh.**
- 4 - The Collector Bilaspur, District Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.**

5 - Chief Engineer PHE Department, Bilaspur, District Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

6 - Executive Engineer PHE Department, Bilaspur, District Bilaspur Chhattisgarh.

... Respondent(s)

Order Sheet

26/12/2024	This is an office reference. This suo moto public interest litigation petition has been registered on the basis of news item published in Hindi Daily Newspaper, namely, Dainik Bhaskar, on 24.12.2024 with a heading “एक ही मोहल्ले में पानी सप्लाई और ग्राम सभा का फर्जी अनुमोदन कर पूरे गांव को सर्टिफाई किया” , and sub-heading “गांवों में नल है पर जल नहीं, जलजीवन मिशन में सबसे विवादित बिलासपुर, फिर भी सबक नहीं ले रहे अफसर”, “इन्हीं गड़बड़ियों के कारण चीफ इंजीनियर और ईई सस्पेंड हो चुके” The aforesaid news report goes to state that the officers of the Public Health Engineering Department of the State have played fraud and have obtained certificate claiming 100% completion of water supply in all the houses of various villages when the fact is that water supply is being made to very few houses.

	Looking to the seriousness of the matter and further it involves concern of the public at large relating to supply of water to the households located in various villages, this matter is taken up for hearing during the winter holidays. The news report also goes to state that in one of the village namely Daihanpara, water is being supplied only to 130 houses which is merely 20% of the population of that village. After initiation of the Jal Jeevan Mission, Bilaspur has remained the most disputed District. It further goes to state that in village Panchayat, Bannakdih, those who do not have ration cards are not being given water supply connection. In various villages, the officials have claimed that have completed the work of installing taps in all the houses when the fact of the matter is that even pipelines have also not been laid till date in the entire village. Alongwith the news report, the pictures of under constructed overhead water tank has also been published which speaks volumes as without construction of the overhead water tank, water cannot be supplied to all the houses located in the villages. Despite the widespread irregularities, the current Chief Engineer has claimed that an investigation will be conducted. The villagers are unhappy with the Sarpanch and Panchayat members, who seem to be doing nothing to address the issue.
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Amit	Furthermore, there is a discrepancy in the water bills, with some areas being charged ₹100 and others ₹80. Mr. Raj Kumar Gupta, learned Additional Advocate General submits that the aforesaid news report is not correct and some erroneous facts have been tried to be portrayed as till date, only three villages, namely Newra, Bhawakapa and Bannakdih, have been certified to have completed 100% of the work of water supply to the houses whereas the news report states about eight villages. In view of the above submission, we deem it appropriate to direct the respondent No. 2, Secretary, Public Health & Engineering Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, to file his personal affidavit addressing the issues involved in the aforesaid news report in detail. He shall inform this Court through his affidavit as to when the Jal Jivan Mission was launched in the State and by what time, the same would be completed. Let the matter be listed again on 8th of January, 2025. Sd/- (Ravindra Kumar Agrawal) JUDGE Sd/- (Ramesh Sinha) CHIEF JUSTICE
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