

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No.18116 of 2023

Madhusudan Pujapanda **Petitioner**

Mr. Laxmidhar Dash, Advocate

-versus-

State of Odisha and others **Opp. Parties**

Mrs. Suman Pattnaik, AGA

CORAM:
JUSTICE S.K. SAHOO
JUSTICE M.S. RAMAN

ORDER

06.06.2023

Order No.

01.

This matter is taken up through Hybrid arrangement (video conferencing/physical mode).

Heard learned counsel for the Petitioner.

It is stated that Alarnatha Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to Vishnu and located in Brahmagiri, Odisha, near Puri. It becomes crowded during the kirshnapaksha of Ashadha, after the Snana Yatra when devotees are not allowed to see the central icon of Jagannath (a form of Vishnu) in Puri temple. After the ceremonial bath on the eve of "Snana Purnima", the siblings deities Lord Balabhadra, Lord Jagannath and Devi Subhadra are believed to be down with fever and they returned to Anasara Ghara in Shree Jagannath Temple. During this period, popularly known as *Anasara* or 'Anavasara' (literally meaning no opportunity to see the lord of Puri), instead of having darshan in the Puri temple, devotees believe that Jagannath during this time manifests as Alarnath Dev, at the Alarnath temple in Brahmagiri. It is

also believed that the devotees can avail the same blessings and fortune of Jagannath darshan by having the darshan of Lord Alarnath. Along with Lord Alarnath, the devotees get the darshan of Lord Ananta Basudev in place of Lord Balabhadra and Devi Bhubaneswari in place of Devi Subhadra. The idols of Lord Dolagobinda, Lord Nrusingha, Lord Madanmohan, Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Goddess Bhudevi, Goddess Sridevi and ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu are also being worshipped at the Alarnath temple.

The Petitioner-Madhusudan Pujapanda has filed this writ petition by way of Public Interest Litigation with the following prayer:-

"Issue any appropriate writ order or direction/command, to Respondents to consider the representations under Annexure-1 and 2 series for proper crowd management, arrangement of Darshan from Argali (Space connected to narrow strip to Sanctum Sanctorum (Garbhagriha) of Lord Allarnath), providing facilities and maintaining law and order for the huge crowd gathering during religious gathering of large numbers of devotees in Shree Shree Alarnath Temple, Brahmagiri during anavasara for two weeks period from 05.06.2023 (Fifth June of Two Thousand Twenty Three).

It is therefore, prayed that this Hon'ble Court may graciously be pleased to admit this PIL writ petition, issue RULE NISI calling upon the opp. parties to show cause, and if the opposite parties fail to show cause or show insufficient case, the said rule be made absolute in granting the relief's prayed for"

Let the learned State Counsel obtain instruction in the matter and file an affidavit indicating steps taken by the District Administration for crowd management and arrangement for smooth darshan of the deity which was

commenced on 05.06.2023 and likely to continue for two weeks. Instruction shall also be taken regarding the provision made for safe and smooth entry into and exit from the temple, so also the regulatory measure taken by the temple administration / committee and also by the District Administration. A responsible Government official, who is at the helm of affairs of the management, shall file such affidavit by the next date, copy of which shall be furnished in advance to the learned counsel for the petitioner.

List this matter on 08.06.2023.

A free copy of this order be handed over to the learned State counsel for compliance.

