



HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

WPPIL No. 110 of 2024

In The Matter Of Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation Based On News Item Published In Daily News Paper Dainik Bhaskar, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, Dated 25.12.2024 The News Items As Follows - “Na Tendar Na Koi Adesh... Bastar Aur Sukma Jile Ke 190 Gawon Me Lga Di Gayi 18 Karor Rupaye Ki 3500 Se Jyada Solar Street Light”

... Petitioner(s)

versus

1 - State Of Chhattisgarh Through Chief Secretary, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur (C.G.)

2 - State Of Chhattisgarh Through Principal Secretary, Panchayat Avam Gramin Vikas Mantralaya, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nava Raipur (C.G.)

3 - Chairman And Secretary Energy Department, Government Of Chhattisgarh, Vidyut Sewa Bhawan, Danganiya, Raipur, District Raipur, (C.G.)

4 - Engineer-In-Chief CREDA, Raipur (C.G.)

5 - The Collector Bastar At Jagdalpur, District Bastar (C.G.)

6 - The Collector Sukma, District Sukma (C.G.)

7 - Chief Executive Officer Zila Panchayat Bastar At Jagdalpur, District Bastar (C.G.)

8 - Chief Executive Officer Zila Panchayat Sukma, District Sukma (C.G.)

... 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 a news report published in Hindi Daily Newspaper, namely Dainik bhaskar, dated 25.12.2024 with a heading “न टेंडर न कोई आदेश.....बस्तर और सुकमा जिले के 190 गांवों में लगा दी गई 18 करोड़ रुपए की 3500 से ज्यादा सोलर स्ट्रीट लाइट” and sub-headings “साल 2021 से लेकर 202 के बीच चला पूरा खेल, क्रेडा के नियम भी कर दिए गए किनारे” and “कांकर-कोंडागांव और जांजगीर-चांपा में भी अलग अलग मदों से इसी तरह का भ्रष्टाचार”. Looking to the seriousness of the matter wherein a huge amount of public money is involved, this matter is being taken up during the winter holidays.

	Heard Mr. Raj Kumar Gupta, learned Additional Advocate General for the State/respondents No. 1 to 3, 5 and 6 as well as Mr. Devershi Thakur, learned counsel for the respondent No. 4. The aforesaid news report goes to state that in between 2021 to 2023, in various villages of the State of Chhattisgarh, there has been massive corruption and irregularities done by the authorities concerned and funds available under various heads like Adarsh Gram Yojna, Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojna, Khanij Nyas Nidhi, and Kshamta Vikas Nidhi have been misused and solar street lights have been installed at a much higher costs than required. It further goes to state that in the Bastar Division, in 181 villages, 3620 number of solar street lights have been installed at the rate of Rs. 47,600 per street light and an amount of Rs.17.23 Crores have been utilized. Similarly, in District Sukma, Rs. 85 Lacs, in District Janjgir, Rs. 2.96 Crores, In District Kondagaon, Rs. 8 Crores and in District Kanker, Rs. 14.40 lacs have been utilized for installation of Solar Street Lights. Mr. Devershi Thakur, learned counsel for the respondent No. 4-Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency (<i>for short, CREDA</i>) submits that the process of procurement of the solar street lights was not proper and the
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entire tender process ought to have been done through the CREDA which has not been done in the present case. The authorities of the State were well informed but they have overlooked the same. Even the rules prescribed under the Bhandar Kray Niyam, have been violated.

Mr. Thakur further submits that today also, there is another news report which states that the solar street lights could have been installed at a price of Rs. 25,000/- (including GST), whereas the payments for each solar street lights which have been made by the authorities of the State ranges from Rs. 47,000/- to Rs. 50,000/- which is sheer misuse of funds.

Mr. Raj Kumar Gupta, learned Additional Advocate General appearing for the State/respondents No. 1 to 3, 5 and 6 submits that when the aforesaid fact has come to the knowledge of the authorities, on 09.04.2024, an enquiry was ordered by the Commissioner, Tribal Development, Raipur. The enquiry has also been complete and the report has also been submitted to the concerned authority, however, he is not having a copy of the same at this stage.

In view of the above, we deem it appropriate to direct the respondent No. 3, Chairman & Secretary, Energy Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, to file his personal affidavit with

respect to the aforesaid news report and also explain in detail the irregularities/misuse of funds alleged to have been made by various authorities of the State.

Let this matter be listed again on **9th of January, 2025.**

Sd/-
(Ravindra Kumar Agrawal)
JUDGE

Sd/-
(Ramesh Sinha)
CHIEF JUSTICE