

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
AT AMARAVATI**



WP(PIL) NO: 233 of 2017

Vinodh Palamangalam

...Petitioner

Vs.

Secy Min Of Women Child Dev and Others

...Respondent(s)

Advocate for Petitioner:

LETTER

Advocate(s) for Respondent(s):

Smt. S. Pranathi, Special Government
Pleader

**CORAM : THE CHIEF JUSTICE DHIRAJ SINGH THAKUR
SRI JUSTICE RAVI CHEEMALAPATI**

DATE : 10th December 2024

P C :

The present PIL has been filed highlighting the issue with regard to lack of spaces for feeding of infants by women, which affect their right to privacy and dignity. The petitioner, therefore, seeks exclusive and adequate breast feeding rooms for lactating mothers in public places like bus stations, railway stations and temples.

Affidavit has been filed in June, 2022 on behalf of respondent No.10 - APSRTC, Vijayawada, whereby it is stated that APSRTC has identified 25 places and accorded approval to take up construction of baby feeding centers at Vijayawada, Guntur and Tirupathi, and that the works in regard to the said centers are in progress.

We direct respondent No.10 to file fresh status report with regard to the status of the said centers, which were proposed and in regard to the works

which were undertaken at Vijayawada, Guntur and Tirupathi and inform the Court as to whether the centers at these three places are functional or not.

We further direct respondent No.10 to reflect in the status report as to what action it has undertaken to open such centers in other places as well wherever the bus shelters are being operated and controlled by the APSRTC. The affidavit be filed in four weeks.

An affidavit has already been filed on behalf of respondent No.12, by the Deputy Secretary to Government, Women Development and Child Welfare Department wherein it has been stated that communications have already been addressed to the Departments of Endowments, Railways and APSRTC to take necessary measures to provide breastfeeding centers in their respective stations.

Latest status report be filed by the concerned officer in this regard as to the status of such centers.

We direct respondent No.2 to file an affidavit reflecting the steps taken for providing for such a facility in all the Railway stations in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Respondent No.8 i.e., the Principal Secretary, Endowments Department is also directed to file a status report with regard to the steps taken for providing such centers in the temple premises, which are under their control or authority.

Although the orders cover Railways, temple premises and bus stations, the Airports have not been brought within the purview of the present PIL. Therefore, we direct that the Airports Authority of India, Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan, Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi-110003, represented by the Chairman, be also incorporated as party respondent and shall figure as respondent No.13 in the present petition.

Mr. Pasala Punna Rao, learned Deputy Solicitor General, waives service of notice on behalf of newly added respondent No.13, who shall file a detailed affidavit as to whether any provision has been made for such a facility in the airports in the state of Andhra Pradesh and if not, what steps would be taken and the timelines within which such a facility would be made available.

Mrs. S. Pranathi, learned Special Government Pleader for the State submits that such a provision should also be made available in large commercial complexes and shopping malls, which are frequented in large numbers by women with new born babies and that appropriate provisions should also be directed to be made in such malls.

In our opinion, it is for the concerned authorities, who grant building permissions, to envisage such modification in their rules and regulations, which would make incumbent upon such applicants, who wish to develop malls and large shopping areas to ensure that such a facility is also made available in those spaces. The authorities to consider taking appropriate steps for modifying the existing rules to provide for such spaces in such buildings, which are proposed to be constructed or already existing commercial spaces or shopping malls.

List on 08.01.2025.

DHIRAJ SINGH THAKUR, CJ

RAVI CHEEMALAPATI, J

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