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HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

WPPIL No. 19 of 2025

In the matter of Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation, Regarding News Item Published In Navbharat, My City, Bilaspur Dated 28th January, 2025, Namely, “सिरगिट्टी मुख्य मार्ग पर शराब भट्टी बनी जी का जंजाल”

... **Petitioner**

versus

- 1 - The State of Chhattisgarh Through Chief Secretary, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur, (C.G.)
- 2 - Secretary Excise Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Raipur (C.G.)
- 3 - The Collector Bilaspur, District Bilaspur (C.G.)
- 4 - The Superintendent of Police Bilaspur, District Bilaspur (C.G.)
- 5 - Commissioner Excise, Bilaspur (C.G.)
- 6 - Commissioner Municipal Corporation, Bilaspur (C.G.)
- 7 - District Excise Officer Bilaspur, District Bilaspur (C.G.)

... **Respondents**

For State/Respondents : Mr. Shashank Thakur,
Additional Advocate General

Hon'ble Shri Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice
Hon'ble Shri Ravindra Kumar Agrawal, Judge

Order on Board

Per Ramesh Sinha, Chief Justice

14.07.2026

- 1 This is an office reference.
- 2 Heard Mr. Shashank Thakur, learned Additional Advocate General, appearing for the State/respondents.

- 3 The present Public Interest Litigation was taken suo moto cognizance by this Court based on news item published on 28.01.2025 in Hindi Daily News Paper Navbharat, My City, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh with a heading : “सिरगिट्टी मुख्य मार्ग पर शराब भट्टी बनी जी का जंजाल”
- 4 Before passing any further orders in the matter, this Court had taken suo motu cognizance of the news report highlighting the grievances of the residents of the Sirgitti Tarbahar area of District Bilaspur regarding the functioning of a liquor shop situated near the Tarbahar under-bridge. The news report alleged that the liquor shop was being operated in violation of the applicable Government norms, being located in close proximity to a temple and a residential area. It further highlighted that the gathering of intoxicated persons in and around the premises during the evening hours had caused serious inconvenience to the local residents, particularly women, who were allegedly subjected to indecent behaviour and harassment. It was also reported that an enclosure had been constructed within the liquor shop premises where liquor was being consumed, resulting in public nuisance, while indiscriminate parking of motorcycles on the main road by customers led to frequent traffic congestion. The report further stated that despite representations having been submitted to the Collector seeking removal of the liquor shop, no effective action had been taken by the authorities.

- 5 Considering the seriousness of the allegations and their bearing on public safety and convenience, this Court, vide its order dated 28.01.2025 directed respondent No. 2, Secretary, Excise Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, and respondent No. 5, Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Bilaspur, to file their respective personal affidavits placing on record the factual position and the action taken in the matter, and the case was directed to be listed for further consideration.
- 6 In compliance of the order dated 28.01.2025 passed by this Court, an affidavit has been filed by the Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, Department of Commercial Tax (Excise). From perusal of the said affidavit, it was observed that two liquor retail outlets are being run in Sirgitti, one being the Foreign liquor, and the other is country liquor, since more than 8 years under the license issued for establishment of "AHATA" (A place where the basic facilities are provided to the consumers) by the State, and certain measures have also been taken so that people may sit at one place and consume liquor, without creating any disturbance to others in the vicinity. So far as the congestion of traffic at the place is concerned, efforts are being made and persons have been deployed outside the liquor shops to control the traffic and to monitor that the vehicles are not being parked in such a manner which may cause traffic congestion.
- 7 Another affidavit has been filed by the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Bilaspur, from perusal of which, it transpires that

action has been taken not only against the liquor shop in question but also against other establishments in the Sirgitti area causing nuisance and traffic congestion. Penalties have been imposed on those found violating municipal norms, including the sale of prohibited single-use plastic. The liquor shop has been directed to conduct its business from the rear side of the premises to avoid obstruction of the road, and directions have been issued to ensure that liquor is not consumed by encroaching upon public roads or streets in the vicinity. It has also been stated that, since the liquor shop is under the control of the Excise Department, the Department has been requested to ensure compliance with the directions issued by this Court. Further, the Zone Commissioner and other officers of the Municipal Corporation are regularly inspecting the area to ensure continued compliance.

8 Further, another affidavit has been filed by the Incharge, Assistant Commissioner Excise, Bilaspur. From bare perusal of the aforesaid affidavit, it goes to show that the liquor shop in question is a licensee liquor shop and the persons, who were found consuming liquor openly or providing place for drinking liquor in the concerned area, FIRs have been registered against them under Section 36C and 36F of the Chhattisgarh Excise Act, 1915 and the Excise Department is also regularly keeping watch in the entire area and making every possible effort to ensure that liquor is not consumed in the open place.

9 The Court is satisfied with the material placed on record by the

respondent authorities. The affidavits filed by the Secretary, Department of Commercial Tax (Excise), the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Bilaspur, and the Incharge Assistant Commissioner, Excise, Bilaspur disclose that concrete and corrective measures have been taken to address the grievances highlighted in the news report. The authorities have ensured traffic regulation in the vicinity of the liquor shops, directed the licensee to conduct its business in a manner that does not obstruct the public road, initiated action against encroachments and other violations, imposed penalties for breaches of municipal norms, and undertaken regular inspections to monitor the situation. It has also been brought on record that the Excise Department has taken action against persons found consuming liquor in public places or providing places for such consumption by registering offences under Sections 36C and 36F of the Chhattisgarh Excise Act, 1915, and is maintaining continuous surveillance over the area.

- 10 In view of the aforesaid facts and the remedial measures taken by the concerned authorities, this Court is of the considered opinion that the purpose for which the present suo motu Public Interest Litigation was registered stands substantially achieved and the matter was five times listed for monitoring of the case and no such incident of traffic congestion near the area in question has been noticed, as such, no further adjudication or directions are required in the matter.

- 11 Accordingly, the present Public Interest Litigation is **disposed of** with the expectation that the respondent authorities shall continue to remain vigilant and ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Chhattisgarh Excise Act, 1915, the applicable rules, and other statutory requirements so as to prevent public nuisance, maintain traffic discipline, and safeguard the convenience and safety of the residents in the area.

Sd/-
(Ravindra Kumar Agrawal)
Judge

Sd/-
(Ramesh Sinha)
Chief Justice

Chandra