

**HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR****WPPIL No. 75 of 2023**

In The Matter of Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation

Versus

The Chief Secretary

Order Sheet

15.04.2026	<p>This is an office reference.</p> <p>Heard Mr. Praveen Das, learned Additional Advocate General for the State, Mr. Niraj Baghel, learned counsel on behalf of Mr. Ramakant Mishra, DSGI for Union of India, Mr. Amiyakant Tiwari and Mr. Ishan Verma, learned counsel for respective parties.</p> <p>In compliance to the Court's order dated 21.01.2026, the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, has filed his affidavit, relevant paras of which are reproduced hereinbelow:</p> <p><i>“3. That, the instant Public Interest Litigation was listed for hearing before the Hon'ble Court on 21/01/2026. It is</i></p>
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respectfully submitted that, on the said date the Hon'ble Court was pleased to consider the affidavit filed by the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Chhattisgarh in compliance of the Hon'ble Court's order dated 09/01/2026 and the same has been taken on record by the Hon'ble Court.

4. That, during the course of hearing the Court Commissioner pointed out that 03 teachers were suspended on the allegation of supply of contaminated Mid-day meal. It is respectfully submitted that this incident regarding allegation of supply of contaminated Mid-day meal pertains to Govt. Middle School, Mangla, District-Bilaspur. On account of the forthcoming exams the teachers namely, Mr. Chandrakant Kashyap and Mrs. Bhavna Tiwari have been reinstated in the School so that no academic loss is caused to the students.

5. That, with respect to the Govt. Middle School Chourabhata, District Janjgir Champa, where 25 students fell sick, it is respectfully submitted that one teacher was suspended. In order to ensure that no academic loss is caused to the students of

the said school one teacher, namely Mr. Sanjay Kumar Rathore has been posted at the Govt. Middle School, Chourabhata, District Janjgir Champa to teach students in place of the suspended teacher. Copies of the posting orders with respect to Mr. Chandrakant Kashyap, Mrs. Bhavna Tiwari & Mr. Sanjay Kumar Rathore are annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A/1.

6. It is respectfully submitted that the Hon'ble Court has directed the deponent to ensure that the place of Mid-day meal is made congenial so that the children are not put to discomfort during the Mid- day meal.

7. It is submitted that pursuant to the observation made by the Hon'ble Court, a second meeting of the specific committee constituted in this regard was held on 06/02/2026 and various issues were duly discussed including operation of centralized kitchen by NGOs, the formation of School management committees and other bodies etc. A specific discussion was held on the issue of implementation of Centralized Kitchen System, wherein various benefits of centralized kitchen system have been put forth. It is submitted that 11 points decisions

have been taken regarding improvement of the system regarding Mid-day meal, its upgradation and implementation of centralized kitchen system etc.

8. It was also observed that as implementation of centralized kitchen system involves larger funds & its implementation in the first stage would be concentrated on Municipal Corporation levels for which a request of budget would be placed before the Central Government. The minutes of the meeting dated 06/02/2026 is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A/2 and the contents thereof would clearly reflect that positive steps have been initiated with respect to implementation of the centralized kitchen system for distribution and Mid-day meal to the students of the Govt. School of Chhattisgarh.

9. It is respectfully submitted that the learned Court Commissioner has submitted reports dated 17/01/2026 & 18/01/2026, wherein certain issues have been pointed out pertaining to the locations where the Mid-day meals are prepared Government Middle School Chourabhata, District Janjgir

Champa. at

10. It is submitted that the specific instructions have been given by the Directorate of Public Instructions to inspect the Schools located in their respective areas and ensure about the hygiene, cleanliness, the facility regarding accommodation where students are served Mid-day meal, the status of the roof as also whether the kitchen, etc. is safe from entry of animals and unauthorized persons. The District Education Officers of the various districts of the State of Chhattisgarh have submitted their reports / certificates specifying that all aspects are ensured to maintain hygiene for Mid-day meal. Copies of the certificates issued by the District Education Officers of various districts in this regard are collectively annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A/3.

11. It is submitted that the District Education Officer, Janjgir Champa has issued a letter to the SDM, Nawagarh, District Janjgir Champa to take steps for removal of encroachment of the land of the school SO that boundary wall can be constructed for securing premises of the said school. Copy

of the communication in this regard in annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A/4.

12. It is further submitted that a report has been submitted by the District Education Officer regarding the present status of Mid-day meals at Govt. Middle School, Chourabhata, District Janjgir Champa, wherein, it has been mentioned that there are 75 students pursuing education there and there has been improvement in the shed where the Mid- day Meal is served as well as now the flooring under the shed has been completed. It has been further mentioned that now there is proper arrangement of drinking water and all the students are served Mid- day Meal after maintaining the hygienic conditions. Copy of the report in this regard is annexed herewith as ANNEXURE A/5.

13. That, the deponent herein submits that all efforts are being ensured to comply with the directions issued by the Hon'ble Court. In this regard consistent monitoring would be carried out to maintain high level of hygiene, sanitation, cleanliness at various schools as also regarding Mid-day meals system and the kitchen etc. as well as

implementation of Centralized Kitchen System.

14. That, the deponent most respectfully submits that he has the highest regards and great respect of the lawful authority of the Hon'ble Court. The deponent herein is aware about the gravity of the order passed by this Hon'ble Court and he respectfully submits that he is duty bound to comply with the order passed by this Hon'ble Court in its true letter and spirit.

15. The above submissions and documents may kindly be taken on record of the case in compliance of the directions of the Hon'ble Court."

Upon perusal of the affidavit, it is revealed that in compliance with the directions issued by this Court, the State authorities have taken certain corrective and remedial measures with regard to the Mid-day Meal Scheme, including reinstatement and posting of teachers to avoid academic loss, issuance of necessary instructions for maintaining hygiene and sanitation, and initiation of steps towards improvement of infrastructure at the concerned schools.

It further transpires that a meeting of the Committee was convened on 06.02.2026, wherein various issues relating to the implementation of a centralized kitchen system, monitoring mechanisms, and overall upgradation of the Mid-day Meal Scheme were deliberated upon and decisions have been taken in that regard. The affidavit also indicates that directions have been issued to the District Education Officers to ensure proper hygiene, safety, and cleanliness at the places where Mid-day meals are prepared and served.

The steps taken by the authorities, as reflected in the affidavit and the annexures appended thereto, prima facie demonstrate that efforts are being made to address the concerns raised before this Court. However, considering the nature of the issue, which directly affects the health and well-being of school children, this Court is of the considered opinion that continuous monitoring is required to ensure strict compliance of the norms and standards relating to the

Mid-day Meal Scheme.

Learned State counsel also submits that one of the members has been appointed as the Chairman of the said Committee. It has also been brought to the notice of this Court that the Secretary, School Education Department, is presently engaged in election duty and is expected to be relieved from the same by the end of this month.

Considering the aforesaid circumstances, it is deemed appropriate to list the matter after summer vacations.

Fresh affidavit shall be filed by the the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur disclosing the progress in the matter by the next date of hearing.

Sd/-

(Ravindra Kumar Agrawal)
Judge

Sd/-

(Ramesh Sinha)
Chief Justice