



HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

WPIL No. 62 of 2025

In The Matter of Suo Moto Public Interest Litigation Regarding News Item, Namely Kamar Tak Pani Me Hatho Me Chata Padhai Ke Liye Jaan Jhokhim Me Dalte Hai Ye Chatra Fir Bhi Muskurate Huye Jate Hai School

... **Petitioner**

Versus

- 1** - State of Chhattisgarh Through Secretary, Home Department Mahanadi Bhawan Atal Nagar Nawa Raipur Chhattisgarh
- 2** - Secretary Public Works Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur (C.G.)
- 3** - Secretary School Education Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Nawa Raipur (C.G.)
- 4** - Director Directorate School Education Department Indrawati Bhawan, Atal Nagar Nawa Raipur (C.G.)
- 5** - Collector Kanker, District - Kanker (C.G.)

... **Respondents**

(Cause-title taken from Case Information System)

Order Sheet

14.07.2025	This is an office reference. Heard Mr. Prafull N. Bharat, learned Advocate General assisted by Mr. Shashank Thakur, learned Deputy Advocate General for the State/respondents.

	This suo moto public interest litigation petition has been registered on the basis of two news items, firstly published in Nav Bharat Times on 13.07.2025 with a heading “कमर तक पानी, हाथों में छाता, पढ़ाई के लिए ऐसे जान जोखिम में डालते हैं ये छात्र, फिर भी मुस्कुराते हुए जाते हैं स्कूल” and secondly, published today i.e. on 14.07.2025 in The Hitavada “Chhattisgarh” with a heading “Four children drown in pond”. The first news report pertains to the situation arising from heavy rainfall in the State of Chhattisgarh. It highlights that most parts of the State are receiving continuous and heavy rainfall. Rivers in Kanker District are reported to be in spate due to the incessant rains. Meanwhile, a video has surfaced contradicting the claims of better arrangements made by the Government and the administration. The said video reveals that children from Kesalpara village in the district are compelled to cross an over-flooded culvert on a daily basis to attend school, thereby risking their lives. These children wade through waist-deep water
--	---

across the culvert in order to reach their school. Although there exists a Primary School in Kesalpara village, for Secondary Education, the children are required to travel to Kanagaon. Between Kanagaon and Kesalpara lies a deep culvert, which the children must cross every year during the rainy season. It is reported that 14 children from the village are enrolled in the secondary school and must face this daily risk.

It further shows that for the safety of these children, the villagers have made repeated demands for the construction of a bridge at the said culvert. However, public representatives have merely provided assurances without any concrete action. The villagers have also approached the District Panchayat Administration seeking the construction of a bridge, but no action has been taken till date.

The second news report, published today in The Hitavada (Chhattisgarh Edition), relates to a tragic incident where four children drowned in a pond at Bhainstara village in Janjgir-Champa District after

returning from school on Saturday afternoon. According to the report, when the children did not return home, their anxious families began searching for them. Upon noticing their clothes near the pond, panic spread throughout the village. Locals rushed to the spot, and with their assistance, the children were retrieved from the water and taken to the hospital. Unfortunately, all four were declared dead.

The report further narrates that the children had returned home from school, kept their school bags, had lunch, and thereafter went out, stating they were going to play. Subsequently, they proceeded to bathe in the nearby Ghatoli Dabri pond, which was deep. All four children drowned silently, unnoticed by anyone. It was only when a villager spotted one of the bodies floating in the pond that the tragedy came to light. Soon, hundreds of villagers gathered at the site, and a frantic search operation ensued, resulting in the recovery of all four children one by one.

Considering the facts narrated in the second

news report published in The Hitavada (Chhattisgarh Edition), though the State may not be fully responsible for such an unfortunate incident, it is nonetheless the duty of the State to ensure that wherever any pond or culvert exists in the vicinity of a school and children are required to pass through such areas, adequate precautions are taken to prevent the recurrence of such tragic incidents.

In view of the aforesaid, we deem it appropriate to direct the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, to file a personal affidavit in this matter before the next date of hearing, explaining why the State remains indifferent and fails to address such situations which are regularly reported in widely circulated print, electronic, and social media.

The affidavit shall also disclose the action taken by the authorities upon these news reports.

Let the matter be listed on 29.07.2025 for further monitoring and compliance.

The learned State counsel is directed to ensure

that a copy of this order is sent to the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, for information and necessary compliance, forthwith.

Sd/-
(Bibhu Datta Guru)
Judge

Sd/-
(Ramesh Sinha)
Chief Justice