



HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH AT BILASPUR

WPPIL No. 95 of 2025

IN THE SUO MOTO PUBLIC INTREST LITIGATION **versus**
STATE OF CHHATTISGARH

Order-Sheet

27/10/2025	This is an office reference. Heard Mr. Prafull N. Bharat, learned Advocate General along with Mr. Shashank Thakur, learned Dy. AG for the State. This suo motu Public Interest Litigation has been initiated based on a news report published in the Hindi daily Navbharat titled “बेलतरा व सुकलकारी बने कब्रगाह, भूख-प्यास से तड़पकर मर रही गायेँ”, with the sub-heading “विडंबना: गायों की मौत पर सवाल, वेटनरी विभाग की लापरवाही का आरोप”. During the hearing held on 23/10/2025, upon considering the gravity of the issue, this Court noted that

cattle were reportedly dying continuously in the Beltara and Sukulkari areas of Masturi Block, District Bilaspur. It was further observed that the temporarily housed cows were also dying due to lack of proper management, food, water, and medical care.

This Court also observed that the continued deaths of cattle in Beltara and Sukulkari are not merely a departmental failure but constitute a profound assault on human sensibilities. Accordingly, the Principal Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Government of Chhattisgarh, was directed to file a personal affidavit in respect of the aforesaid news report.

In compliance with the said order, a personal affidavit has been filed on 26/10/2025 by the Secretary, Livestock Development Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Atal Nagar, Naya Raipur (C.G.). The relevant portion of the affidavit reads as under:—

“3. It is respectfully submitted that, the instant Suo Motu Public Interest Litigation has been registered on the basis of a news item published on 23.10.2025. This Hon'ble Court,

taking cognizance of the said news item and considering the seriousness of the incident where cattle are reportedly dying continuously in the Beltara and Sukulkari areas of the Masturi Block, District Bilaspur, while being kept in temporary shelters due to lack of proper management, food, water, and medical care, and the apparent inaction or unawareness of the officials of the Veterinary Department has been pleased to take note of all the conditions mentioned in the news report. The Hon'ble Court has accordingly directed the respondents to file an affidavit regarding the proper administration and management of such shelters, along with detailed information concerning the death of the animals.

4. It is respectfully submitted that the concerned authority has forwarded a detailed report dated 24.10.2025 pertaining to village Sukulkari. The said report elucidates the actual facts and circumstances item published on connected with the 23.10.2025, which relates to the incident that occurred on 15.10.2025 and had already been reported by 'Gau Seva Samiti, Bilaspur. All requisite procedures were duly completed on the same day of the incident. However, the matter was subsequently

publicized and highlighted without any substantial basis behind the arose. Therefore, for the kind situation that consideration of this Hon'ble Court, it is submitted. that the incident concerning the unfortunate death of the cattle on 15.10.2025 has been duly clarified by the competent authority. A copy of the report of village Sukulkari dated 24.10.2025 is enclosed herewith and marked as ANNEXURE R-1.

5. It is respectfully submitted that, on perusal of the entire report, it is clarified that on 15.10.2025, the President of the 'Gau Seva' District Level Committee, Bilaspur, informed about the death of certain cows. In this regard, as per the information received from the Tahsildar, Pachpedi, and the spot inspection conducted by the team comprising a Veterinary Doctor and Assistant Veterinary Field Officer, it was found that a total of five cows were dead on the spot. Out of them, the condition of two cattle was completely decomposed, and therefore, postmortem could not be conducted. It was observed that the death of these two cattle had occurred approximately 4 to 7 days earlier.

6. That, as regards the remaining three postmortem examinations were conducted, and the reports indicated that their deaths were due

to natural causes. Further, upon enquiry with the villagers, the Sarpanch of the concerned Gram Panchayat stated that the said cattle did not belong to any particular shelter home (Gouthan). The local villagers confirmed that after the death of the animals belonging to some owner usually the carcasses of their animal are buried or lying outside the village area.

7. It is respectfully submitted that the inspection team comprising Dr. Amit Jain (Veterinary Doctor, Gau Seva Aayog), Dr. P.K. Agnihotri, Dr. Sandhya Tiwari, Smt. Yogeshwari Jangde (Asst- Veterinary Field Officer) along with the Panchayat Sarpanch, Secretary, Rojgar Sahayak has properly investigated the matter on 24.10.2025. A Panchnama was prepared in the presence of the villagers, which reveals that in the village Sukulkari Pastuerland of the then Gothan (Charagah), appointed caretakers (Charvahas) were found grazing approximately 120 to 130 cattle. As per the Panchnama, no such disease has been found among the cattle. It is further submitted that the team of Veterinary Doctors conducted a detailed inspection Sukulkasi in Gram Sukulkari, and no other cases of cow mortality were found. (The detailed report has already been enclosed) and now showing

the present status and situation, a copy of the photograph also be enclosed herewith as ANNEXURE R-2.

8. It is respectfully submitted that similarly, an enquiry report dated 24.10.2025 pertaining to village Beltara has been submitted by the concerned authority. In the said report, it has been mentioned that the inspection team comprising Dr. Tanwar (Joint Director, Veterinary Services Bilaspur) Dr. Shashi Singh, Dr.Amit Jain (Veterinary Doctor, Gau Seva Aayog) and Mr. Suresh Kashyap along with the Sarpanch Shri Padam Singh, the Secretary, and other villagers, found that with the assistance of the Gram Panchayat, four member of Charvaha (cowherd) arrangements have been made for proper management, wherein 86 cattle were found to be in good condition. It has further been reported that proper management has been ensured for vaccination of the cattle.

9. That, during the spot inspection, the villagers also stated that it has been acknowledged that due to the presence of stray and unwanted cattle which often cause damage to standing crops, an internal and temporary arrangement was made. Accordingly. 30.06 2025 and meetings were held between

29.07.2025, and as per the proposal of the Gram Panchayat, it was decided as a temporary measure to utilize the Bhadrapara Mini Stadium, as a shelter place for stray cattle, effective from 16.08.2025. The villagers are now regularly keeping such stray cattle there.

10. The said proposal has been finalized and continuous monitoring is being carried out. Presently, 86 stray cattle have been captured and are being looked after by appointed caretakers (Charvahas) from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily. In the evening, the cattle are kept at the Mini Stadium. A proposal has also been sent for construction of a permanent shed structure at the said place. A copy of the enquiry report of village Beltara dated 24.10.2025 is filed herewith as ANNEXURE R-3.

11. It is further respectfully submitted that during the enquiry, it was found that two cows were lying dead, one of which had died due to Dystocia, while the other's body was decomposed, indicating that the death had occurred 15 to 20 days earlier.

12. It is submitted that the respondent authority has taken the matter seriously, and as per the proposal submitted by the concerned authority for the management of stray cattle, all

necessary protective and management measures have been initiated and implemented. Further, by orders dated 06.08.2025 and 11.08.2025, under the 'Godham' Scheme, proposals from establishment of seven institutions for proper management of cows shelter, have been sent by district administration and are presently under consideration before the State Government, which is expected to take a decision shortly. A copy of Circular dated 11.08.2025 is filed herewith as ANNEXURE R-4.

13. At this stage of the investigation, no dereliction of duty has been found on the part of the veterinary doctors. However, for better management of the cattle shelters and to reach a conclusive determination in this regard, an additional period will be required.

14. It is further respectfully submitted that the deponent holds the highest regard and immense respect for the lawful authority of this Hon'ble Court, as well as its orders and directions issued from time to time, and is duty-bound to adhere to and abide by the same."

Bare perusal of the aforesaid affidavit, it appears that the response placed on record is neither comprehensive nor satisfactory. From the statements contained therein, it is

evident that the incident of cattle deaths had occurred on 15.10.2025, yet no effective action was taken by the concerned authorities until the matter was highlighted through the news report dated 23.10.2025 and subsequent cognizance by this Court. The affidavit further discloses that decomposed carcasses of cattle were found at more than one location, clearly indicating lack of regular supervision and delay in reporting and disposal. The contradictory statements regarding whether the dead cattle belonged to any Gouthan or private owners, and the admission that villagers usually leave carcasses outside the village area, also point towards inadequate management and absence of proper administrative control. Although it is claimed that no disease or negligence has been found, such assertion appears premature and unsupported by any detailed record or veterinary verification.

The affidavit thus reflects a perfunctory approach, lacking specific data as to the total number of cattle sheltered, availability of fodder, water and medical care, frequency of inspection, and the accountability of the

officials concerned.

The Court therefore finds the affidavit unsatisfactory and inadequate in explaining the ground realities. The Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry, is accordingly directed to file a fresh and detailed personal affidavit clearly setting out the factual position in respect of each shelter in the affected area, the number of cattle housed, the causes of such deaths supported by postmortem reports, and the measures taken or proposed for their proper management and welfare by the next date of hearing.

At this stage, learned counsel for the State would submit that a policy has been framed by the State Govt. in the name and styled as “गोधाम योजना” for betterment of the cattle and cows and the same has duly been circulated to all the Collectors of the State on 06/08/2025.

It is expected that the authorities concerned shall implement the aforesaid scheme i.e. “गोधाम योजना” in its letter and spirit.

List this case on **19/11/2025**.

Sd/-

(Bibhu Datta Guru)
Judge

Sd/-

(Ramesh Sinha)
Chief Justice