

IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD**R/WRIT PETITION (PIL) (WRIT PETITION (PIL)) NO. 7 of 2025**

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SUO MOTU
Versus
STATE OF GUJARAT THROUGH THE SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT
& ORS.

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Appearance:

LAW OFFICER BRANCH(420) for the Applicant(s) No. 1
MR PR ABICHANDANI(102) for the Applicant(s) No. 1
MS. MAITHILI MEHTA, AGP for the Opponent(s) No. 1,2,3

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**CORAM: HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE MRS. JUSTICE
SUNITA AGARWAL
and
HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE PRANAV TRIVEDI**

Date : 02/05/2025

ORAL ORDER
(PER : HONOURABLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE MRS. JUSTICE SUNITA AGARWAL)

Perused the report of the Member Secretary, Gujarat State Legal Services Authority (GSLSA) submitted in compliance of the order dated 07.03.2025 passed in the present petition.

2. The report is in two parts. The first part narrates the steps taken by the Member Secretary with the help of the Secretary, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) in order to assess the situation of the victim, as also the need and care needed by the victim. The steps taken are found to be satisfactory. Moreover, the Member Secretary is directed to take stock of the concern of the victim through the DLSA Secretary and Para Legal Volunteer (PLV) who has been deputed to provide necessary help. The

Member Secretary is further directed to apprise the court regarding the steps taken by him as regards the directions issued by this Court for preparing comprehensive plan involving all stake holders by DLSA, Dahod for spreading awarness about the gender sensitization, rights of women, woman safety and security and empowerment.

3. In part-II, there is a reference of the meeting of the Member Secretary alongwith the local administrative officials, NGOs working in the area and representatives of Gender Resources Centers. The report of the Member Secretary indicates that looking to the demography of the District, percentage of literacy rate, population below poverty line and most importantly variety of customs amongst the community, the awareness programme is to be designed focusing on the community concern. One significant suggestion was to constitute community based PLV structure as women in the District do not easily open up or communicate with social workers. If the representatives of the community itself are involved in the team of the PLV, the effective outreach programme with the involvement of the specified community PLVs can be worked out. It was thus, resolved that :-

“Resolution: It was resolved to constitute local level teams of Para Legal Volunteers at all talukas in district Dahod by DLSA involving representation of all communities residing in the villages in respective villages. Secretary, DLSA has been directed to restructure the composition of PLV to involve maximum communities’s representation.”

4. In order to eradicate social evils as a step to address the

social evils like domestic violence and other cases like drunken violence, rape, child abuse, dowry, child possession, cyber crime, sexual harassment of woman and witchcraft pay, it was suggested the involvement of the Panchayat and resolved as under :-

“Resolution: It was resolved to spread information about the help available to women at all villages with the help of Anganwadi Worker, Sakhi One Stop Center, Gram Panchayat and School Management Centers at primary schools at villages. It was further resolved to spread the information through Nukkad Natak/Streat Play as majority of population is backward. It is further resolved to sensitize the SHE Team (Mahila Police) to the effect that when a lady victim comes, appropriate response be given.”

5. A suggestion was given for establishment of the District Level Victim Counseling center to take care of mental health and effective mainstreaming of victim where team of expert psychologists provide their services. It was thus resolved that :-

“Resolution-It was resolved that DLSA Dahod, with the help of District Collector, will endeavour to establish the center and will take help of Sakhi One Stop Center. It is also conveyed to DLSA Dahod that in case any guidance in this regard is required, they can contact Dr. S.L.Vaya, Senior psychologist of Rastriya Raksha University, a project partner of GSLSA.”

6. Other steps for creating general awareness as indicated in the report are :-

- Preparing informative small size leaflet depicting information for women security and empowerment in vernacular language and circulate the same to the maximum woman population.
- At village level, maximum awareness programmes and legal literacy camps for rights of woman be organised at schools and colleges.

- Toll free no. 15100 of NALSA should be made more and more popularised.
- At panchayat office literacy camp exclusively for women should be organised with assistance of local police, district administration and DLSA.
- In each village through all the modes maximum awareness for free and competent legal aid to women be spread. Strong network of PLVs at Taluka Legal Service Committee is need of an hour.
- Social media should be positively used for spreading apt awareness.
- Reels and Short films to sensitize the general population about human values and culminating the system of “witch hunting” should be displayed through mobile vans of DLSA and GSLSA in the interior most villages of the District.
- Maximum awareness about the project “Sangathi”-A victimology center be spread by all possible means.

7. The Member Secretary, GSLSA has, thus, proposed that these measures shall be compiled in the form of an action plan to be executed by the DLSA in a calendar year with a systematic schedule. Measuring the impact assessment of the project, the action plan can be replicated in other tribal dominated districts.

8. The Member Secretary, GSLSA is directed to submit an action taken report in terms of the plan submitted by him as narrated hereinabove by the next date fixed.

Put up this matter on 22.08.2025.

(SUNITA AGARWAL, CJ)

(PRANAV TRIVEDI,J)

C.M. JOSHI

Original copy of this order has been signed by the Hon'ble Judges.
Digitally signed by: CHANDRAKANT MAHADEV JOSHI(HC01073), Principal Pvt. Secretary, at High Court of Gujarat on 07/05/2025 18:24:42