

ITEM NO.14

COURT NO.1

SECTION PIL-W

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A
R E C O R D O F P R O C E E D I N G S

Suo Motu Writ Petition (C) No(s).2/2020

IN RE : REGARDING CLOSURE OF MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

Respondent(s)

(FOR ADMISSION)

Date : 18-03-2020 This petition was called on for hearing today.
CORAM :

HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE B.R. GAVAI
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SURYA KANT

By Courts Motion

Counsel for the parties

Mr. ANS Nadkarni, ASG
Mr. Kanu Agrawal, Adv.
For Mr. G.S. Makker, AOR

Mr. Sibho Sankar Mishra, AOR

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following
O R D E R

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, most of the States have directed closure of schools. Some of the States have also directed closure of Anganwadis.

The mid-day meal scheme under which nutritional food is supplied to the children undertaking education is implemented through various schools in the States. The Anganwadis, in addition to supplying nutritional food, also implement the scheme of providing nutritional food to the lactating and nursing mothers.

On account of shutdown of the schools and the Anganwadis, the children as well as the lactating and nursing mothers would be deprived of the nutritional food.

It is reported, that in some districts, though the schools and Anganwadis have been shut down, the parents have been told to pick up nutritional food for their children from such centres.

Non-supply of nutritional food to the children as well as lactating and nursing mothers may lead to large-scale mal-nourishment. Particularly, the children and the lactating and nursing mothers in rural as well as tribal area are prone to such mal-nourishment. Such mal-nutrition may affect their immunity system and as such, such children and lactating and nursing mothers would be more prone to catch the infection.

While dealing with one crisis, the situation may not lead to creation of another crisis.

In that view of the matter, it is necessary, that all the States should come out with a uniform policy so as to ensure, that while preventing spread of COVID-19, the schemes for providing nutritional food to the children and nursing and lactating mothers are not adversely affected.

We, therefore, issue notice to the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development of the Union of India as well as the Chief Secretaries/Chief Administrators/Administrators of all the States and the Union Territories to put in their response on an affidavit within a period of one week from today.

In addition, let notice be also issued to the Resident Commissioners of all the State and Union Territories in Delhi by their respective emails.

Waive service on the respondents-Union of India and the State of Orissa since Mr. ANS Nadkarni, learned Additional Solicitor General, and Mr. Sibbo Sankar Mishra, learned counsel, are appearing on behalf of those respondents respectively.

We appoint Mr. Sanjay R. Hegde, learned Senior Counsel who is present in the Court, as learned Amicus Curiae to assist the Court in the matter.

List the matter on 27.03.2020.

(SANJAY KUMAR-II)
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(INDU KUMARI POKHRIYAL)
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR