

IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB AND HARYANA AT CHANDIGARH

101

CRWP-242-2021

Date of Decision: 23.04.2021

Rishi

...Petitioner

Versus

State of Haryana and others

...Respondents

CORAM:- HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE RAJAN GUPTA.  
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE KARAMJIT SINGH.

PRESENT: Mr. Rupinder Khosla, Senior Advocate as Amicus Curiae.

Mr. Ankur Mittal, Additional Advocate General, Haryana.

Mr. Vikas Mohan Gupta, Additional Advocate General, Punjab.

Mr. Pankaj Jain, Sr. Standing Counsel with  
Mr. Jaivir Chandail, Additional Government Pleader for  
UT, Chandigarh.

Mr. J.S. Toor, APP for UT, Chandigarh.

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**RAJAN GUPTA, J. (Oral)**

Case has been heard through Video Conferencing on account of COVID-19 Pandemic.

Mr. Mittal submits that Nodal Agencies in every District headed by the Deputy Commissioner, concerned Superintendent of Police, a representative of the Municipal Council/Corporation and a Civil Surgeon are functional. According to him, senior officers of Government of Haryana held a meeting yesterday and deliberated the matter. They have decided that Secretary, Legal Services Authority in every District would also be a member of the said Committee as he receives number of complaints arising out of the covid situation. He assures the court that in every District,

meeting of the committee shall be held on daily basis, by way of electronic means, if necessary, in view of the crisis and prompt response will be given by the Administration as and when a call is received on the helpline number, or by any of the members of the Committee.

Mr. Gupta submits that the State of Punjab has no objection to the formation of a committee on the similar lines and assigning a particular number in every District to consider the grievances of the public. He, however, submits that a designated helpline number 104 has already been assigned which entertains all types of grievances of the public. We, thus, direct that needful be done at the earliest.

Mr. Pankaj Jain with Mr. Jaivir Chandail submits that in UT a war room is already in operation which is considering the complaints of the people. A dedicated phone number is also functional.

During the course of hearing Mr. Navkiran Singh, Advocate has intervened and brought to the notice of the court that certain private hospitals are charging exorbitant fee and are fleecing the public. This is happening due to lack of control by the authorities.

It has been assured by all the three States that such grievance would be promptly looked into and punitive measures shall be taken against such private hospital and medical institutions, if the situation so warrants. Further, assurance has been given that surprise checks shall also be conducted by the concerned authorities on such private facilities.

All the three States assure us that the complaints/grievances shall be promptly redressed in case a call is received on the designated helpline number. More personnel shall be deputed to attend such calls and PCRs/Beats in the nearby vicinity shall be activated. Such numbers shall be

widely publicised on the electronic and print media in order to make the public aware of the help available at hand and instill confidence in them in the current pandemic situation.

States shall also depute officials of the municipal bodies/health authorities to ensure that mask etiquettes are followed by general public. Heads of the public as well as private institutions would sensitize the employees to wear masks in appropriate manner. Persons who wear the masks casually leaving their mouth and/or nose exposed would be treated on the same footing as those not wearing the mask at all and liable to same punitive action.

In view of above assurances given by all the three States, no further orders are required to be passed at this stage. Petition is hereby disposed of with liberty to the amicus curiae to seek revival of the petition, if necessary. Respective States shall file a status report regarding day to day developments in every District by way of a short affidavit in the Registry within a week.

(RAJAN GUPTA)  
JUDGE

April 23, 2021  
gbs

(KARAMJIT SINGH)  
JUDGE

Whether Speaking/Reasoned

Yes/No

Whether Reportable

Yes/No