

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No.12966 of 2023

Mantu Das

....

Petitioner

Mr. Afraaz Suhail, Advocate

-versus-

Union of India and others

.... ***Opposite Parties***

Mr. P.K. Parhi, DSG along with

Mr. D.R. Bhokta, C.G.C. for Union of India

Mr. Debakanta Mohanty, A.G.A. for the State

CORAM:

THE CHIEF JUSTICE

JUSTICE G. SATAPATHY

ORDER

01.05.2023

Order No.

01. 1. The present petition highlights the plight of very young children, many of them belonging to the scheduled tribes, in the Danagadi Block and mostly from villages Ghatishahi, Kiajhar, Salinjagha, Nadiabhanga, Dhuligarh, Chania and Anagundi in Jajpur Districts, who are suffering from chronic malnutrition, living under semi-starvation and prolonged hunger. They are vulnerable to diseases and many have lost their lives.
2. Another issue that has been highlighted is that in the absence of Aadhar cards, these children get completely excluded from the public distribution system and other welfare schemes. It is pointed out that in Ghatishahi village only 160, out of 309 villagers have Aadhar cards and therefore are unable to get the monthly quotas from the public distribution system. The instances of children dying of malnutrition have also been highlighted in the petition.

3. It is obvious that this requires immediate attention at the hands of the State Government as well as the Union of India.

4. Notice. Mr. P.K. Parhi, learned Deputy Solicitor General for Union of India and Mr. Debakanta Mohanty, learned Additional Government Advocate for the State accept notice on behalf of the respective Opposite Parties. Extra copies of the present petition be served on them today itself.

5. The Court directs that both the Additional Chief Secretary, Women and Child Development (W&CD) Department, State of Odisha as well as the Secretary, Ministry of W&CD, Government of India will file their respective affidavits giving a para-wise reply to the petition not later than 15th May, 2023. In the meanwhile, the Collector, Jajpur along with the CDMO, Jajpur will undertake a visit to the Danagadi Block and in particular, the affected villages including village Ghatishahi and submit a report to this Court on the corrective ameliorative action taken before the next date. The Collector, Jajpur, the CDMO, Jajpur, the Secretary, W&CD, Government of India and the Additional Chief Secretary, W&CD, State of Odisha are requested to remain present online on the next date. This order be communicated forthwith by the Registry to each of the above officials. The respective counsel will also do likewise.

6. List on 18th May, 2023.

(Dr. S. Muralidhar)
Chief Justice

(G. Satapathy)
Judge