

SL. No	Date	Office Notes, reports, orders or proceedings or directions and Registrar's order with Signatures	COURT'S OR JUDGES'S ORDERS
	24.07.2023		<p>WPIL No. 79 of 2022  <b><u>Sri Vipin Sanghi, C.J.</u></b>  <b><u>Sri Rakesh Thapliyal, J.</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ms. Gauri Maulekhi, petitioner, in-person.</li> <li>2. Mr. S.S. Chauhan, learned Deputy Advocate General for the State.</li> <li>3. Mr. Ravi Bisht, <i>proxy</i> counsel for Mr. Aditya Pratap Singh, learned counsel for respondent no.5.</li> <li>4. Mr. Anil Kumar Bisht, learned counsel for respondent no.10.</li> <li>5. It is pointed out that one of us (Rakesh Thapliyal, J.) had appeared as a counsel for respondent no.11, at an earlier stage in this matter. However, none of the parties, including the petitioner, have any objection to this Bench hearing the matter, considering the fact that present is a PIL.</li> <li>6. The issue raised by the petitioner, in this writ petition, is also pending consideration in Writ Petition (PIL) No.105 of 2023.</li> <li>7. In this writ petition, the petitioner has raised very serious issue of public interest, namely, the extreme ill-treatment being meted out to equines, which are deployed in the Kedarnath, Yamunotri, Gangotri, Gaumukh and Hemkhud Sahib pilgrimage routes for the purpose of carrying pilgrims as well as goods.</li> <li>8. The petitioner, who appears in-person, points out that each year, hundreds, if not thousands, of equines die while being used by their handlers. There</li> </ol>

is utter lack of sensitivity and complete indifference, not only on the part of the handlers, who treat the animals as a mere source of income, but also on the part of the Administration, which is blind to the enormity of the suffering, to which, the equines are being subjected. She submits that there is hardly any infrastructure created on these routes, and there is no proper regulation, and monitoring by the Authorities to ensure that the animals are properly looked after while they render services, and they are attended to medically whenever such medical attention is necessary.

9. Ms. Maulekhi has submitted that the Animal Welfare Board of India has framed a Standard Operating Procedure, which should be enforced by the State. The State Animal Welfare Board has framed its own SOP, which she states is highly diluted, and even that is not being implemented on the ground.

10. Ms. Maulekhi has drawn the attention of the Court to the communication dated 25.06.2022, that her organization has sent, highlighting the immediate and urgent steps that need to be taken by the Stat for the welfare of the equines.

11. We direct the State to respond to the said communication, point by point, by filing an affidavit within two weeks.

12. On the next date, the Secretary, Animal Husbandry, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the State Animal Welfare Board and the concerned District Magistrates, shall remain present before the Court. The District Magistrates may join the proceedings *virtually*, whereas the two officers should personally remain present in Court, to assist the Court.

		<p>13. Mr. Chauhan has submitted that the personal appearance of the Secretary, Animal Husbandry and the Chairperson of the Board may be exempted.</p> <p>14. We made it clear to him that the present proceedings are not adversarial and the reason for requiring their presence is to be able to communicate to them our concern, and to hear them with regard to the steps taken by them in relation to the issue raised by the petitioner.</p> <p>15. List on 10.08.2023. The matter shall be taken up after fresh matters.</p> <p>16. The date in the Writ Petition (PIL) is pre-poned, and the same shall be taken up with the present writ petition on the next date.</p> <p>17. The Registry is directed to inform the petitioner, as well as all the learned counsels appearing in Writ Petition (PIL) No.105 of 2023, of the pre-ponement of date in the said writ petition.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Rakesh Thapliyal, J.)</b> <b>24.07.2023</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Vipin Sanghi, C.J.)</b> <b>24.07.2023</b></p> <p>NISHANT</p>
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