

**WPPIL No. 58 of 2020**

**With**

**WPPIL No. 50 of 2020**

**WPPIL No. 51 of 2020**

**WPPIL No. 67 of 2020**

**WPPIL No. 70 of 2020**

**Hon'ble Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, C.J.**

**Hon'ble Manoj Kumar Tiwari, J.**

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**Order**

Mr. Shiv Bhatt, Mr. Dushyant Mainali, Mr. Piyush Garg and Ms. Snigdha Tiwari, learned counsels for the petitioners.

Mr. Rakesh Thapliyal, learned assistant solicitor general with Mr. V.K. Kaparuwan, learned standing counsel for the Union of India.

Mr. S.N. Babulkar, learned Advocate General assisted by Mr. C.S. Rawat, learned Chief Standing Counsel and Mr. Anil K. Bisht, learned Additional Chief Standing Counsel for the State.

These writ petitions have raised issues with regard to tackling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, since Kumbh Mela 2021 is scheduled to commence from 27.02.2021, concerns have been expressed with regard to organising and conducting of the Kumbh Mela by the Civil Administration, Haridwar.

The learned counsel for the petitioners have expressed their anxiety that until and unless the inflow of people is controlled, until and unless safe accommodation is provided, until and unless the number of people congregating at the "ghats" is totally controlled by the Civil Administration, Kumbh Mela 2021 may become the breeding ground for

by the Government, for permitting the people to enter the State, and to reach Haridwar. Moreover, concrete decisions have to be taken as to how to resolve the logistical problems created by congregation of large population, especially in these abnormal times of COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. S.N. Babulkar, the learned Advocate General, has drawn our attention to the affidavit filed by the State. However, the affidavit, in a nutshell, merely contains certain assurance that concrete steps will be taken for managing the congregation of a large population. However, the essential data is conspicuously missing.

Therefore, this Court directs the Chief Secretary, the Additional Secretary, Public Health, the District Magistrate, Haridwar, the Mela Adhikari to convene a meeting immediately, preferably by 12.01.2021, and to discuss the ways and means which need to be utilized for resolving the logistical problems of organising Kumbh Mela 2021. The decision of the meeting, and of the Government with regard to taking the concrete steps for resolving the difficulties shall be placed by Mr. S.N. Babulkar, the learned Advocate General, before this Court on 13.01.2021.

The Chief Secretary, the Additional Secretary, Public Health, the District Magistrate, the Mela Adhikari and the District Monitoring Committees are directed to join and to be present before this Court through video conferencing

take steps for issuance of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) dealing with Kumbh Mela 2021.

List this case on 13.01.2021 as the first case in the cause list.

Let a certified copy of this order be furnished to the learned counsels, today itself, on payment of the prescribed charges.

**(Manoj Kumar Tiwari, J.) (Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, C.J.)  
11.01.2021**

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NISHANT