

10 23.7.2021

gd/ssd

WPA(P)/198/2021

CAN/1/2021

RENU PRADHAN

VS

THE STATE OF WEST BENGAL AND ORS.
(Through Video Conference)

M/s. Arindam Paul with
Mostafijur Rahaman, Advocates (Present in Court)
..for the Petitioner.

Mr. Kishore Datta, Advocate General,
Mr. Anirban Ray, Government Pleader and
Mr. Shayak Chakraborty,
Advocates (Through VC)
..for the State.

M/s. Sabyasachi Chatterjee,
Akashdeep Mukherjee,
Indrajit Dey and
Sandipan Das, Advocates (Through VC)
..for the Applicant in
CAN/1/2021.

* * * *

The issue sought to be raised by the learned counsel appearing for the petitioner in the present petition is regarding safety and security of the women travelling in the public transport buses. It is stated that they are unnecessarily harassed and sometime sexually assaulted. Some steps have to be taken to prevent the crime.

CAN 1 of 2021 has been filed by Ankani Biswas @ Ankan, a practicing Advocate in this Court, who is a transgender. She has sought her impleadment in the present petition. The grievance is that even she was also misbehaved in a public transport.

As suggested at the time of hearing, we have requested Mr. Kishore Datta, learned Advocate General

to examine and issue appropriate directions to all the transporters in the State of West Bengal to display the women helpline number inside and outside the buses/ public transport vehicles so as to enable any of the sufferer to lodge the complaint on the helpline, so provided.

This number should also be displayed at prominent places on different bus-stands and bus-stops.

The issue regarding providing a separate helpline for transgenders or suitable amendment or modification in the existing system enabling the transgenders also to access the women helpline may be examined. New helpline number or addition of faculty in the existing number may require dissemination of information to all concerned so that they can make use of it.

In addition to that the issue may be also examined to display the State Legal Services Authority helpline number along with the aforesaid numbers so as to enable any of the victim to take appropriate, legal aid, in case required.

We have also requested Mr. Y.J. Dastoor, learned Additional Solicitor General to examine this issue, may be for taking any appropriate steps at the National level, in case not already there.

Whatever steps we have been proposed, which Mr.

Kishore Datta, learned Advocate General has agreed to examine at the State level are only after the crime has been committed. We need to take certain steps for prevention thereof. The same can be only if there is change in the mindset of the people. We think there is need to educate the people. For the purpose some suitable plan may be prepared by the State to start the process at the school level in this regard so that we are able to reduce the crime in the society. State Legal Services Authority may also examine this aspect of the matter.

Adjourned to August 12, 2021.

[Rajesh Bindal, C.J.(A)]

[Arijit Banerjee, J.]