

(2020) 04 DEL CK 0054

In the Delhi High Court

Case No : Civil Writ Petition No. 2979 Of 2020, Civil Miscellaneous No. 10336 Of 2020

Ajit Kumar

APPELLANT

Vs

Union Of India And Anr

RESPONDENT

Date of Decision : 22-04-2020

Acts Referred:

Citation : (2020) 04 DEL CK 0054

Hon'ble Judges : Hima Kohli, J;Subramonium Prasad, J

Bench : Division Bench

Advocate : Ajit Kumar, Maninder Acharya, Anurag Ahluwalia, Anuj Aggarwal

Final Decision : Disposed Of

Judgement

1. The matter has been heard through Video Conferencing.

2. The present petition is in the nature of a Public Interest Litigation filed by the petitioner, a senior citizen, praying inter alia for issuing directions to the respondent No.1/Union of India and the respondent No.2/Government of NCT of Delhi for considering the option of isolating or reversing the quarantine of old/elderly residents of Delhi (above 80 years) or people who require the medical assistance and are suffering from co-morbidity by shifting them from Red Zones (hot spots) to safe green zones, for providing effective arrangements to bring essential facilities including groceries, banking, etc., at their doorsteps for arranging adequate testing of senior citizens for detecting Covid-19 at the early stage, for establishing helplines and Apps dedicated to senior citizens at par with the helplines and Apps. established by other States in the country and lastly, for issuing directions, to the respondents to prepare a comprehensive data base of senior citizens with

complete details.

3. Mr. Ajit Kumar, Advocate who appears in person, submits that out of a total population of 2 crores in Delhi, 8% are senior citizens and due to the lockdown imposed by the government, they have been compelled to stay at home. In this duration, many of the senior citizens who live alone as their children are residing abroad or are out of town, do not have any support system and are unable to access facilities like banking, medical, etc. They are forced to step out of their houses for purchasing essential items like groceries, milk, medicines and for withdrawing money from banks. In view of their increased vulnerability, there is the likelihood of their getting infected with Covid-19, which may prove fatal to them. It is in this background that the present petition has been filed for seeking directions to the respondents to provide essential services at home to senior citizens in Delhi, during this lockdown period imposed by the State.

4. Ms. Acharya, learned ASG states on instructions that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued an order dated 24.3.2020, whereunder all the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India, State/ Union Territory Governments and State/Union Territory Authorities have been called upon to take effective measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the country. Annexed to the said order, are the Guidelines or the measures to be taken by the concerned authorities for containment of Covid-19 epidemic in the country. It is stated that in terms of the said order, Delhi Government is required to take appropriate steps.

5. Mr. Anuj Aggarwal, learned ASC, GNCTD submits that adequate measures have already been taken by the Government of NCT of Delhi to secure senior citizens. Delhi Police has a dedicated helpline for senior citizens bearing number 1291. Government of NCT of Delhi has also established an APP called "Delhi Police Senior Citizens App". Besides that, Delhi Police has a dedicated helpline for the general public bearing number 1075.

6. Learned counsel submits that Delhi Government has created a team of Corona Warriors to identify and red flag senior citizens with pre-existing ailments. There are 13,750 "Corona Foot Warriors Containment and Surveillance Teams" (CFWCST) formed at the Polling Station level. Each team has a Booth Level Officer, ASHA/Anganwadi Worker, sanitation staff of the

civic agency, Beat Constable of Delhi Police and a Civil Defence

volunteer as a member. The said team is required to call up each senior citizen in the area under their jurisdiction and enquire about their health and in

case of any health issues, pass on the information to the respective District Magistrates and the health Department. It is submitted that each team

covers 500 houses under their jurisdiction and are required to call upon and visit at least 50 houses per day. The contact details of each person living in

a particular area are already available with the respective Booth Level Officers. The said team is not only required to visit the houses of senior

citizens in their area and ask about their well-being, but they also attend to their requirement relating to essential commodities. For the said purpose,

Eeco Vans have been arranged that move from place to place to meet the essential requirements of the senior citizens. The said Vans function under

the directions of the District Magistrate/SDMs of the area.

7. We have enquired as to why has a dedicated helpline not been set up by the Delhi Government for the senior citizens just as the Delhi Police has done.

8. Learned counsel submits that in the event a dedicated helpline has not been set up so far, the same shall be activated within two days and adequate

publicity of the said helpline number shall be given in the newspapers and social media to ensure that the information is disseminated amongst all

concerned.

9. In view the submissions made hereinabove, we are satisfied that adequate steps have been taken by the Delhi Government to attend to the

requirements of senior citizens residing in Delhi. It is hoped and expected that the Delhi Police and the Delhi Government shall continue discharging

their duties meticulously during the lockdown period so as to avoid any inconvenience to senior citizens.

10. With these directions, the present writ petition is disposed of alongwith the pending application.