



**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION**

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO. 43 OF 2024

Shobha Panchmukh } **Petitioner**
Versus
The State of Maharashtra & Ors. } **Respondents**

Mr. Shyam Panchmukh for petitioner.

Ms. P. H. Kantharia, Government Pleader
with Ms. Jyoti Chavan, Additional
Government Pleader and Mr. Amar Mishra,
AGP for respondent no. 1 (State).

Mr. Yuvraj Narvankar for respondent no. 2.

**CORAM: DEVENDRA KUMAR UPADHYAYA, CJ. &
AMIT BORKAR, J.**
DATE: 30th JULY 2024

P.C.:

1. On the oral prayer made by learned counsel for the petitioner, let the University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, through its Secretary, be impleaded as party respondent no. 4.
2. Necessary amendment shall be incorporated during the course of the day. Reverification is dispensed with.
3. Issue notice to the respondents, returnable on **4th September 2024**.
4. Learned Additional Government Pleader puts in appearance on behalf of respondent no. 1 (State) and waives service of notice and Mr. Narvankar, learned counsel, puts in appearance on behalf of respondent no. 2 and waives service of notice.

5. The instant PIL petition concerns itself with inadequate measures available with the University of Mumbai and the colleges associates/affiliated to it so far as curbing suicidal tendencies amongst the students of higher education are concerned. Well-being of every student including mental well-being is an integral part of health in general of every student.

6. Section 5(36) of Maharashtra Public Universities Act, 2016 casts a duty on the University to make arrangements for promoting healthy atmosphere and ensure welfare of the students of the University, colleges, schools and institutions. Thus, the University, in our opinion, is duty bound to take measures to create an atmosphere in the University and the colleges so that incidents of suicide do not take place.

7. The Parliament was informed on 5th December 2023 that as per the information received by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) in the years 2019-2021, the Maharashtra saw increasing number of suicides committed by students. This number in 2019 is 1487, in the year 2020 it is 1648 and in the year 2021 it is 1834. Such a situation is not only alarming, but calls for immediate measures by all concerned.

8. Let an affidavit in reply be filed by the respondents within three weeks. A week's time thereafter shall be available to the petitioner to file rejoinder affidavit, if any.

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(AMIT BORKAR, J.)

(CHIEF JUSTICE)