



IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No.6936 of 2024

*Smt. Sakhilata Sahoo*

....

*Petitioner(s)*

*Mr. Bijaya Kumar Nayak (3), Adv.*

*-versus-*

*State of Odisha & Ors.*

....

*Opposite Parties*

*Mr. Debasis Mohapatra, ASC*

*for O.Ps.1 & 2*

*Mr. Kali Prasad Nanda, Adv.*

*for O.P.3*

**CORAM:**

**DR. JUSTICE S.K. PANIGRAHI**

**ORDER**

**10.07.2024**

**Order**

**No.**

05.

1. This matter is taken up through hybrid arrangement.

2. In filing this Writ Petition, the Petitioner claiming herself to be wife of the deceased, who died due to COVID-19, has sought for a direction from this Court to the Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation, Bhubaneswar/ Opposite Party No.3 for granting the official documents relating to the death of her husband in COVID-19 in her favour.

3. Learned counsel for the Petitioner submits that since the deceased husband was the sole bread earner in the family, upon his death the widow-Petitioner being a poor and uneducated woman who is struggling a lot to maintain her livelihood. He further submits that in order to get the ex-gratia amount of Rs.50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand only) due to death of her husband in COVID-19, the Petitioner is required to submit an



application along with necessary documents including the Covid Death Certificate for the said purpose.

4. Learned counsel for the Petitioner alleges that despite approaching several occasions to the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) by the Petitioner, the Opposite Party No.3 is not granting necessary documents relating to the death of the deceased in COVID-19. Hence, the Petitioner has filed this Writ Petition.

5. At this juncture, learned counsel for the Opposite Party No.3 after some adjournments in the past submits that the documents relating to the death of the deceased in COVID-19 shall be granted in favour of the Petitioner within a period of three working days hence.

6. Considering the above submission of learned counsel for the Opposite Party No.3, this Court directs the Opposite Party No.3 to issue necessary documents relating to the death of the deceased in COVID-19 in favour of the Petitioner, within a period of three working days hence.

7. Be that as it may, since the Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation/Opposite Party No.3 is taking so much time for issuing necessary certificates sought for by the general public and for such act of the Opposite Party No.3 is the cause for public harassment unnecessarily.

8. It is noted that the state of public administration has invited the attention of critics for failures on many counts especially on the count of service delivery to citizens in time. Though several steps



have been taken by Governments at different levels, several attempts have been made to address the bottlenecks aiming at making the administrative system more responsive, keeping the citizen at the centre-stage. The public service providers including the BMC are increasingly looked upon in many circles as outmoded, self-seeking, secretive and indifferent to public need. There has also been a concern evident at the level of State and local Self- Government Institutions level to have an image makeover and acceptability among public.

9. Introduction of Citizen's Charter could be a pioneering influence in shaping the initiatives undertaken by the BMC. A hand-holding exercise is necessary on the part of the BMC to undertake for the citizens to ensure delivery of its services in time to fulfill the Citizen's Charter. Efforts need to be made to set up the Information and Facilitation Counters and the Public Grievance Cells which are the basic ingredients for materializing the Citizen's Charter. Further, new software for public grievance redress and monitoring system need to be developed in order to enable a centralised system of redressal and monitoring so that people who are in the darker side of the digital divide can also be benefitted from different E-seva Kendras.

10. It is at the back drop, this Court directs the BMC to introduce a CITIZEN'S CHARTER declaring the Corporation's commitment to achieve excellence by setting a target of timely delivery of services including issuance of different Certificates like the present one.



11. Accordingly, the Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation being a service provider to citizens shall spell out a commitment for fulfilling needs of the citizens. The commitments include the time limit for citizens centric services, compensation to the citizens in case of delay in delivery of such services, launching of a grievance redressal mechanism for the citizens, level of quality of services, providing the full information of the services provided in simple language preferably in Odiya language at the different organs of the BMC and so on.

12. The preparation of the Citizen's Charter should be done at the earliest with a wider consultation with various stake holders. The implementation of the Citizen's Charter should encourage the culture of courtesy and helpfulness by the personnel of the service provider i.e. BMC in the present case.

13. Accordingly, this Court directs the Commissioner, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation, Bhubaneswar/ Opposite Party No.3 to file an affidavit to the above effect along with the proposed Notification of the CITIZEN'S CHARTER by 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2024.

14. List this matter on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2024.

**(Dr. S.K. Panigrahi)**  
**Judge**