

* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **W.P.(C) 4166/2016**

COURT ON ITS OWN MOTION Petitioner

Through: Court on its own motion.

Versus

UNION OF INDIA & ORS. Respondents

Through: Mr. Anil Soni, CGSC with
Mr. Naginder Benipal, Adv. for UOI.

CORAM:

HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE

HON'BLE MS. JUSTICE SANGITA DHINGRA SEHGAL

ORDER

27.03.2017

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1. This petition is taken up as a Public Interest Litigation *suo moto* on the basis of the letter dated 05.05.2016 addressed by Justice Vipin Sanghi explaining his personal experience of no answer to "100 Number" (Emergency Helpline Number) in spite of repeated calls.

2. A detailed letter dated 05.05.2016 was also addressed to Mr. Alok Kumar Verma, IPS, Commissioner Delhi Police bringing to his notice the personal experience of the learned Judge and requesting to enquire into the issue. The said letter was also placed on record and having taken note of the said letter by order dated 11.5.2016, we have arrayed the Government of NCT of Delhi, Commissioner of Delhi Police and Ministry of Home Affairs as parties to the present petition and called upon the Commissioner of Police, Delhi to explain the poor response pointed out by the learned Judge

in the letter dated 05.05.2016 and to ensure that no such lapses would recur in the system. We also called upon the Government of NCT of Delhi and the Ministry of Home Affairs/Union of India to come out with suggestions to make the system more effective and efficient.

3. In pursuance thereof, counter affidavits have been filed on behalf of Respondent No.2/ Commissioner, Delhi Police and Respondent No.3/ Union of India, Ministry of Home Affairs.

4. In the affidavit filed on behalf of the respondent No.2/Delhi Police, at the outset it is explained that on 29.4.2016 out of the numerous calls that were received, three calls related to traffic jam in Vasant Kunj area was received between 10:28 Pm to 10:38 PM and the same were forwarded to Traffic Control Room which had alerted the ground staff.

5. Respondent No.2/Delhi Police in the said affidavit, has also explained the mechanism to receive and answer the calls made on the Emergency Number 100 and the steps that have been taken to streamline the system and make it more efficient to ensure that the chances of reoccurrence of such incidents are minimised. The relevant paragraphs are as under:

"2. (A) That emergency calls from various telecom service providers are received in Central Police Control Room (CPCR) i.e. Police Assistance-100 (PA-100) and/or other helplines through MTNL Exchange to Delhi Police Exchange in CPCR. On receipt of distress calls, Delhi Police Exchange gives Welcome message and then with the help of Automatic Call Distribution software forwards these calls to the PA 100 call taker/agent who is free and available at that moment. These call takers attend to the distress callers and fill up the details of the call i.e. details of incident, address and police station etc. in Electronic Challan Form. These electronic challans are forwarded to respective Wireless Dispatcher, District Control Room and Police Station electronically for further necessary

action. The concerned wireless dispatcher identifies the PCR Van nearest to the scene of incident and directs it through wireless/SMS to reach the scene of the incident to attend the distress caller. Simultaneously the concerned police station directs the staff on duty to reach the scene of incident for necessary action. The flow chart of Emergency call response system is placed at **Annexure R-1**.

4. That in pursuance of the Letter dt. 5/5/2016 of Hon'ble Judge and to ensure that chances of reoccurrence of the incident are minimized, the following steps have been taken to streamline the system and make it more efficient.

i. Keeping in view that the system being old, the preventive maintenance cycle of the technical infrastructure has been made more stringent and frequent.

ii. The manpower resources deployed for managing the emergency response system has been further harmonized to keep in tune with the overall work load and changing call pattern.

iii. In addition, Feed Back Staff has been deputed round the clock in CPCR to make calls to telephone numbers from which calls made to CPCR are found to be abandoned. This step ensures that even callers, whose calls were abandoned, are contacted by CPCR Staff for Redressal of grievances. During the intervening period (15/5/2016 to 30/6/2016) 24019 calls were abandoned and all the callers were contacted by CPCR Feed Back Centre. The call details of Feed Back Center are annexed as **Annexure R-IV**.

5. That it is pertinent to submit here that due to above steps, the Queue Time and numbers of abandoned calls have reduced appreciably from March to June. The maximum number of abandoned call on any day in the month of March 2016 was 5533, which came down to 205 calls on any day in the month of June 2016.

a. In order to tackle this problem of calls queuing up at the Telecom Service Provider (TSP) and MTNL level, the matter has been taken up with the authorities concerned. In this regard, Special Commissioner of Police/Operations, Delhi Police has written a D.O. Letter dt. 3/3/2016 to Joint Secretary/UT/MHA highlighting the following issues to further strengthen the functioning of PA-100 emergency Service. The copy of the DO letter is annexed as **Annexure R-V**.

b. Dedicated bandwidth to be allotted by various TSPs to enable citizens easy access to the emergency services.

c. Location Based services (LBS) to be provided by Telecom service Providers for easy and faster identification of location of the distress caller.

Further on 4/5/2016 during the meeting of Special Task Force, chaired by Union Home Secretary, Delhi Police again raised the issue relating to congestion in the telecom network, which further causes delay and leads to Abandoned Calls at TSP (Telecom Service Provider) Switch level. In turn, Ministry of Communication and IT has already initiated action as conveyed to Delhi Police vide Letter No.16-04/2015AS-III/NP/68/121, dt. 5/5/2016. The copy of Ministry of Communication and IT letter No. 16-04/2015AS-III/NP/68/121 dated 5/5/2016 is annexed as **Annexure R-VI**. Delhi Police is pursuing the matter with the concerned authorities.

In addition it is also placed on record that the PA-100 System extension up to Police Station Level was completed as a part of modernization of Emergency Response System in the year 2014-15. Now the extension of PA-100 system upto PCR Van is being taken up during the current financial year.

Future plan regarding modernization concerning various aspects of PA-100 System is annexed as **Annexure R-VII**.

6. That it is also worth mentioning here that priority proposal for creation of 663 additional posts for functioning of various Control Rooms in Delhi Police has already been taken up."

6. The respondent No.3/ Ministry of Home Affairs has also filed a short reply affidavit explaining the steps that have been taken to ensure that the persons whose call/calls made to Emergency Number 100 have been abandoned are contacted by the Central Police Control Room Staff for redressal of grievances. With the help of this system in place, the queue time and numbers of abandoned calls from 5533 calls in March 2016 has come down to 205 calls in June 2016. It is also explained that there are different types of emergencies that lead to large number of phone calls that are received by CPRC on a daily basis and out of this there are certain calls that are not attended immediately causing inconvenience to the public.

7. From a perusal of the affidavits filed on behalf of respondents No. 2 and 3, it becomes clear that concrete steps are being taken by the concerned authorities to check that any call made to Emergency Number 100 is answered immediately.

8. The affidavit filed on behalf of the Respondent No.2/Delhi Police, also makes it clear that one of the major reasons that the calls made on Emergency Number 100 are abandoned or remain unanswered is because of the heavy traffic on the Telecom Service Provider leading to congestion in their system as a result of which few calls do not reach Delhi Police Exchange in the CPRC giving an impression to the distress caller that the call has not been attended.

9. That being so, we deem it appropriate to dispose of the writ petition taking on record the submission made on behalf of the Respondent no.3/ Ministry of Home Affairs that in order to tackle the problems of calls queuing up at the Telecom Service Providers and MTNL the matter regarding priority routing of emergency calls has been taken up with the

authorities concerned and also i.e., the Ministry of Communication and IT, Department of Telecommunication has taken up the matter with all the Access Service Providers which in turn shall soon lead to a much plausible and effective system.

10. The respondent Nos.1 to 3 shall continue to monitor the system and ensure that the service on 100 number becomes more efficient and effective.

Writ petition is accordingly disposed of.

CHIEF JUSTICE

SANGITA DHINGRA SEHGAL, J

MARCH 27, 2017

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