

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF PUNJAB & HARYANA AT
CHANDIGARH**

Civil Writ Petition No. 37761 of 2018 (O&M)

Date of Decision: 20.12.2018

Ravinder Kumar Kodaan

.....Petitioner

versus

State of Haryana and others

.....Respondents

**CORAM: HON'BLE MR.JUSTICE KRISHNA MURARI, CHIEF JUSTICE
 HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE ARUN PALLI, JUDGE**

Present : Mr. V.K.Jindal, Senior Advocate with
 Ms. Janya Sirohi, Advocate, for the petitioner.

KRISHNA MURARI, CHIEF JUSTICE (oral)

This petition in the nature of a Public Interest Litigation has been filed seeking the following reliefs:-

- i) Issue a writ of mandamus to constitute a committee of the recognized author/Philosophers/Professors of 'Shrimad Bhagavad Gita' to find out the correctness and to delete the disputed translations from the Holy Book 'Shrimad Bhagavad Gita' authored by Sh. Jai Dayal Goenka (respondent No.5) and published by Geeta Press Gorakhpur (respondent No.6).
- ii) Further issue a writ in the nature of Prohibition restraining the State of Haryana from propagating, distributing, purchasing the same book from Geeta Press Gorakhpur (respondent No.6).
- iii) Further issue a writ in the nature of Prohibition restraining the distribution of the said holy book in a religious function i.e. "Kurukshetra Mahotsav, Geeta Jayanti Samaroh, to be held from 07th December, 2018 to 23rd December, 2018.

- iv) Further issue a writ in the nature of Prohibition restraining the State of Haryana from financing the religious function and spending the huge amount running in crores by distributing the book under the Chairmanship of one saint namely Shri Gyanaji Maharaj known as a renounced exponent of 'Shrimad Bhagavad Gita' and who is relying upon the misinterpretation of the Shalokas, which are running contrary to the fundamental meanings of the Vedas and values of Shri Sanatan Dharam and its holly books scriptures.
- v) With a further prayer for issuance of a writ in the nature of mandamus to carry out all such directives of this Hon'ble Court as this Hon'ble Court may deem fit in view of the facts and circumstances.
- vi) And further issue a writ in the name of mandamus directing the respondents to decide the representation dated 01.12.2018 (Annexure P-5) submitted the petitioner by passing a speaking order in a time bound manner.
- vii) With a further prayer for issuance of directions to the respondent to pass all such orders which are necessary for the proceedings/orders of holding of this function;
- viii) With a further prayer for issuance of any other writ, order or direction whichever this Hon'ble Court may deem fit and proper under the facts and circumstances of the case.

2. On our repeated query as to how public interest is effected by alleged incorrect translation of 'Shrimad Bhagavad Gita' by respondent No.5 and published by respondent No.6, has met with no positive response from learned counsel for the petitioner except for repeatedly stating that the

translation of the Shalokas of 'Shrimad Bhagavad Gita' from Sanskrit to Hindi being wrong and incorrect is infact deviation from the established principle of Shri Sanatan Dharam and its religious scriptures that is Vedas. We fail to understand that even if the allegations made by the petitioner are taken to be correct on its face value, how our interference in the matter would serve any public interest. Furthermore though the allegations have been made that the petitioner strongly believe that the State Government is directly aiding and financing the Gita Jayanti wherein the translated copy published by respondent No.6 would be distributed which would be misleading. It may be relevant to extract paragraph-3 from the writ petition wherein the aforesaid averments have been made:-

“That it is submitted that the petitioner being an advocate besides has deep interest in religion, and strong believer of ethos of Hinduism, and as such he has also read other prevalent commentary on *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. Now a day's many preachers have come up in India, who are distributing their own books and commentary under the title of the *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. The petitioner had also gone through a book which is published by Geeta Press Gorakhpur, drafted by Shri Jai Dayal Goenka and being distributed by Shri Gyananad Ji Maharaj, who is organizing Gita Jayanti at Kurukshetra, with the help of Kurukshetra Development Board, which is independent board but financed by the Government. The petitioner strongly believe that the State Government is directly aiding and financing the Gita Jayanti as the Hon'ble Chief Minister is believed to be the follower of Shri Gyananad Ji Maharaj and has sanctioned a budget of Rs. 11 crores from the coffer of the Government of Haryana and as such directly the State Government of Haryana is organizing this function. The petitioner has no grievance in organizing the Gita Jayanti function, but he has strong grievances, because a book is being distributed under the title of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita* printed by Geeta Press Gorakhpur, which contains

misinterpretation of some of the Shalokas; and because of the wrong interpretation of the shalokas of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the book is being misread by the common people and the message which should have been delivered through “Shrimad Bhagavad Gita” is being wrongly delivered and as such this petition as Public Interest Litigation, is being filed.”

3. A perusal of the aforesaid paragraph would go to show that the allegations are based on the beliefs of the petitioner without there being any material to indicate the involvement of the State Government. The petition goes to show that the petitioner has no grievance in organizing the function but he is objecting to the distribution of the book printed by respondent No.6 which according to him contains a wrong interpretation of Shalokas of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. Again we fail to understand even if the allegations are taken to be true on the face value, how public interest is being effected which requires our interference in the matter. It appears that this not a Public Interest Litigation but it is a private interest litigation to settle certain scores with either respondents No.5 and 6 or a publicity interest litigation which is liable to be dismissed at the threshold.

Accordingly, the petition stands dismissed.

(KRISHNA MURARI)
CHIEF JUSTICE

(ARUN PALLI)
JUDGE

20.12.2018
ravinder

Whether speaking/reasoned	√Yes/No
Whether reportable	Yes/No√