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HIGH COURT OF CHHATTISGARH, BILASPUR**Writ Petition (PIL) No. 41 of 2016**

In Matter Of Justice For 355 Missing Persons In Bilaspur Distt. Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.

---- Petitioner

Versus

1. State Of Chhattisgarh Through Principal Secretary, Home Department, Mahanadi Bhawan, Raipur, District Raipur, Chhattisgarh.
2. Collector, Bilaspur, District Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.
3. Superintendent Of Police, District Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.
4. The Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority Through Member Secretary Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority Vidhik Sewa Marg, Bilaspur Chhattisgarh.

---- Respondents

For Petitioner : Shri Ranbir Singh Marhas, *Amicus Curiae*.

For Respondent/State : Shri Satish Chandra Verma, Additional Advocate General.

For Respondent/SLSA : Shri Ashish Shrivastava, Advocate.

Hon'ble Shri Ajay Kumar Tripathi, Chief Justice
Hon'ble Shri Parth Prateem Sahu, Judge

Order on Board**14/01/2019****Per Ajay Kumar Tripathi, Chief Justice**

1. Heard counsel for the parties.
2. The present Public Interest Litigation ('PIL') was initiated on the basis of a newspaper report published in a local daily known as "Patrika". The newspaper brought to the attention the issue of missing children and persons running in the hundreds, in which hardly any endeavor was being made by the Police to trace them or to solve the issue even as a crime. The Court therefore appointed Shri Ranbir Singh Marhas, learned Advocate as *Amicus Curiae* and the case was registered as Writ Petition (PIL) No.41 of 2016.

3. Matter has been monitored by the High Court from time to time. Further, keeping in mind the directions which came to be issued even by the Hon'ble Apex Court in the case of *Bachpan Bachao Andolan v. Government of India* in *Writ Petition (C) No.75 of 2012*, directions were also issued to the State Legal Services Authority of the State of Chhattisgarh to examine the matter and come up with their report and suggestions. To the credit of State Legal Services Authority, they did some significant amount of work and submitted a detailed report including recommendations which would go a long way in addressing the issue. The compliance report in this behalf was filed on 10.04.2017.

4. Affidavits have been filed on behalf of the Respondent-State authorities. The department and the agencies involved, examined the report of the State Legal Services Authority and they have done work in this regard. The details of which is available by way of a compliance report dated 09.12.2018. Document-A annexed thereto is the response of the State authorities to the suggested action plan by the State Legal Services Authority.

5. The Court would also not miss to take note of the fact that the thousands of cases of such missing children to be precise as 38,073 up till 15.06.2017 were reported and recovery to the extent 37,153 has been made till the said date. Thereafter, progress has been made in solving the cases of the missing children. This is heartening figure keeping in mind that the results have been obtained by constant monitoring by the High Court and directions issued from time to time, with due assistance both from the *Amicus Curiae*, the State as well as the counsel representing State Legal Services Authority.

6. The Court is satisfied that the object and purpose behind initiation and registration of this PIL has been significantly achieved, but the Court would also not hesitate to record that the mechanism which have been put in place, as well as suggestions which are still required to be implemented would be required to be

made as a continues deliver mechanism. The experience gained over the period of time shall also help in achieving of the object and purpose behind this PIL.

7. This PIL stands disposed off now with appreciation having been recorded in favour of all the counsels who have rendered assistance. But a direction is issued upon the Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development, State of Chhattisgarh that the input and hard work put in for setting up the infrastructure and machinery should not go into the hibernation because the PIL stands disposed off now.

Sd/-

(Ajay Kumar Tripathi)
CHIEF JUSTICE

Sd/-

(Parth Prateem Sahu)
JUDGE