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IN THE HIGH COURT AT CALCUTTA
CONSTITUTIONAL WRIT JURISDICTION
APPELLATE SIDE

WPA 17303 of 2019

Halima Bibi
Vs.
West Bengal State Electricity
Distribution Company Limited & Ors.

Mr. Prasanta Kumar Banerjee,
Ms. Krishna Yadav
... For the petitioner.

Mr. Amitabh Shukla,
Mr. Prakash Chandra Pandey
... For the respondent nos. 1 to 4.

Mr. Kajal Roy
... For the respondent no.6

The petitioner had applied for a new electricity connection at her premises, situated at 72/A/4/A/1, Mallick Para Lane, Ward No.5, Serampore, Hooghly (hereinafter referred to as the said premises). The petitioner says that despite fulfilling all requirements of West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (in short, WBSEDCL), the licensee, the petitioner has not been given the connection because of the resistance from the respondent no.6 (private respondent). The petitioner, therefor, has been compelled to file the present writ petition seeking a new connection from WBSEDCL.

On behalf of WBSEDCL, it is submitted

that there is an existing pole just in front of the petitioner's premises wherefrom several persons are enjoying electric supply. The petitioner can be conveniently given a connection from the said pole, but for the objection and resistance from the private respondent, connection could not be given.

On behalf of the private respondent, it is submitted that on the northern side of the premises of the private respondent there is a 4 feet strip of land, which is tried to be shown by the petitioner as a common passage. The said strip of land is an exclusive property of the private respondent in view of an ex parte decree dated 7th February, 2017 passed in Title Suit, being T.S. No.200 of 2014.

On a perusal of the plaint filed in T.S. No.200 of 2014 made over to the Court by the advocate for the private respondent, it appears that the petitioner was not a party to the said Title Suit No.200 of 2014.

The private respondent says that during pendency of T.S. 200 of 2014 but before the ex parte decree was passed the owners of some adjacent plots of land by showing the 4 feet wide strip of land as a common passage have taken water connection and got electric poles erected thereat for getting electric supply. The private respondent, therefor, was compelled to file a subsequent suit being Title Suit

No.531 of 2018, wherein an ex parte ad interim order of injunction was passed on 21st December, 2018, directing the plaintiff and the defendants therein to maintain status quo as of that date with regard to the nature, character and possession of the said 4 feet wide passage lying on the contiguous north of 'Ka' schedule suit property of the plaintiff till 8th January, 2019. The private respondent says that the said ad interim order of injunction has been extended from time to time and is still subsisting. Relying upon the decree in the first suit and the interim order in the second suit, the private respondent says that the petitioner should not be given electric supply by WBSEDCL from the existing pole on the 4 feet wide passage on the northern side of the premises of the private respondent.

After considering the materials on record and the submissions made by the parties, I find that the grounds of objection made out by the private respondent are untenable in law. In the first suit, as indicated hereinabove, the petitioner was not a party. The decree passed therein is, as such, not binding upon the petitioner. In the second suit, the petitioner was originally not a party but is said to be made a party subsequently. The ex parte ad interim order of injunction of status quo was passed at a time when the petitioner was not a party to the suit. That apart

and in any event the order of status quo cannot prevent the petitioner from getting an electric connection and also does not restrain WBSEDCL from giving a connection to the petitioner from the existing pole on the 4 feet wide passage. No new pole is being erected which may be contended by the private respondent to be changing the nature and character of 4 feet wide passage. In any event, the entry of the officials of WBSEDCL through the said 4 feet wide passage to access the electric pole already existing thereat cannot also be prevented by the private respondent by dint of the order of status quo or the decree.

The other issue raised by the private respondent is that the petitioner despite having knowledge of the suit, the injunction application filed in the second suit wherein the petitioner has been added subsequently as party to the suit and the interim order has suppressed such fact in the writ petition. This amounts to suppression of material fact according to the petitioner. Since the petitioner was not the original defendant in the suit, there remains a doubt as to the knowledge of the petitioner about the suit, the injunction application and the interim order passed therein. The petitioner is given the benefit of doubt and, as such, is not hauled up for suppression of material facts.

In the facts and circumstances as aforesaid, I direct WBSEDCL to give connection to the petitioner at the said premises from the existing electric pole on the 4 feet wide passage upon payment of all necessary costs and charges, if not already paid and compliance with other formalities. WBSEDCL, if required shall raise a fresh quotation or invite the petitioner to pay on the basis of the quotation if any already raised in the event the petitioner has not paid for the same. The quotation, if required, should be raised by 1st February, 2021. The connection has to be given within 5 (five) working days from the date of deposit of the money in case of fresh quotation otherwise by 5th February, 2021. It is expected that the private respondent shall cooperate with the officials of WBSEDCL and the petitioner while the officials of WBSEDCL visit the locale for giving connection to the petitioner.

The respondent no.5, being the Officer-in-Charge, Serampore Police Station, is directed to ensure that there is no breach of peace in the locale at the time when the officials of WBSEDCL make visit for the purpose of giving connection to the petitioner.

The electricity connection to the petitioner, in terms of this order, will neither create any new right nor abridge or extinguish any existing right of the petitioner in respect of 4 feet wide passage.

It is made clear that I have not gone into the dispute as to the right, title and interest of the 4 feet wide passage and all recordings, hereinabove, are only for the purpose of deciding the present writ petition.

Nothing further remains to be adjudicated in the writ petition and the same is accordingly disposed of without any order as to costs.

Since I have not called for any affidavits, the allegations contained in the writ petition are deemed to have not been admitted by the respondents.

Urgent photostat certified copy of this order, if applied for, is to be given to the parties upon compliance with the necessary formalities.

(Arindam Mukherjee, J.)