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

Date of decision: 7th April, 2022

+ **W.P.(C) 2506/2019 & CM APPL.19643/2021**

ANJANA GOSAIN

..... Petitioner

Through: Ms. Shalini Nair, Advocate.
versus

GOVERNMENT OF NCT AND ANR.

..... Respondents

Through: Mr. Sameer Vashisht, ASC, GNCTD.

CORAM:

JUSTICE PRATHIBA M. SINGH

Prathiba M. Singh, J. (Oral)

1. This hearing has been done through hybrid mode.
2. The present matter concerns the outstanding bills of the Petitioner-Ms. Anjana Gosain, who is a lawyer, and the non-payment of the outstanding fee by the Respondent- GNCTD.
3. At the outset of today's hearing, Ms. Anjana Gosain submits that all her outstanding fee memos have been cleared by the Respondent-GNCTD.
4. A status report has been handed over to the Court by Mr. Sameer Vashisht, Id. ASC in respect of the Single Window System (*hereinafter* "SWS") for the payment of fee to Government counsels appearing for the GNCTD. The said status report, in compliance of the order dated 17th January, 2022, reports further progress on the finalization and launching of the SWS for the payment of fees to Government counsels.
5. The status report reveals that the SWS for smooth and seamless payments of Government counsels is now at an advanced stage of

development. The chronology of events set out in the status report shows that from February onwards, there has been coordination between the Law Department, GNCTD and the National Informatics Centre (NIC) for the setting up of SWS and for the training of the staff of various departments of GNCTD as also Government counsels, whose bills are to be processed through the system.

6. As of 17th March, 2022, the Virtual Machine is stated to have been created by the National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI) Cloud Coordinator and the URL of the link has also been provided to the Department of Law, GNCTD for the security audit. The sub-domain that has been chosen for hosting the SWS is <http://osws.delhi.gov.in> which is now under the control of the IT Department of the GNCTD. Emergency hosting website on NIC has been issued by the Law Department and the training of departmental officers is stated to have been completed as of 30th March, 2022. It is stated that the sub-domain has been put in public domain, however, it has been made accessible only to the officers of various Departments of GNCTD as the security audit is still underway. The relevant portion of the status report reads as under-

“It is pertinent to mention the hosted Website will be accessible only to various departments of GNCT of Delhi at present for the purpose of updating the hierarchy of the officers who are involved in processing of fee bill of Govt. Counsels. Further, the portal will be accessible by the Govt. counsels through the user ID provided by this Department after the completion of hands on training.”

7. Finally, the status report informs the Court that various suggestions have been received from the officers of various departments of GNCTD of

Delhi during the training process, some of which are being considered for being incorporated in the existing software so as to make it more user friendly. Government counsels, who have to upload their fee memo on a daily basis are now to be trained as to the manner in which the portal is to be used for uploading of bills and for ascertaining the status thereof. Accordingly, the training has been fixed for counsels for GNCTD from 25th April, 2022 to 29th April, 2022.

8. The Court has perused the status report and is of the view that the SWS should be made functional soon, in view of the progress that has been made as per the status report. Thus, the features that have to be incorporated on the basis of the suggestions that would be made by the Government counsels, as also the training of officers yet to be undertaken, if any, shall be completed by 15th May, 2022. Further, the security audit is directed to be completed by 30th June, 2022. An endeavour shall be made to make the SWS portal fully functional by 15th July, 2022.

9. The GNCTD may proceed further and allot the User IDs to the various Government counsels whose services are being utilised for by the Government. Further, it shall be ensured that those officials in various departments who are handling the processing and clearing of bills do so in a fixed time frame. The process of clearing of fee memos after being uploaded on the SWS by the counsels ought to be completed within a period of 30 days from the date of the uploading or any reasonable time limit so that clearing of Government counsel's memos is not postponed indefinitely.

10. The status report filed today is taken on record.

11. Let the matter be listed on 21st July, 2022 to enable the GNCTD to file a further status report apprising the Court of the further progress made in the

implementation of the SWS for clearing of Government counsel's fee memos, in terms of directions passed today by this Court.

PRATHIBA M. SINGH
JUDGE

APRIL 7, 2022/dj/sk

