

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

CRLMP No.1103 of 2022

Lilabati Khuntia

....

Petitioner

*Mr. P.C. Dash,
Advocate*

-versus-

State of Odisha & others

....

Opp. Parties

*Mr. A.K. Nanda,
Additional Government Advocate*

**CORAM:
JUSTICE BISWAJIT MOHANTY**

**ORDER
29.08.2022**

Order No.

03.

1. Heard Mr. P.C. Dash, learned counsel for the petitioner and Mr. A.K. Nanda, learned Additional Government Advocate.

2. Mr. Das submits that after registration of Kissan Nagar P.S. Case No.88 of 2022 and notwithstanding filing of the charge sheet in connection with the said case on 18.07.2022, the accused persons are threatening the petitioner and her family members. Therefore, he prays that the opposite parties be directed to give adequate protection to the petitioner and her family members.

3. Mr. Nanda submits that for getting protection, the petitioner should approach the "Competent Authority" as constituted under the "Witness Protection Scheme, 2019" notified by the Government of Odisha vide Extra-ordinary Gazette Notification No.1164 dated 6.7.2019 in tune with the judgment of the Supreme Court in the case of **Mahender Chawla & others v. Union of India & others** reported in **(2019) (I) OLR (SC) 126**. According to him, since the petitioner

is the informant, she being a star witness in case of a future trial, she can seek protection under the above noted Scheme by filing an appropriate application in the prescribed form before the “Competent Authority” consisting of the learned District & Sessions Judge as Chairman, head of the Police in the district as Member and head of prosecution in the district as its Member Secretary. He also submits that the said Scheme provides different types of protection measures under Clause - 7.

4. In such background, Mr. Dash submits that the petitioner may be granted liberty to approach the “Competent Authority” for the purpose of getting protection.

5. Considering the submissions made, this Court grants liberty to the petitioner to approach the “Competent Authority” under Witness Protection Scheme, 2019 in an appropriate manner. In the event such a motion is made, the “Competent Authority” is directed to take a decision on such motion in tune with the above noted Scheme as expeditiously as possible.

6. Accordingly, this CRLMP is disposed of.

7. Urgent certified copy of this order be granted on proper application.

(Biswajit Mohanty)
Judge