

**IN THE PUNJAB AND HARYANA HIGH COURT AT
CHANDIGARH**

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CWP-29097-2023
Date of Decision: 22.12.2023

ATUL SHARMA

..... Petitioner

VERSUS

STATE OF PUNJAB AND OTHERS

.... Respondents

CORAM: HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE VINOD S. BHARDWAJ

Present: Mr. Sukhwinder Singh Chatrath, Advocate
for the petitioner.

Mr. Sehajbir Singh Aulakh, Asst. A.G. Punjab
for the respondent-State.

VINOD S. BHARDWAJ, J. (ORAL)

The instant petition has been instituted under Articles 226/227 of the Constitution of India, 1950 seeking issuance of a writ in the nature of Mandamus directing the respondents to issue Press Accreditation Card to the petitioner as the same is being denied to him without any cogent reasons.

Learned counsel for the petitioner contends that the petitioner is running a weekly newspaper by the name of 'Jalandhar Breeze' and is the Editor-in-chief of the above-named weekly newspaper. The Government of Punjab in order to grant accreditation to the media persons dealing with the news at different levels, formulated the Punjab Media Accreditation Rules, 2009 (for short 'Accreditation Rules). Rule 4 and Rule 5 of the Accreditation Rules lays down the procedure for issuing accreditation card to the newspersons/media representatives of different categories at various levels.

The petitioner being eligible was issued press accreditation card vide card No. PRJ-2021/4533 by respondent-Department. The said card was valid till 13.05.2022. However, on the expiry of the said card, the petitioner had applied for the renewal of his press accreditation card. The application and supporting documents were submitted through e-mail dated 28.03.2022 as well by hand in the office of respondent-department. Further, the said application of the petitioner is pending since 11.09.2022 at the grievance portal yet the same remains unresolved till date and as per the details available online no action has been taken on the same except comments dated 18.10.2022 and 28.10.2021 wherein it is mentioned 'Jalandhar Breeze' is not empanelled/recognized in the list of DAVP and necessary information in this regard has already been sent to the office of Deputy Director (Press) PFA Branch, vide letter No.1/348091/2022 dated 21.04.2021. Apart from the said comments no effective steps have been taken as neither the complaint of the petitioner at the grievance portal has been closed nor his press accreditation card has been renewed. Lastly, the petitioner served a Legal Notice dated 15.12.2022 (Annexure P-5) upon respondent-authorities but no action has been taken thereupon.

Notice of motion.

Mr. Sehajbir Singh Aulakh, Asst. A.G. Punjab appears and accepts notice on behalf of respondent-State.

Learned counsel for the petitioner, however, submits that at this juncture, he would be satisfied if respondent No.3-District Public Relations Officer, Jalandhar, is directed to consider and decide the Legal Notice dated 15.12.2022 (Annexure P-5) in a time bound manner.

Learned counsel for the respondents does not oppose the prayer made by learned counsel for the petitioner.

Accordingly, in view of the above, with the consent of the parties and without commenting anything on the merits of the case, the present petition is disposed of while directing respondent No.3-District Public Relations Officer, Jalandhar to consider and decide the Legal Notice dated 15.12.2022 (Annexure P-5) by passing a reasoned and speaking order after affording an opportunity of hearing to the respective parties within a period of three months from the date of receipt of certified copy of this order.

Petition stands disposed of accordingly.

DECEMBER 22, 2023
Vishal Sharma

(VINOD S. BHARDWAJ)
JUDGE

Whether speaking/reasoned : Yes/No
Whether reportable : Yes/No