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

+ W.P.(C) 15574/2023 & CM APPL. 62362/2023 (Direction)

MANJI BHAI

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Ram Narayan Singh, Adv.

versus

GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI & ORS.Respondents

Through: Mr. Rishikesh Kumar, ASC
with Ms. Sheenu Priya, Mr.
Vikas Saini, Mr. Atik Gill, Mr.
Sudhir Kumar Shukla & Mr.
Sudhir, Advs. for Resp./
GNCTD.

Mr. Sriharsha Peechara, SC
with Mr. Akshat Kulshreshtha
& Mr. D.S. Bhanu, Advs.

SI Karan, P.S. Connaught
Place.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE YASHWANT VARMA

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE DHARMESH SHARMA

ORDER

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03.12.2024

1. This writ petition has been preferred seeking the following reliefs:

“a) Pass an appropriate writ in the nature of mandamus or other writ, order or direction to substitute the name of the petitioner in place his deceased wife on compassionate ground.

b) Direct the Respondents not to dispossess or obstruct or disturb the Petitioner in carrying on his trade from his respective squatting site i.e. in front of Indian Oil Building/Janpath Bhawan, Janpath, New Delhi in terms of section 3(3) of the street vendors {Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending} Act 2014 and;

c) Direct the Respondents/Town Vending Committee to conduct the survey of the Petitioner within time bound manner and to issue certificate of vending in favour of the Petitioner as per the provisions of the Street Vendors {protection of livelihood and regulation of street vending} Act 2014;



d) Pass such further order/orders/direction as deem fit and proper in the interest of justice in favour of the petitioner.”

2. From the disclosures which are made in the counter affidavit filed on behalf of the **New Delhi Municipal Council**¹, we find that although the petitioner had asserted that his deceased wife was carrying on vending activities in the area in question, according to them, the petitioner is an unauthorised vendor/squatter. It is further submitted that the name of the writ petitioner does not appear in the list of 628 verified squatters which had been initially prepared. Reference is then made to the litigation which ensued with respect to the enlistment of those 628 applicants/ vendors and which ultimately came to be dropped.

3. The case of the respondents is that the petitioner cannot seek substitution or addition in the list of 628 vendors bearing in mind the judgment of this Court in **Kishwari Begam vs. New Delhi Municipal Council**², where we had held as follows:

“6. Admittedly, no *tehbazari* license had been issued to the petitioner's deceased husband and therefore, the petitioner's claim that she be substituted in place of her deceased husband as a licence holder in the records of NDMC cannot be acceded to. The list of 628 eligible street vendors, which was prepared in the year 2012 was based on the applications made by the street vendors who were found to be carrying on the vending activities at the material time. Several of such street vendors had approached the Court and on the said basis, NDMC had drawn up a list of eligible street vendors. Some of those street vendors who have been continuously carrying on the vending activities were granted protective orders on the principle that all the street vendors who were carrying on activities at the time when the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014 (hereafter the *Street Vendors Act*) came into force, were entitled to such protection under Section 3(3) of the Street Vendors Act.

¹ NDMC

² 2024 SCC OnLine Del 6376



7. Except as noted above, the 628 eligible street vendors are not required to be provided any special status. Since the petitioner's deceased husband, whose name is mentioned in the list of 628 street vendors has expired, it cannot be assumed that the petitioner is required to be substituted in his place. It is also important to note that Connaught Place (Rajiv Chowk and Indira Chowk) has been declared as No-Vending Zone. Therefore, the petitioner has no right to carry on street vending activities in the said area only on the ground that she is the legal heir of a street vendor, who she claims was unauthorizedly vending in the said area.

8. Mr. Sahoo, learned counsel appearing for the petitioner has drawn the attention of this Court to Rule 13 of the Delhi Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Rules, 2017 (hereafter *the Vending Rules*) and has stated that all the street vendors whose name find mention in the list prepared by the Chopra Committee and Thareja Committee would be entitled to participate in the elections for the first Town Vending Committee (hereafter TVC).

9. He submits that by virtue of Rule 13 of the Vending Rules, the petitioner's deceased husband had a right to participate in the elections. He submits that the petitioner being a sole legal heir of her deceased husband ought to be entitled to exercise the said right. In addition, Mr. Sahoo also referred to Para 3.3 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Scheme, 2019 (hereafter *Scheme*) which sets out the criteria for issuing certificate of vending (COV) for street vendors. Para 3.3 of the said scheme is set out below:—

“3.3 The criteria for issuing certificate of vending to street vendors

(3.3.1) The certificate of vending shall be issued to a registered street vendor in compliance with Section 2.1.1.

(3.3.2) The allotment of vending space shall be subject to demarcation of vending zones pursuant to Section 8.5, available vacancies on time-sharing basis and holding capacity.

(3.3.3) In case the number of applicants exceeds the available number of vending spaces determined, or exceeds 2.5% of the total population, the allotment will be made by seniority, that is, based on descending order of duration of vending activities at the current site, subject to categorical reservations described in Section 6.2. For a single vending site, allotment amongst the registered street vendors shall be made by draw of lots in case of oversubscription.



(3.3.4) The preference shall be given to Persons with Disability and Women in accordance with Section 6.2.

(3.3.5) The vendors who could not be issued COY as per their first choice shall be accommodated, subject to availability, from a list of locations ranked in order of vendor preference, to avoid non-issuance altogether.

(3.3.6) Not more than one member of a family (consisting of spouse and dependent children) be given a Certificate of vending.

(3.3.7) The area/street where temporary vending is to take place will be notified by the TYC as outlined in Chapter 8.

(3.3.8) Categorization, demarcation and holding capacity of vending zones shall be decided by the Local Body in consultation with the TVC as outlined in Chapter 8.

(3.3.9) A Certificate of Vending will be subject to limited renewal in accordance with Chapter 4.

(3.3.10) The Local Body shall maintain an updated waiting list for oversubscribed vending zones for consideration in case of future availability of holding capacity. Such a waiting list shall be made available to applicants online.”

10. It is submitted that the petitioner being the sole legal heir of her deceased husband is also entitled to be accorded some seniority for the purpose of allocation of vending spaces. He also relies on Section 5(2) of the Street Vendors Act which reads as under:—

“5. (2) Where a street vendor to whom a certificate of vending is issued dies or suffers from any permanent disability or is ill, one of his family member in following order of priority, may vend in his place, till the validity of the certificate of vending—

(a) spouse of the street vendor;

(b) dependent child of the street vendor:

Provided that where a dispute arises as to who is entitled to vend in the place of the vendor, the matter shall be decided by the committee under section 20.”

11. In the present case, the petitioner's deceased husband had not been issued any COV under the Street Vendors Act. However, there is no dispute if such a certificate had been issued, the petitioner would be entitled to have her name included in the COV in place of her deceased husband, as his widow.

12. Although, the petitioner's deceased husband had not been issued any COV, we are of the view that the same benefit ought to be made available to the petitioner as well. The petitioner cannot



be prejudiced by the delay in issuance of COV or implementation of the Street Vendors Act. Consequently, we find merit in Mr. Sahoo's contentions that the petitioner would have the right to participate in the elections of the TVC in place of her deceased husband as stipulated under Rules 13 of the Vending Rules.

13. There is also no cavil with Mr. Sahoo's contention that, once the petitioner's claim is verified, she would also be accorded the benefit of the criteria for allocation of *tehbazarilicense* as stipulated under paragraph 3.3 of the Scheme.

14. In view of the above, we consider it apposite to dispose of the present petition by directing that the petitioner would be entitled to exercise the same rights as her deceased husband was under Rule 13 of the Vending Rules and would be accorded the benefit of seniority as her deceased husband would have been entitled to in terms of paragraph 3.3 of the Scheme, if he was alive, at an appropriate stage.”

4. In view of the aforesaid, while we find ourselves unable to grant the reliefs as prayed for, however we dispose of the writ petition in terms identical to *Kishwari Begam*. This order shall be without prejudice to any independent rights to vend that may be claimed and asserted by the writ petitioner and which would be open to be established before the concerned Town Vending Committee.

5. The writ petition stands disposed of on the aforesaid terms.

YASHWANT VARMA, J.

DHARMESH SHARMA, J.

DECEMBER 3, 2024/kk