

IN THE HIGH COURT OF ORISSA AT CUTTACK

W.P.(C) No. 15395 of 2015

Secretary, High Court Legal Services *Petitioner*
Committee

Mr. Prafulla Kumar Rath, Amicus Curiae

-versus-

Chief Secretary to Government of *Opposite Parties*
Odisha and Others

Mr. M.K. Khuntia, Addl. Govt. Advocate

CORAM:
THE CHIEF JUSTICE
JUSTICE G. SATAPATHY

ORDER
04.05.2023

Order No.

30. 1. Today, Mr. Khuntia, learned Additional Government Advocate hands over today a 42-page affidavit of the Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Government, School and Mass Education Department which contains 24 annexures running to over 600 pages setting out the steps taken to comply with the Court's direction issued on 28th February, 2023.
2. The details of the funds sanctioned by the Government of Odisha for repair and upgradation of schools and the minutes of the meeting held for that purpose have been enclosed. Specific to seven elementary schools in Boudh district, photographs have been enclosed of the progress of repair/upgradation of such schools and the letter of the Collector and District Magistrate, Boudh which appears to suggest that the work of each of those seven schools would be completed by 31st August, 2023. Office orders concerning uploading of data relating to the schools in the Unified

District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE +) portal and transfer of assets to of different Department of the Panchayati Raj institutions have also been enclosed. The details of the resource allocation in the school education sector have also been set out. It appears that nearly Rs.150 crores in the budget for 2022-23 was earmarked towards repair and maintenance of Primary, Upper Primary and High Schools and for Boudh approximately Rs.2.5 crores has been allocated. It is claimed that in the budget of 2023-24 Rs.80,514.00 lakh is stated to have been allocated towards 'Mo School Abhiyan' under which 10,000 schools will be targeted to be covered in the first phase.

3. It is also claimed that under the High School Transformation Programme 6872 High Schools have been transformed into modern centers in the last three years and that the Government has plans to transform all the remaining High Schools by the end of 2023. The details of the upgradation of Odisha Adarsh Vidyalaya Sangathan (OAVs) have also been set out. The details of other schemes have also been set out. It is stated that directions have been issued to all the District Education Officers (DEOs)-cum-DPC that they will physically verify the schools for proper certification as regards basic amenities along with photographs.

4. The Court is setting out all the above details in the affidavit filed today only so that the continued monitoring of the compliance by the State Government with the assurances held out in the affidavit is possible. The Court expects the different agencies involved in the task to strictly adhere to the timelines they have set for themselves so that the objective of true transformation as promised is achieved.

5. A copy of the affidavit is already available with the learned Amicus Curiae. It will be open to him to undertake visits to any of the districts of his choice to ascertain whether the assurances held out in the affidavit are being adhered to and to file further reports in this Court. Since the PIL is non-adversarial, it is needless to state that wherever the learned Amicus Curiae wishes to travel to inspect the schools, the local administration will extend their full cooperation.

6. List on 24th July, 2023.

S.K. Jena/Secy.

