

HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT

URGENT PREPONED HEARING OF SUO MOTU COVID-19 PIL

Date: 01-04-2020

As per order of Honourable the Chief Justice (enclosed hereinbelow), an urgent preponed listing of the Suo Motu Writ Petition PIL on Covid-19 virus, which was earlier scheduled to be listed on 03/04/2020, was done in the Bench headed by Honourable the Chief Justice Mr. Justice Vikram Nath and comprising Honourable Mr. Justice Ashutosh J. Shastri. This hearing was urgently necessitated in view of the reports in the print and electronic media about a religious congregation of large number of people having been held at New Delhi, despite of the restrictions against such large gatherings in the present scenario. The listing order passed by Honourable the Chief Justice took note of media reports that many of the participants of this congregation, when travelled to different parts of the country, have been found to be infected with Covid-19 virus. Also that, there are also reports of such persons having travelled to the State of Gujarat.

The hearing was conducted through video conferencing at 12 pm today. The learned Advocate General of the State of Gujarat Mr. Kamal B. Trivedi, learned Government Pleader Ms. Manisha L. Shah, learned Public Prosecutor Mr. Mitesh Amin and learned Assistant Solicitor General Mr. Devang Vyas participated in the hearing. Honourable Bench has directed the Union and the State of Gujarat to submit separate notes to the Bench, reporting about the details of the participants of the congregations having entered the State of Gujarat or hailing from the State of Gujarat, the steps taken to contain the further spread of Covid-19 virus through them and corrective/punitive measures that can be and/or are being taken if the participants in the gathering were from abroad on certain restricted VISAs/Travel Permits etc. The order of the hearing will be passed and published on the website shortly.

ORDER

Today's newspapers cover a common front page news regarding a religious gathering having taken place in New Delhi, despite restrictions. Large number of members of this gathering have travelled to different states of the country carrying the virus Corona (Covid-19). The news channels are only covering the same incident which has given rise to an equally big challenge for the nation when the nation is already crippled and facing the challenge of dealing with the pandemic of Corona Virus (Covid-19).

This Court had registered Suo Motu PIL No.42 of 2020 on 13th March 2020 to monitor the various aspects arising out of the said pandemic. The next date fixed in the matter is 3rd April 2020. However, considering the extreme urgency, in the larger public interest, it is directed that the said PIL be listed today at 12 noon. State Law Officers, both State and Union of India concerned with the said PIL be intimated. Copy of this order along with copies of front page of various newspapers be sent by email to them.

01.04.2020

CHIEF JUSTICE

