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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INIDA CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION	(PUBLIC	INTE	REST	LITIGATION
NO	•	\mathbf{OF}	2020	

IN THE MATTER OF:

Shashank Deo Sudhi

Petitioner

Versus

Union of India and Ors

Respondents

URGENT APPLICATION

To,

The Registrar General, Supreme Court of India,

Sir,

Kindly treat the accompanying petition as an urgent one in accordance with circular dated 23.03.2020 of this Hon'ble Court and other orders.

The grounds of urgency are being set out as under:-

"The government of our country is completely caught in dilemma and is forced to take an irrational decision of arbitrary capping in respect of the testing facility for covid-19 in private hospital/laboratories at rate of Rs 4500/-. This decision of the respondent is extremely

unfortunate, where the entire country is under

locked down and the government hospital is

overwhelmingly packed to its capacity. It is

extremely difficult for the common citizen to get

himself/herself tested in the government

hospital/labs and being no alternative in the

sight, the common and poor people are

constrained to pay the said capped amount to the

private hospital/labs for protecting their lives".

In addition to above, the rest of the grounds of

accompanied petition may also be considered as

grounds of urgency.

In view of the above sighted urgent grounds, it is

most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may

allow this application in inters of justice for public at

large.

Filed by

Petitioner (In Person)

Date: 31.03.2020

THE SUPREME COURT OF INIDA CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION (PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION) NO. _____OF 2020

IN THE MATTER OF:

Shashank Deo Sudhi

Petitioner

Versus

Union of India and Ors

Respondents

AFFIDAVIT

- I, Shashank Deo Sudhi, aged about 48 years, S/o Shri Surendra Kumar Pathak, R/105-B, First Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
- 1. That I am the petitioner and as such I am well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present matter and am competent to swear this affidavit.
- 2. That the petitioner seeks an urgent hearing on the ground as mentioned in the accompanied urgent application and main petition which are not being reproduced herein for the sake of brevity.

DEPONENT

VERIFICATION

Verified at New Delhi on this 31st day of March 2020 that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief and nothing material has been concealed there from.

DEPONENT

PERFORMA FOR FIRST LISTING

SECTION: Article 32

The c	case pertains to (Please tick/chec	ck the co	orrect box):
$\sqrt{}$	Central Act (Title)		The Constitution of India
$\sqrt{}$	Section		Article 32 of Constitution
	Central Rule (Title)		
$\sqrt{}$	Rule No(s)		Order XXXVIII Rules 1
	State Act (Title)		
	Section		
	State Rule (Title)		
	Rule No(s)		
	Impugned Interim Order (Dates	s)	
	Impugned Final Order/Decree	(Date)	
	High Court (Name)		
	Name of Judge		
	Tribunal Authority (Name)		
1.	Nature of matter		minal
2.	, 11		ank Deo Sudhi
			ni@gmail.com
	(c) Mobile phone number :	98106	15050

3.	(a) Respondent No.1 (b) E-mail ID	: Union of India: hfm@gov.in, ncov2019@gov.in	
	(c) Mobile phone number	r: 011-23063024, 23061913	
4.	(a) Main Category classif	fication : Writ Petition (Civil)	
	(b) Sub classification	: Public Interest Litigation	
5.	Not to be listed before	: N/A	
6.	(a) Similar disposed of m	natter with citation, if any & case	
	details : N/A		
	(b) Similar pending matt	er with case details: N/A	
7.	Criminal Matters: N/A		
	(a) Whether accused/cor	nvict has surrendered	
	(b) FIR No	Date :	
	(c) Police Station:		
	(d) Sentence Awarded :		
	(e) Period of sentence undergone including period of		
	detention/custody unde	rgone :	
8.	Land Acquisition Matter	s: N/A	
	(a) Date of Section 4 not	ification:	
	(b) Date of Section 6 not	ification:	
	(c) Date of Section 17 no	tification:	
9.	Tax Matters: State the t	ax effect : N/A	
10.	Senior Citizen>65 ye	etitioner /appellant only) N/A ears SC/ST Women/Child gal aid case In Custody	
11.	Vehicle Number (In case	of Motor Accident Claim Matters): N/A	
		Petitioner (In Person)	
Date	e: 31.03.2020	Shashank Deo Sudhi	

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INIDA CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION (PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION)

NO. ____OF 2020

IN THE MATTER OF:

Shashank Deo Sudhi

Versus

Versus

Union of India and Ors

Respondents

And

PAPER BOOK

(FOR INDEX KINDLY SEE INSIDE)

PETITIONER IN PERSON: Shashank Deo Sudhi

Synopsis

That present public interest litigation is being preferred by petitioner in person out of growing concern of the unprecedented pandemic covid-19 which is posing a grave threat of deadly infection among the population of the country. It is admitted fact that our health infrastructure is dangerously outstretched understaffed and under resourced. This pandemic is dangerously devouring the life of the citizen of the country at the extraordinary rapidity with extraordinary fatalities. The government of our country is completely caught in dilemma and is forced to take an irrational decision of arbitrary capping in respect of testing facility for covid-19 in the private hospital/laboratories. The decision taken extremely unfortunate, respondent is given the unfortunate circumstances where the entire country is under locked down and the government hospital is overwhelmingly packed to the capacity. It is extremely difficult for the common citizen to get himself/herself tested in the government hospital/labs and being no alternative in the sight, the people are constrained to pay the capped amount to the private hospital/labs for protecting their lives. The respondents are completely

insensitive and indifferent to the plight of the common citizen of the country who are already financially burdened on account of completely locked down with no possibility of being unlocked in recent future. The financial suffering being caused by the respondent No.3 by issuance such arbitrary advisory dated 17.03.2020 fixing Rs 4500/- testing and confirming including screening of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs are discriminatory and unreasonable, depriving the accessibility of medical facilities to the common citizen violating the right to life guaranteed under article 21 of the Constitution of India. Further, the capping of the prices of the testing facility of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs strikes at the article 14 of the Constitution of India as being arbitrary unreasonable. This act of the respondent No.3 in capping the prices for testing of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs is violative to the ideals and values of the Constitution of India which promises the protection of the state to the common people in the time of emergency and calamities. As such, the advisory issued by respondent No. 3 is repugnant and opposed to the well settled principles of right to equality and equal protection of law under article 14 of the Constitution of India and also against the postulates and mandates enshrined under article 21 of the Constitution of India. Thus, the advisory is liable to struck down as ultravires of the provision of the Constitution of India.

That it is submitted that the impending danger of the covid-19 is extremely serious given the deprived population of the country and testing is the only way to contain the novel corona virus pandemic. The private hospitals including laboratories have an important role to play in containing the scale of pandemic by extending philanthropic services in the hour of national crisis. It is the national duty of the respondents to save the infecting people as they are lurched in extremely unusual circumstances. Hence all sections of the societies must reach out in the help of the grieving and infecting patients. It is further submitted that it is urgently required that the respondents have to provide a free of cost testing for covid-19 to the all citizen. Given the inadequate testing of the citizen, the situation is becoming more dangerous and devastating. It is totally unfortunate that there are 114 identified testing centers for testing the covid-19 in the entire country of 130 million citizen. The big question is emerging that whether the common people will bear the cost of private testing agencies? Of course, the common citizen have to bear the cost of covid-19 testing in private hospitals/labs where the common citizen are severely handicapped on account of somewhat with the complete locked down and somewhat with other financial reasons. Thus, the decision made by the

government is completely arbitrary in order to deprive the large section of people from the easily available testing centers by placing arbitrary financial capping for testing of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs.

That it is further submitted that the respondent is not only discriminating in the accessibility and availability of testing facility but also discriminating in providing a guarantee of legitimacy of the fully accredited pathological labs or testing centers as the majority of the testing centers/pathological labs are not accredited with NABL or any other accretion board or agency. Such agencies are providing false and fake clinical reports which are dangerous to the health the safety of the common citizen. Hence, the respondents must ensure that the all the tests of covid-19 must be carried out in NABAL or ICMR accredited/registered pathological labs/ diagnostic centers.

That it is submitted that the respondents must ensure to provide the adequate numbers of testing kits and testing centers to test covid-19 across the country. It is further submitted that the respondents must ensure to provide the adequate numbers of ventilators including other medical devices to cater apocalyptic emergent situation of corona virus. Since, the majority of the government hospitals in our country are without the facility of the ventilators. It must be ensured that every district hospital must have adequate numbers of ventilator to cater to the needed medical emergency.

That it is submitted that the respondent No.3 is keeping the citizen of the country under the dark from the consequences and devastating outcome from the covid-19. It is extremely useful for the citizen of the country if the daily briefing on a national TV channels may be done so that the common citizen of the country may have awareness of the fatality and the extent of devastation being caused by invisible ghost like covid-19, which may generate the confidence in common strengthen the knowledge citizen and would immunization. Such briefings and dissemination of critical information effecting the common people is the bedrock of the idea of the Constitution of India. The respondent No.3 is acting myopically and opaquely disregarding the importance of the common citizen of the country. The transparent information relating the government policies to the citizen of the country is critically and indispensably important for the effective functioning of the democracy. In this regard it is submitted that whatever information about the situation of covid-19 is percolating and reaching to the common citizen through the private channels. Hence, it is utmost important that the urgency of information must be validly acknowledged in order to fight against covid-19.

DATES AND EVENTS

Dates	Events
17.03.2020	The respondent No.3 has issued advisory
	dated 17.03.2020 for capping on rates Rs
	4500/- of testing facilities of covid-19 in
	private hospitals/labs.
	Annexure P-1 [Page 33 to 35]
28.03.2020	The respondent No.3 published the list of
	approved the private laboratories for
	testing of covid-19 corona virus.
	Annexure P-2 [Page 36 to 39]
29.03.2020	The respondent No.3 published the list of
	approved the government laboratories for
	testing of covid-19 corona virus.
	Annexure P-3 [Page 40 to 46]
	Hence the Writ Petition in the interest of
	public at large.

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INIDA CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION (PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION)

NO. OF 2020

IN THE MATTER OF:

1. Shashank Deo Sudhi

(Petitioner in Person)

S/o Sh. Surendra Kumar Pathak,

R/o 105-B, First Floor, Pocket-2,

Sector-6, Dwarka,

New Delhi-110075

... Petitioner (In Person)

VERSUS

1. Union of India

Through its Secretary,

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Udyog Bhawan,

New Delhi.

... Respondent No.1

2. Directorate General of Health Services

(Through its Secretary)

Nirman Bhawan, Maulana Azad Rd,

New Delhi, Delhi 110011. ... Respondent No.2

3. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

V. Ramalingaswami Bhawan, Ansari Nagar,

New Delhi, Delhi 110029. ... Respondent No.3

(ALL RESPONDENTS ARE CONTESTING RESPONDENT)

PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION UNDER ARTICLE 32 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA FOR ISSUANCE OF IMMEDIATE DIRECTION TO THE RESPONDENTS FOR ENSURING TO PROVIDE FREE OF COST **TESTING FACILITY OF COVID-19 (CORONA VIRUS)** TO ALL THE CITIZEN OF THE COUNTRY AT ALL TESTING LABS IRRESPECTIVE OF PRIVATE OR GOVERNMENT IN VIEW OF UNPRECEDENTED PANDEMIC STARING TO ENGULF THE WHOLE POPULATION OF THE COUNTRY IN ITS TENTACLES AND/OR DECLARE THE ADVISORY DATED 17.03.2020 ISSUED BY THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH (ICMR) AS BEING ARBITRARY AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL VIOLATING ARTICLE 14 & 21 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA DISCRIMINATING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF TESTING FACILITIES FOR COVID-19 IN EXTRAORDINARY HEALTH CRISIS AND/OR ISSUANCE OF DIRECTION TO THE RESPONDENTS FOR RAMPING UP THE TESTING FACILITIES OF COVID-19 AT THE EARLIEST GIVEN THE ESCALATING MORTALITY AND MORBIDITY RATE ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND/OR ISSUANCE DIRECTION TO THE RESPONDENTS FOR ENSURING THAT ALL TESTS

RELATING TO COVID-19 MUST BE CONDUCTED UNDER NABL ACCREDITED PATHOLOGICAL LABORATORIES AS THE NON-ACCREDITED LABS ARE NOT CONFORMING TO THE STANDARDS AS PER GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES BEING PRESCRIBED BY INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY ACCREDITATION CO-OPERATION (ILAC) AND ASIA PACIFIC ACCREDITATION CO-OPERATION (APAC) AND/OR DIRECTION MAY BE ISSUED TO THE RESPONDENTS TO PROCLAIM AN ORDER FOR URGENT RESUMPTION OF DUTIES OF ALL PRIVATE HOSPITALS INCLUDING ITS <u>DOCTORS AND</u> PARAMEDICAL STAFFS IN ORDER TO FIGHT THE THREAT OF ONGOING PANDEMIC OF COVID-19 AND/OR DIRECT THE RESPONDENT NO.3 TO HOLD REGULAR NEWS BRIEFINGS THROUGH THE NATIONAL TV CHANNEL ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION ON COVID-19 AND PRECAUTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE COMMON PEOPLE.

TO

HON'BLE THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND HIS
HON'BLE COMPANION JUSTICES OF THE
HON'BLE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE PETITIONERS ABOVE-NAMED

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:

1. That present public interest litigation is being preferred by petitioner in person out of growing concern of the unprecedented pandemic covid-19 which is posing a grave threat of deadly infection among the population of the country. It admitted fact that our health infrastructure is dangerously outstretched understaffed and under resourced. This pandemic is dangerously devouring the life of the citizen of the country at the extraordinary rapidity with extraordinary fatalities. The government of our country is completely caught in dilemma and is forced to take an irrational decision of arbitrary capping in respect of the testing facility for covid-19 in private hospital/laboratories. The decision taken by the respondent is extremely unfortunate, given the unfortunate circumstances where the entire country is under locked down and the government hospital is overwhelmingly packed to the capacity. It is extremely difficult for the common citizen to get himself/herself tested in the government

hospital/labs and being no alternative in the sight, the people are constrained to pay the capped amount to the private hospital/labs for The respondents protecting their lives. completely insensitive and indifferent to the plight of the common citizen of the country who are already financially burdened on account completely locked down with no possibility of being unlocked in recent future. The financial suffering being caused by the respondent No.3 by issuance such arbitrary advisory dated 17.03.2020 fixing Rs 4500/- testing confirming including screening of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs are discriminatory and unreasonable, depriving the accessibility of medical facilities to the common citizen violating the right to life guaranteed under article 21 of the Constitution of India. Further, the capping of the prices of the testing facility of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs strikes at the article 14 of the Constitution of India as being arbitrary and unreasonable. This act of the respondent No.3 in capping the prices for testing of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs is violative to the ideals and

values of the Constitution of India which promises the protection of the state to the common people in the time of emergency and calamities. As such, the advisory issued by respondent No. 3 is repugnant and opposed to the well settled principles of right to equality and equal protection of law under article 14 of the Constitution of India and also against the postulates and mandates enshrined under article 21 of the Constitution of India. Thus, the advisory is liable to struck down as ultra-vires of the provision of the Constitution of India. The copy the said advisory dated 17.03.2020 is being annexed herewith and marked as **Annexure P-1**.

1.A That the petitioner is a citizen of India and has been practicing advocate in various Hon'ble courts of the country including this Hon'ble Court. The petitioner has been serving the society by taking up various probono cases especially of poor people who are coming from lower strata of the society. Over the years, the petitioner has been raising various social issues which affects the public at large and had approached to the various

Hon'ble High Courts including this Hon'ble Court for an immediate redressal of those grievances. The petitioner is fully committed to the cause of the common of the people and had been making representation to the concerned agencies of the government highlighting the critical issues related to society without any active assistance of any organization or bodies.

1.B The petitioner is committed and dedicated in building various awareness programmes across the country and facilitating creating lawful environment in common of our country. The contribution of the petitioner has been fully acknowledged by various national agencies. Recently, the petitioner raised several issues relating to the health of citizens of our country before this Hon'ble Court in the capacity of the professional pleader. The petitioner has unblemished record relentlessly contributing towards ensuring the rights of the innocent citizen of the country.

- 1.C The petitioner has no personal interest, or private/oblique motive in filing the instant application. There is no civil, criminal, revenue or any litigation involving against the petitioner, which has or could have a legal nexus with the issues involved in this application.
- 1.D That the petitioner is filing this Writ Petition on his own volition and he shall be liable to pay costs as ordered by this Hon'ble Court in the event it is found out that this petition is filed for any personal gain or oblique motive.
- That the Petitioner is a citizen of India, and 1.Ehas been practicing advocate in various Hon'ble courts of across the country including this Hon'ble Court with his annual income of about Rs. 8,00,000/- per annum. The email address of the Petitioner is sdsudhi@gmail.com and mobile no. +91-9810615050. The Permanent account number of the petitioner is ATHPS6763Q. The postal address of the petitioner is 105-B, First Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka,

Police Station: Dwarka, New Delhi-110075.

- 1.F That the petitioner seeks exemption from filing duly affirmed affidavit in the prevailing circumstances with an undertaking that deficit court fees will be paid subsequently.

 The petitioner further undertakes that the matter may be taken up through the Video-Conferencing mode. The petitioner would prefer to appear in person through appear at such facility in the premises of Hon'ble Supreme Court itself.
- That it is submitted that the impending danger of 2. the covid-19 is extremely serious given the deprived population of the country and testing is the only way to contain the novel corona virus hospitals pandemic. The private including laboratories have an important role to play in containing the scale of pandemic by extending philanthropic services in the hour of national crisis. It is the national duty of the respondents to save the infecting people as they are lurched in extremely unusual circumstances. Hence sections of the societies must reach out in the

help of the grieving and infecting patients. It is further submitted that it is urgently required that the respondents have to provide a free of cost testing for covid-19 to the all citizen. Given the inadequate testing of the citizen, the situation is becoming more dangerous and devastating. It is totally unfortunate that there are 114 identified testing centers for testing the covid-19 in the entire country of 130 million citizen. The big question is emerging that whether the common people will bear the cost of private testing agencies? Of course, the common citizen have to bear the cost of covid-19 testing in private hospitals/labs where the common citizen are severely handicapped on account of somewhat with the complete locked down and somewhat with other financial reasons. Thus, the decision made by the government is completely arbitrary in order to deprive the large section of people from the easily available testing centers by placing arbitrary financial capping for testing of covid-19 in private hospitals/labs. The copy of the list of private laboratories and government laboratories

are being annexed herewith and marked as

Annexure P-2 and Annexure P-3 respectively.

- 3. That it is further submitted that the respondent is not only discriminating in the accessibility and of facility availability testing but also discriminating in providing a guarantee legitimacy of the fully accredited pathological labs or testing centers as the majority of the testing centers/pathological labs are not accredited with NABL or any other accretion board or agency. Such agencies are providing false and fake clinical reports which are dangerous to the health the safety of the common citizen. Hence, respondents must ensure that the all the tests of covid-19 must be carried out in NABAL or ICMR accredited/registered pathological labs/ diagnostic centers.
- 4. That it is submitted that the respondents must ensure to provide the adequate numbers of testing kits and testing centers to test covid-19 across the country. It is further submitted that the respondents must ensure to provide the adequate numbers of ventilators including other medical devices to cater apocalyptic emergent situation of

corona virus. Since, the majority of the government hospitals in our country are without the facility of the ventilators. It must be ensured that every district hospital must have adequate numbers of ventilator to cater to the needed medical emergency.

That it is submitted that the respondent No.3 is 5. keeping the citizen of the country under the dark from the consequences and devastating outcome from the covid-19. It is extremely useful for the citizen of the country if the daily briefing on a national TV channels may be done so that the common citizen of the country may have awareness of the fatality and the extent of devastation being caused by invisible ghost like covid-19, which may generate the confidence in common citizen and would strengthen knowledge of immunization. Such briefings and dissemination of critical information effecting the common people is the bedrock of the idea of the Constitution of India. The respondent No.3 is acting myopically and opaquely disregarding the importance of the common citizen of the country. The transparent information relating the

government policies to the citizen of the country is critically and indispensably important for the effective functioning of the democracy. In this regard it is submitted that whatever information about the situation of covid-19 is percolating and reaching to the common citizen through the private channels. Hence, it is utmost important that the urgency of information must be validly acknowledged in order to fight against covid-19.

QUESTION OF LAW

- 6. That it is submitted that in the circumstances mentioned herein above and below, the pertinent question of law emerges for consideration and determination which are set out as under:-
 - (a) **Whether**, the citizen of our country are entitled to right to life and right to be guarded and protected against arbitrary and discriminatory advisory on testing facilities relating to pandemic covid-19 through private hospitals/labs on payment of capped price?
 - (b) **Whether**, such advisory is striking at the root of article 14 & 21 of the Constitution of India vis a vis larger health interest of the common

citizen of the country?

- (c) **Whether**, an urgent ramping of medical equipment like ventilators including covid-19 testing kits is mandatorily required to slow the spread of deadly disease of corona virus?
- (d) **Whether**, the respondent No.3 is not required to brief the citizen of the country about the current situation to cause awareness amongst the common citizen of the country in terms of number of fatalities and the list of precautions to be adopted by the common people?
- (e) **Whether**, it is eminently required that the all the tests relating to covid-19 must be carried out in NABL accredited labs or any agencies approved by WHO or ICMR?

GROUNDS

7. That it is submitted that being dissatisfied and aggrieved by the arbitrary advisory dated 17.03.2020 of respondent No. 3 on capping of the testing cost of covi-19 in private hospitals/labs, the petitioner is constrained to approach this Hon'ble Court for striking down the said advisory

as being arbitrary and discriminatory and as such ultra-vires of the provision of the Constitution of India. The decision of the respondents is not legally premised in as much as the entire country is fighting life and death and there is no end to the misery and this financial misery will cost the common people in a manner which is completely unimaginable and unbearable. The respondents is constitutionally enjoined to protect the health of citizen and if the respondents fail to do so, it is failing in its constitutional duties towards the citizen of the country. The arbitrary act of the respondent is akin to authorizing the private hospitals/labs including other agencies to act arbitrarily by taking the said capped amount which would likely to include more costs as the process of testing progresses. Hence, in addition to the arbitrary capping, the other issues like availability of adequate numbers of ventilators and mandatory testing from accredited/registered NABAL/ICMR labs/pathological clinics and ensuring the mandatory briefings of ICMR through national channel to the citizen of country are importantly needed in the hour of calamity.

Hence, the petitioner is approaching this Hon'ble Court for consideration of the issues and appropriate direction thereof on the inter-alia various grounds including the following grounds as mentioned herein bellow:-

(a) **Because**, the such arbitrary act of respondents is completely ultra-vires provisions of the Constitution of India. The said advisory is also fatally defective in the light of unprecedented scale of the pandemic situation where financial consideration was made paramount over the health and safety of the common people of country. The decision of the respondents is further symptomatic of arbitrariness as the respondents are fully aware that the respondents cannot accommodate the surging numbers of patients of covid-19 in the government hospitals and hence the respondents are shifting their constitutional duties towards the private player and private stake holder on a financial of common people. As constitutionally guaranteed right that the availability of the resources is the

responsibility of the states and the states cannot shirk from their responsibilities. Hence, the acts of the respondents infringes the fundamental rights of the common citizen guaranteed under article 14 and 21 of the Constitution of India.

- the act of the respondent (b) **Because**, discriminatory and arbitrary as the financial burden by way of advisory would deprive the large number of people to the accessibility and availability of the testing facilities of covid-19. This decision of respondents is all the more unconstitutional in as much as that the respondents are fully aware of their under resourced government hospitals and thereby enriching the private hospitals/labs. Such promotion of the private hospitals completely against the preambular statement of the Constitution of India.
- (c) **Because**, the said advisory dated 17.03.2020 is illegal as it amounts to the deprivation and privation of common people who are financially not well off. As such, the advisory must be declared ultra-vires of the

constitution of India infringing the rights of the common people under article 14 & 21 of the Constitution of India. Hence, the said advisory should be struck down as illegal.

- (d) **Because**, the majority of the laboratories in our country are not accredited from NABL or any accreditation agencies. Therefore, there is possibility of wrong diagnostic report leading to the wrong treatment and eventually the death to the patients. Hence, the respondents must be directed to ensure that all clinical and diagnostic report must be prepared only by fully accredited laboratories to ascertain the correctness of the clinical reports.
- (e) Because, the respondents must owe its constitutional responsibility to respond towards the medical needs of common people of the country. The respondent further devise appropriate mechanism to cater to such calamitous situation like covid-19. The adhock and makeshift responses would further compound the criticality of the situations leading catastrophes to and more devastations. Hence, the respondents must be

directed to take extremely urgent measures to protect the health of the common citizen.

the respondent No.3 is (f) not transparent in providing the information relating to current challenges posed by covid-19 as the respondent No.3 is at the forefront of fighting the pandemic situation and is found to be aloof from appraising the devastating consequences arising out of covidcountry. No 19 across the authorized representative is coming out before the nation to appraise the medical trajectory being followed by the people. Hence, the required information from the concerned agencies is not coming out amongst the common people and hence depriving the country from the important information amounts to striking an arrow in the heart of the democracy. As such, the respondent No.3 must be directed to conduct a daily briefing through national channel about the measures taken to contain the consequences of covid-19 and also about the precaution to be taken by the common people.

- 8. That it is submitted that the petitioner craves the leave of this Hon'ble Court to plea and urge any other further grounds which may be taken by the petitioner during the course of arguments on the present petition and same will be filed at the earliest on direction of this Hon'ble Court.
- 9. That it is submitted that no prejudice or harm would be caused to the public at large if the present application is allowed for adjudication.
- 10. That the present Application is being made bona fide and in the interest of justice.

PRAYER

In view of the above and in the interests of justice, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Court may be pleased to:

(a) Direct the respondents for ensuring to provide free of cost testing facility of covid-19 (corona virus) to all the citizen of the country at all testing labs irrespective of private or government in view of unprecedented pandemic staring to engulf the whole population of the country in its tentacles.

and/or

(b) Declare the advisory dated 17.03.2020 issued by the respondent No.3 as being arbitrary and unconstitutional violating article 14 & 21 of the Constitution of India discriminating the accessibility of testing facilities for covid-19 in extraordinary health crisis.

and/or

(c) Direct the respondents for ramping up the testing facilities of covid-19 at the earliest given the escalating mortality and morbidity rate across the country.

and/or

(d) Direct the respondents for ensuring that all tests relating to covid-19 must be conducted under NABL accredited pathological laboratories as the non-accredited labs are not conforming to the standards as per global best practices being prescribed by international laboratory accreditation co-operation (ILAC) and Asia pacific accreditation co-operation (APAC).

and/or

(e) Direct the respondents to proclaim an order for urgent resumption of duties of all private hospitals including its doctors and paramedical staffs in

order to fight the threat of ongoing pandemic of covid-19.

and/or

(f) Direct the respondent No.3 to hold regular news briefings through the national tv channel about the current situation on covid-19 and precaution to be taken by the common people.

And/or

(g) Pass such further order(s) as may be deemed fit and proper under the facts and in the circumstances of the case.

AND FOR THIS ACT THIS KINDNESS THE APPLICANT AS IN DUTY BOUND SHALL EVER PRAY.

DRAWN BY:
(Shashank Deo Sudhi)
Petitioner in Person
105-B, First Floor,
Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka
New Delhi-110075
Drawn on 31.03.2020

FILED BY: (Shashank Deo Sudhi)

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INIDA CIVIL ORIGINAL JURISDICTION

WRIT PETITION (PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION)
NO. _____OF 2020

IN THE MATTER OF:

Shashank Deo Sudhi

Petitioner

Versus

Union of India and Ors

Respondents

AFFIDAVIT

- I, Shashank Deo Sudhi, aged about 48 years, S/o Shri Surendra Kumar Pathak, R/105-B, First Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
- 1. That I am the petitioner and as such I am well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present matter and am competent to swear this affidavit.
- 2. That accompanying Writ Petition under Article 32 of Constitution of India has been drafted by me and the facts stated therein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. The contents of Para 01 to Para 10 including synopsis, list of dates & events and prayer of the accompanied public interest litigation are true and correct to the best of my knowledge belief. The contents of the same are not being reproduced herein for the sake of brevity and may be read as part and parcel of this affidavit.

DEPONENT

VERIFICATION

Verified at New Delhi on this 31st day of March 2020 that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief and nothing material has been concealed there from.

DEPONENT

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- I, Shashank Deo Sudhi, aged about 48 years, S/o Shri Surendra Kumar Pathak, R/105-B, First Floor, Pocket-2, Sector-6, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:-
- 1. That I am the petitioner and as such I am well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present matter and am competent to swear this affidavit.
- 2. That the petitioner seeks exemption from filing duly affirmed affidavit in the prevailing circumstances with an undertaking that deficit court fees will be paid subsequently. The petitioner further undertakes that the matter may be taken up through the Video-Conferencing mode. The petitioner would prefer to appear in person through appear at such facility in the premises of Hon'ble Supreme Court itself.

DEPONENT

VERIFICATION

Verified at New Delhi on this 31st day of March 2020 that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct to my knowledge and belief and nothing material has been concealed there from.

DEPONENT

INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH

Strategy of COVID19 testing in India (17/03/2020):

Background:

WHO declared an outbreak of febrile respiratory illness of unknown etiology in December 2019 from Wuhan, Hubei province of China. Since its emergence, the disease has rapidly spread to neighboring provinces of China as well 151 other countries mainly through International travel. Infection is spread through droplets of an infected patient generated by coughing and sneezing or through prolonged contact with infected patients.

Currently, India has witnessed only imported cases of COVID19 and limited local transmission from imported cases to their immediate contacts. Community transmission of the disease has not been documented till now. If community transmission is documented, the above testing strategy will undergo changes to evolve into stage appropriate testing strategy.

Objectives:

- To contain the spread of infection / community transmission of COVID19 by improving access.
- To provide free of cost and reliable diagnosis to all individuals meeting the inclusion criteria of COVID19 testing.
- To avoid indiscriminate testing and reducing panic and optimally utilize the resources of the country and scale up facilities for testing.

Current scenario:

- All individuals requiring to be tested are being offered at no cost.
- Accessibility and availability of the test is being increased every day by adding optimum numbers of testing laboratories every week.

- Currently, the cost of the first step screening assay is INR 1500 and additional confirmatory assays is INR 3000.
- As a part of the laboratory expansion process, ICMR has engaged with non-ICMR / MOHFW Govt. laboratories to initiate testing facilities. This includes CSIR, DBT, DRDO, Govt. Medical Colleges etc.
- ICMR is also engaging with high-quality private laboratories that includes NABL accredited labs to understand the modalities of increasing access to the test while ensuring appropriate safeguards.
- ICMR is operationalizing already existing high throughput diagnostic systems (up to 1400 samples per day) to exponentially augment the testing capacity in heavily overloaded states. It is proposed to install high throughput systems in at least 5 locations (with possibility of scale-up to 10 locations) on an urgent basis.
- ICMR-NIV, Pune has already placed orders to augment the existing stockpile of reagents to I million tests which would be available soon. WHO has also been requested to provide additional I million probes for testing.
- Advisory for testing are being reviewed and updated periodically (09/03/2020 and 16/03/2020). The testing strategy is reviewed by a high-level Expert Committee constituted by Secretary DHR & DG, ICMR and Chaired by Prof, Randeep Guleria, Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi.

Current testing strategy:

I.All asymptomatic people who have undertaken International travel:

- They should stay in home quarantine for 14 days.
- They should be tested only if they become symptomatic (fever, cough, difficulty in breathing etc.).
- If test result is positive, then they should be isolated and treated as per the standard protocol.

ii.All contacts of laboratory confirmed positive cases:

They should stay in home quarantine for 14 days.

- They should be tested only if they become symptomatic (fever, cough, difficulty in breathing etc.).
- If test result is positive, then they should be isolated and treated as per the standard protocol.
- iii.Health care workers managing respiratory distress I Severe Acute Respiratory Illness should be tested when they are symptomatic.

Guidelines for private sector laboratories intending to initiate COVID19 testing:

- Laboratory test should be only offered when prescribed by a qualified physician as per ICMR guidance for testing. Since the guidance evolves periodically, the latest revised version should be followed.
- ICMR will share the SOPs for laboratory testing and provide positive controls for establishing the test as soon as the concerned private laboratory has procured the primers, probes and reagents as per SOPs. Adoption of commercial kits for testing should be based on validations conducted by ICMR-National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune.
- Appropriate biosafety and biosecurity precautions should be ensured while collecting samples from a suspect patient. Alternatively, a disease specific separate collection site may be created.
- All the private testing laboratories ensure immediate/ real-time reporting to the State officials of IDSP (Integrated Disease Surveillance Program of Govt. of India) and ICMR Hq. for timely initiation of contact tracing and research activities.
- ICMR strongly appeals that private laboratories should offer COVID19 diagnosis at no cost.

Annexure P-2

INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH

Date: 28/03/2020

List of Private Laboratories to test COVID-19

S.	Names of	Names of Laboratory and Address
No.	States	-
1	Delhi (8)	 Lal Path Labs, Block -E, Sector 18, Rohini, Delhi Dr Dangs Lab, C-2/1, Safadarjung Development Area, New-Delhi Laboratory Services, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi Max Lab, Max Super Spciality Hospital, Saket, New-Delhi Sir Ganga Ram Hospital Clinical Lab Services, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Delhi Oncquest Labs Ltd, 3-Factory Road, New-Delhi Prognosis Laboratories, 515-16, Sector 19, Dwarka City X-Ray & Scan Clinic Pvt Ltd,
2.	Gujarat (4)	4B/18, Tilak Nagar, NewDelhi 1. Unipath Specialty laboratory limited, 102, Sanoma Plaza, Opposite Parimal Garden, Besides JMC House, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad 2. Supratech Micropath Laboratory & Research Institute Pvt Ltd, Kedar, Ahmedabad 3. SN GeneLab Pvt Ltd, President Plaza –A, Near Mahavir Hospital, Nanpura, Surat 4. Pangenomics International Pvt Ltd, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad
3.	Haryana (5)	1. Strand Life Sciences, A-17, Sector 34, Gurugram

			2. SRL Limited, GP26, Sector 18, Gurugram
			3. Modern Diagnostic & Research Centre-Lab, 363-364/4, JAwahar Nagar. Gurgaon
			4. Core Diagnostics Pvt Ltd, Udyog Vihar Phase-3, Gurgaon
			5. MolQ Laboratory, Plot 28,29; Sector 18(P), Electronic city,
-	1	Varnatalra	Udyog Vihar, Phase IV, Gurgaon
	4.	Karnataka	1. Neuberg Anand Reference Laboratory, Anand Tower, #54,
		(2)	Bowring Hospital Road, Bengaluru
			2. Cancyte Technologies Pvt Ltd, Sri
			Shankara Research Centre,
			Bengaluru
-	5.	Maharashtra	
		(10)	D37/1, TTC MIDC, Turbhe,
		,	Navi Mumbai
			2. Suburban Diagnostics (India) Pvt.
			Ltd., 306, 307/T, 3 rd Floor,
			Sunshine Bld., Andheri (W),
			Mumbai
			3. Metropolis Healthcare Ltd, Unit No. 409-416, 4th Floor,
			Commercial Building-1, Kohinoor
			Mall, Mumbai
			4. Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation
			Hospital and Research Centre,
			Molecular Medicine, Reliance Life
			Sciences Pvt. Ltd., R-282,
			TTC Industrial Area, Rabale, Navi
			Mumbai
			5. SRL Limited, Prime Square
			Building, Plot No 1, Gaiwadi
			Industrial Estate, SV Road,
			Goregaon, Mumbai
			6. A.G. Diagnostics Pvt Ltd,
			Nayantara Building, Pune

		7. Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital Laboratory, Four Bungalows, Mumbai
		8. InfeXn Laboratories Private Limited, A/131, Therelek Compound, Road No 23, Wagle Industrial Estate, Thane (W)
		9. iGenetic Diagnostics Pvt Ltd, Krislon House, Andheri East, Mumbai
		10. Tata Memorial Centre Diagnostic Services-Tata Memorial Hospital, Parel, Mumbai
6.	Orissa (1)	1. Dept of Lab Services, Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar
7.	Tamil Nadu (4)	1. Dept. of Clinical Virology, CMC, Vellore
		 Department of Laboratory Services, Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd, Chennai Neuberg Ehrlich Lab Pvt Ltd, 46-48 Masilamani Road, Balaji Nagar, Chennai Sri Ramachandra Medical College & Research Institute, Porur, Chennai
8.	Telangana (8)	 Laboratory Services, Apollo Hospitals, 6th Floor, Health Street Building, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad Vijaya Diagnostic Centre Pvt Ltd, Street No 19, Himayath Nagar, Hyderabad Vimta Labs Ltd, Plot No 142, Phase 2, IDA Cherlapally, Hyderabad Apollo Health and Lifestyle Limited, Diagnostic Labortory, Bowenpally, Secunderabad Dr. Remedies Labs Private Ltd, A3, Titus Plaza, Sharma

		Commercial Complex, Punjagutta, Hyderabad 6. Pathcare Labs Pvt Ltd, Medchal, Hyderabad 7. American Institute of Pathology And Lab Sciences Pvt Ltd, Citizens Hospital, Serilingampally, Hyderabad 8. Medcis Pathlabs India Pvt Ltd, Plot No 16 & 17, Swathi Plaza, Anand Nagar, New Bowenpally, Secunderabad
9.	U.P. (1)	1. RML Mehrotra Pathology Pvt Ltd, Nirala Nagar, Lucknow
10.	West Bengal (2)	 Apollo Gleneagles Hospitals, 58 Canal Circular Road, Kolkata Tata Medical Center, Rajarhat, Kolkata
11.	Kerala (2)	 DDRC SRL Diagnostics Pvt Ltd, Panampilly Nagar, Ernakulam MIMS Lab Services, Govindapuram, Kozhikode

Annexure P-3

INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH

Date: 29/03/2020

Total Government Laboratories Approved and Supported (provided diagnostic kits or reagents) by ICMR 123:

	N	Name of Brade at August
S. No.	Names of States	Names of Medical Colleges
1.	Andhra Pradesh (4)	 Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences, Tirupati Rangaraya Medical College, Kakinada Sidhartha Medical College, Vijaywada Govt. Medical College, Ananthpur
2.	Assam (4)	 5. Gauhati Medical College, Guwahati 6. Regional Medical Research Center, Dibrugarh 7. Jorhat Medical College, Jorhat 8. Silchar Medical College, Silchar
3.	Bihar (4)	9. Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna 10.Indira Gandhi Institute Medical Sciences, Patna 11. Patna Medical College, Patna 12. Darbhanga Medical College, Darbhanga
4.	Chandigarh (2)	Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education & Research, Chandigarh Govt. Medical College, Chandigarh
5.	Chattisgarh (2)	 15. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur 16. Late Baliram Kashyap M Govt. Medical College, Jagdalpur
6.	Delhi (6)	17. All India Institute Medical Sciences 18. Lady Hardinge Medical College 19. National Centre for Disease Control

		20. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital 21. Institute of Liver & Biliary Sciences 22. Army Hospital Research &
7.	Gujarat (6)	Referral 23. BJ Medical College, Ahmedabad 24. MP Shah Govt Medical College, Jamnagar 25. Govt. Medical College, Surat
		26. Govt. Medical College, Bhavnagar27. Govt. Medical College, Vadodara28. GMC, Rajkot, Gujarat
8.	Goa (1)	29. Goa Medical College, Goa
9.	Haryana (2)	30. Pt. B.D. Sharma Post Graduate Inst. of Med. Sciences, Rohtak, Haryana 31. BPS Govt. Medical College, Sonipat
10.	Himachal Pradesh (2)	32. Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla 33. Dr. Rajendra Prasad Govt. Medical College, Tanda
11.	Jammu & Kashmir (4)	34. Govt. Medical College, Jammu 35. Command Hospital (NC) Udhampur 36. Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Srinagar
		37. Govt. Medical College, Srinagar
12.	Jharkhand (2)	38. MGM Medical College & Hospital, Jamshedpur 39. Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences, Ranchi
13.	Karnataka (7)	 40. Hassan Inst. of Med. Sciences, Hassan 41. Mysore Medical College & Research Institute, Mysore 42. Shimoga Instt. of Medical Sciences, Shivamoga Inst. of Med. Sciences, Shivamogga 43. Command Hospital (Air Force) Bengaluru 44. Bangalore Medical College &

		Research Institute, Bengaluru 45. National Institute of Virology, Bangalore Field Unit, Bengaluru 46. Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences, Gulbarga -
14.	Kerala (10)	 47. National Institute of Virology Field Unit, Allapuzzha 48. Govt. Medical College, Thiruvanathapuram 49. Govt. Medical College, Kozhikode 50. Govt. Medical College, Thrissur 51. Rajiv Gandhi Center for Biotechnology, Thiruvanathapuram 52. Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences, Thiruvanathapuram 53. State Public Health Laboratory, Trivandrum 54. Interuniversity, Kottayam 55. Malabar Cancer Center, Thalassery 56. Government Medical College Hospital, Kasaragod
15.	Maharashtra (13)	57. National Institute of Virology, Pune 58. Seth GS Medical College & KEM Hospital, Mumbai 59. Kasturba Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Mumbai 60. National Institute of Virology Field Unit, Mumbai 61. Armed Forces Medical College, Pune 62. BJ Medical College, Pune 63. Indira Gandhi Govt. Medical College, Nagpur 64. Grant Medical College & Sir JJ Hospital, Mumbai 65. Govt. Medical College,

		Aurangabad 66. V. M. Government Medical College, Solapur 67. Haffkine Institute, Mumbai 68. Shree Bhausaheb Hire Govt. Medical College, Dhule 69. Government Medical College, Miraj
16.	Madhya Pradesh (4)	 70. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhopal 71. National Institute for Research on Tribal Health, Jabalpur 72. Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medical College, Indore 73. Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal
17.	Manipur (2)	Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Med. Sciences, Imphal-East, Manipur Regional Institute of Medical Sciences, Imphal
18.	Meghalaya (1)	76. North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences, Shillong, Meghalaya
19.	Odisha (2)	77. Regional Medical Research Centre, Bhubaneshwar 78. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneshwar
20.	Puducherry (1)	79. Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research, Puducherry
21.	Punjab (2)	80. Govt. Medical College, Amritsar 81. Govt. Medical College, Patiala
22.	Rajasthan (8)	 82. Sawai Man Singh Medical College, Jaipur 83. Dr. Sampurnan and Medical College, Jodhpur 84. Jhalawar Medical College, Jhalawar 85. RNT Medical College, Udaipur 86. SP Medical College, Bikaner

		87. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Jodhpur 88. JLN Medical College, Ajmer 89. Govt. Medical College, Kota
23.	Tamil Nadu (10)	90. King Institute of Preventive Medicine & Research, Chennai 91. Madras Medical College, Chennai 92. Govt. Theni Medical College, Theni 93. Tirunelveli Medical College, Tirunelveli 94. Govt. Medical College, Thiruvarur 95. Kumar Mangalam Govt. Medical College, Salem 96. Coimbatore Medical College, Coimbatore 97. Govt. Medical College, Villupuram 98. Madurai Medical College, Madurai 99. Govt. Medical College, Trichy
24.	Telangana (5)	
25.	Tripura (1)	105. Government Medical College, Agartala
26.	Uttar Pradesh (8)	106. King George Medical University, Lucknow 107. Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi 108. Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Aligarh 109. Command Hospital, Lucknow

		110. Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Medical College, Meerut 111. Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute, Lucknow 112. Uttar Pradesh RIMS, Saifai 113.Regional Medical Research Centre, Gorakhpur
27.	Uttarakhand (2)	 114. Govt. Medical College, Haldwani 115. All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh
28.	West Bengal (4)	. National Institute of Cholera & Enteric Diseases, Kolkata . Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research, Kolkata . Midnapore Medical College, Midnapore . North Bengal Medical College, Darjeeling
29.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands (1)	120. Regional Medical Research Centre, Port Blair
		Collection sites only
30.	Sikkim (1)	121. Sir Thutob Namgyal Memorial (STNM), Gangtok
31.	Ladakh (1)	122. Sonam Norboo Memorial Hospital (SNMH), Leh
32.	Arunachal Pradesh (1)	123. Tomo Riba Institute of Health & Medical Sciences (TRIHMS), Naharlagun

Other Laboratories in pipeline (7)

1.	Andhra Pradesh (1)	Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Kadapa (No biosafety cabinet)
2.	Himachal Pradesh (1)	Central Research Institute, Kasauli
3.	Karnataka (1)	Vijaynagar Institute of Medical Sciences, Bellary
4	Madhya Pradesh (3)	Bundelkhand Medical College, Sagar S.S. Medical College, Rewa Bhopal Memorial Hospital & Research Centre, Bhopal
5.	Mizoram (1)	Zoram Medical College, Aizwal, Mizoram (Staff)