

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY
ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION
SOU MOTO PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO. OF 2021**

High Court on its own motion
Versus

....Petitioner

**CORAM : PRASANNA B. VARALE &
S. M. MODAK, JJ.**

DATE : 1st DECEMBER, 2021.

P.C. :

1. News item published in daily newspaper Loksatta dated 24th November, 2021 under the caption “डॉ. बाबासाहेब आंबेडकर यांच्या साहित्य छपाईचा पाच कोटींचा कागद वापरविना” reflects a sorry state of affairs. It is stated in the news item that the State Government has undertaken a project of publishing literature of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and it is common knowledge that certain literature is published by the State Government under the caption “The writings and speeches of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar” in volumes. The news item stated that these volumes are always in demand. There is no dispute on this statement that these volumes are in demand not only by the researchers but also by the public in general. The news item further stated that the State Government issued directions to print 9 lakh copies of the volumes of these speeches and writings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and paper for printing to the tune of Rs.5,45,00,000/- (Rupees Five Crore Forty-Five Lakh only) was purchased by the State but unfortunately, in last four

years, only 33,000 copies are printed, as such, the rest of the paper purchased for the project is lying in the godowns. The news item further stated that the Government Press is not equipped with the modern machinery and faces the issue of old machinery and inadequate human resources. The news items further stated that though the staff in the Government Press is taking all possible efforts but due to limitation of the staff, they are facing difficulties. The news item stated that the State Government published 1 to 21 volumes of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's writings and speeches till date and due to heavy demand, the volumes are to be printed time and again. Then, there are details as to directions to various Government Printing Press at Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur. Then, there are other details of purchase of papers. The news item further stated that in last four years, only 33,000 prints were ready and, out of these 33,000 prints, only 3675 copies were made available for distribution.

2. The publication is absolutely necessary and desirable for present and future generation. It is useful to members of legal fraternity as well as to general members. So we feel that there is need for this Court to look into the issue of halting of project and reason therefor. Considering the nature of the grievance raised in the news item, we are treating the news item as a matter for public interest litigation. The Registry is directed to register this sou moto public interest litigation and

to place the necessary papers before the Bench presided over by Hon'ble the Chief Justice taking up the public interest litigation/s for further consideration.

(S. M. MODAK, J.)

(PRASANNA B. VARALE, J.)