

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY  
ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION  
PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION NO. 52 OF 2013**

Priscilla Samuel	...Petitioner
Versus	
Union of India & Ors.	...Respondents

Petitioner present in-person

Mr. J. S. Saluja, A.G.P for the Respondent-State

Mr. D. P. Singh for the Respondent-UOI

Ms. Nikita Jacob I/b S. K. Legal Associates for the Respondent Nos.  
8 and 9

Ms. M. Adenwalla for Tata Institute of Social Welfare

**CORAM : V. M. KANADE &  
REVATI MOHITE DERE, JJ.  
WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY, 2016**

**P.C. :**

1. Mr. Saluja, learned A.G.P appearing for the State seeks further two weeks time to file his reply. As a last chance, two weeks time is granted. No further adjournment will be granted for filing affidavit.

2. The affidavit to state firstly whether rules have been framed under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and under the Maharashtra Regulation of Marriage Bureaus and Registration of Marriages Act, 1998. Secondly, the State Government also to clarify in the affidavit whether they have appointed Dowry Prohibition Officers and if they have, the qualifications and experience of such Dowry Prohibition Officers who are appointed.

3. The intention of the Legislature for appointment of Dowry Prohibition Officers was to ensure that these Officers shall create awareness about the provisions of the Act and will ensure the prevention of demand of dowry. We were informed on the last occasion that the State Government has appointed Police Officers as Dowry Prohibition Officers. In our view, the purpose of creating post of Dowry Prohibition Officers will not be served if Police Officers are appointed as Dowry Prohibition Officers. In our last order, we have noted that even today, in the State of Maharashtra, the number of dowry deaths is on the rise. We would like to know whether the State Government has taken any steps to curb the menace of dowry deaths.

4. The State Government shall also state in their affidavit whether they have taken any steps for the regulation of Marriage Bureaus under the Maharashtra Regulation of Marriage Bureaus and Registration of Marriages Act, 1998. The petitioner, who is appearing in-person has brought to our notice some of the advertisements which are issued on the websites of marriage Bureaus. She has pointed out that demand of dowry is openly made on these sites though such demands are prohibited under the Dowry Prohibition Act. The State Government has passed an Act for the purpose of regulation of marriage Bureaus. It is a matter of common knowledge that marriage Bureaus have mushroomed and they make tall claims of having solemnized number of marriages. However, it is alleged that no record is maintained by these Bureaus, and despite the Act being passed, the State Government which is supposed to monitor these agencies have not taken any steps. It is alleged that the Register of Marriage Bureaus is not maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Section 5 of the said Act mentions the steps which are to be taken for the registration of marriage Bureaus. Section 6 prescribes the duties of husband to submit Memorandum for registration of marriage. It is

submitted that information which is provided by the parties is not verified by these Bureaus.

5. The grievance of the petitioner is that the marriage Bureaus are carrying on unlawful and illegal activities. The State Government to file a detailed reply dealing with all the averments which are made in the petition.

6. Stand over to 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2016.

**REVATI MOHITE DERE, J.**

**V. M. KANADE, J.**