

ODISHA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
TOSHALI BHWAN (2ND FLOOR),
SATYA NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751007

OHRC Case No. 2709 of 2013

ORDER

15th Sep 2014

The case is based on the petition of Mr. Akhanda addressed to the National Human Rights Commission, which is subsequently transferred to this Commission. In his petition, Mr. Akhanda states that the SCB Medical College & Hospital, Cuttack authorities by a notification on 28-6-2013 restricted entry of media representatives into the hospital campus. The petitioner has alleged that this step of SCB Medical College & Hospital authorities is an attempt to hide the hospital's gross unprofessional conduct and it is a violation of human rights of the journalists, patients and others.

The copy of the petition was sent to the Secretary to Government, Health & Family Welfare Department and Superintendent, SCB Medical College & Hospital, Cuttack for a report.

The Joint Secretary to Government, Health & Family Welfare Department has submitted a report vide his letter No.22213/H dated 23-8-2014. The Superintendent, SCB Medical College & Hospital, Cuttack has also submitted a report. Perused both the reports. It is revealed that during the month of June 2013 an unpleasant incident occurred inside the campus of the SCB Medical College & Hospital, Cuttack between the PG students of the hospital and some outsiders in the ward, which resulted in cease work by the PG students. Therefore, the authorities felt it expedient to issue an order dated 28-6-2013 restricting the entry of third persons into the ward, so as to maintain privacy, hygiene and safety of the patients as well as all of the staff and faculties of the hospital. It is further reported that the media persons are regularly visiting the

medical campus and collecting information regarding the day-to-day affairs of the hospital. They are also allowed to enter into the OPD, casualty and wards after obtaining permission from the Superintendent. In support of the above, the Joint Secretary has mentioned that Sri Nirupam Banerjee, Representative of “Odisha Post” was allowed by the Superintendent, SCB Medical College & Hospital, Cuttack for media coverage of implementation of Bone Marrow Transplant Unit in the Department of Clinical Haematology, SCB MCH, Cuttack on 13-11-2013. Also Sri Vikash Sharma and Mr. Kautuk Mitra, journalists representing the “Telegraph” and “ETV” respectively were given permission for media coverage. The Joint Secretary has claimed that the human rights of the media have not been curtailed by the hospital authorities.

At this stage it is brought to our notice that the validity of the notification dated 28-6-2013 restricting entries of media representatives, a PIL has been filed in the High Court and after fully fledged hearing the Hon’ble High Court has reserved its order. In the circumstances, we desist from entertaining the petition. Accordingly, further proceeding in this case closed under Regulation 10(i) of the Orissa Human Rights Commission (Procedure) Regulations, 2003.

SHRI B.K.PATNAIK
MEMBER

JUSTICE B.K.MISHRA
ACTING CHAIRPERSON