

LAXMI v. UNION OF INDIA

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**(2016) 3 Supreme Court Cases 669**

(BEFORE R. V. RAVEENDRAN AND A.K. PATNAIK, JJ.)

*a* WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, decided on February 11, 2011  
LAXMI .. Petitioner;

*Versus*

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS .. Respondents.

*With*

*b* (BEFORE R.M. LODHA AND ANIL R. DAVE, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, decided on August 31, 2012

LAXMI .. Petitioner;

*Versus*

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS .. Respondents.

*c* *With*

(BEFORE R.M. LODHA AND M. YUSUF EQBAL, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, decided on April 22, 2014

LAXMI .. Petitioner;

*Versus*

*d* UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS .. Respondents.

*With*

(BEFORE MADAN B. LOKUR AND UDAY U. LALIT, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006 with WP (C)  
No. 867 of 2013, decided on February 6, 2015

*e* LAXMI .. Petitioner;

*Versus*

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS .. Respondents.

*With*

(BEFORE MADAN B. LOKUR AND UDAY U. LALIT, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, decided on April 10, 2015

*f* LAXMI .. Petitioner;

*Versus*

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS .. Respondents.

*g* WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006<sup>†</sup> with WP (C) No. 867 of  
2013, decided on February 11, 2011, August 31, 2012,  
April 22, 2014, February 6, 2015 and April 10, 2015

*h* **A. Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 — S. 357-A — Compensation to victims of acid attack — Quantum and manner of disbursal — Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India to coordinate with States/UTs to give effect to S. 357-A CrPC, in particular, with reference to acid attack victims — Central Government and State Governments may also consider making**

<sup>†</sup> Under Article 32 of the Constitution of India

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**appropriate provision for regulation of sale of acids so that it is not easily or readily available to offenders — Crimes Against Women and Children — Acid attack — Penal Code, 1860, Ss. 326-A and 326-B (since enacted)**

*Laxmi v. Union of India*, WP (Cri.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 30-10-2009 (SC), referred to a

**B. Constitution of India — Arts. 21, 14, 15 and 32 — Acid attack — Preventive measures and relief to victims of acid attack — Amendment of Penal Code and framing of rules to regulate sale of acid and other corrosive substances — Ban on sale of acid — As regards concern of Supreme Court in order dt. 11-2-2011, about free availability of acids, Central Government and State Governments may also consider making appropriate provision for regulation of sale of acid so that it is not easily or readily available to offenders — MHA, to convene a meeting of Chief Secretaries/Secretaries of State Governments concerned and Administrators of UTs to discuss enactment of appropriate provisions for regulation of sale of acid in States/UTs — Industry, Trade, Development and Business Laws — Sikkim Trade Licence and Miscellaneous Provisions Rules, 2011 — R. 17-A — Crimes Against Women and Children — Acid attack — Penal Code, 1860, Ss. 326-A and 326-B (since enacted)** b

**C. Constitution of India — Arts. 21, 14, 15 and 32 — Acid attack — Preventive measures and relief to victims of acid attack — Framing of rules to regulate sale of acids and other corrosive substances — Treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of acid attack victims — Directions by Supreme Court in order dt. 3-12-2013, *Laxmi*, (2014) 13 SCC 743 — Implementation of — Monitoring of cases — States which have either not complied with or partially complied with order directed to ensure compliance positively within ten weeks and affidavit of compliance to be filed in Supreme Court on or before 15-7-2014 failing which Court may initiate contempt proceedings — Penal Code, 1860 — Ss. 326-A and 326-B — Poisons Act, 1919 — Ss. 2 and 8 — Rule-making power of State Governments for regulation of retail sale of acids — Rules to regulate and prevent acid attacks** c

*Laxmi v. Union of India*, (2014) 13 SCC 743 : (2014) 5 SCC (Cri) 814, considered d

**D. Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 — Ss. 357-A and 357-C — Compensation to victims of acid attack — Quantum and manner of disbursement — Cost of treatment of acid attack victims to be governed by S. 357-C CrPC — Not being very clear how to be implemented, particularly payment for hospitalisation, medical treatment, etc. expenses, some States framing Model Rules for compensation, without uniform rate of compensation — Supreme Court had pointed out that compensation should be enhanced to at least Rs 3,00,000 as aftercare and rehabilitation cost — All States have not framed adequate rules keeping in mind these directions — Secretaries in MHA and MoH, Government of India to jointly convene a meeting of Chief Secretaries/their counterparts in States and UTs within six weeks to work out details with regard to treatment of acid attack victims keeping in mind S. 357-C CrPC, 226th Report of Law Commission and discuss and prepare Model Rules for compensation keeping in mind directions issued by Supreme Court in *Laxmi*,** e

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a (2014) 4 SCC 427 — A consolidated affidavit in a chart form should be filed by Secretary MHA within seven weeks — Constitution of India — Arts. 21 and 32 — Acid attack — Crimes Against Women and Children — Acid attack — Penal Code, 1860, Ss. 326-A and 326-B (since enacted)

*Laxmi v. Union of India*, (2014) 4 SCC 427 : (2014) 4 SCC (Cri) 802, *relied on*

b E. Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 — Ss. 357-A and 357-C — Compensation to victims of acid attack — Quantum and manner of disbursal — Situation reviewed — Victim Compensation Scheme notified in almost all States and UTs — However, from chart annexed along with affidavit filed by MHA and despite directions given by Supreme Court in *Laxmi*, (2014) 4 SCC 427, minimum compensation of Rs 3,00,000 per acid attack victim has not been fixed in some States/UTs — Member-Secretary of State Legal Services Authority to take up issue with State Government so that orders passed by Supreme Court are complied with and a minimum of Rs 3,00,000 is made available to each victim of acid attack — Directions given for wide publicity to Victim Compensation Scheme — Constitution of India — Arts. 21 and 32 — Acid attack — Crimes Against Women and Children — Acid attack — Penal Code, 1860, Ss. 326-A and 326-B (since enacted)

d F. Constitution of India — Arts. 21, 14, 15 and 32 — Acid attack — Preventive measures and relief to victims of acid attack — Relief to victims — Treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of acid attack victims — Free medical treatment by private hospitals — Detailed directions issued — Full medical assistance to be provided to victims of acid attack and private hospitals should also provide free medical treatment to such victims, that for possible reluctance of private hospitals, State Government's officers concerned should take up matter with private hospitals appreciated

f G. Constitution of India — Arts. 21, 14, 15 and 32 — Acid attack — Preventive measures and relief to victims of acid attack — Framing of rules to regulate sale of acid and other corrosive substances — Ban on sale of acid — Secretaries, MHA and MHFW to take up matter with State Governments/UTs to ensure that an appropriate notification is issued within three months — Some States/UTs have already issued such a notification, but, all States and UTs must issue such a notification at an earliest possible date — Poisons Act, 1919 — Ss. 2 and 8 — Rule-making power of State Governments for regulations of retail sale of acids — Rules to regulate and prevent acid attacks

g H. Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 — Ss. 357, 357-A and 357-C — Compensation to victims of acid attack — Quantum and manner of disbursal — Setting up of a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for acid attack victims and generally — Since District Legal Services Authority is already constituted in every district and is involved in providing appropriate assistance relating to acid attack victims, it may not be necessary to set up a separate Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, as multiplicity of authorities need not be created — Thus, directed that such District Legal Services Authority, to include District Judge and such other co-opted persons who

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**District Judge feels will be of assistance, particularly District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police and Civil Surgeon or CMO of that district or their nominee, to function as Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for all purposes** a

*Laxmi v. Union of India*, WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 6-2-2015 (SC); *Laxmi v. Union of India*, (2014) 4 SCC 427 : (2014) 4 SCC (Cri) 802, *relied on*

Writ petition disposed of

SB-D/54936/CR

Advocates who appeared in this case :

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**Chronological list of cases cited**

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| 1. WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 6-2-2015 (SC), <i>Laxmi v. Union of India</i>   | 676f, 677a                   | g |
| 2. (2014) 13 SCC 743 : (2014) 5 SCC (Cri) 814, <i>Laxmi v. Union of India</i>             | 675b, 675b-c, 675c-d, 675d-e |   |
| 3. (2014) 4 SCC 427 : (2014) 4 SCC (Cri) 802, <i>Laxmi v. Union of India</i>              | 676b, 676d-e, 677c-d         |   |
| 4. WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 30-10-2009 (SC), <i>Laxmi v. Union of India</i> | 673b-c                       | h |

**ORDER dated 11-2-2011**

(BEFORE R.V. RAVEENDRAN AND A.K. PATNAIK, JJ.)

a WP (Crl.) No. 129 of 2006

1. One of the prayers in this writ petition is to issue a direction to the respondents to make appropriate amendment in the Penal Code, 1860 and Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 for dealing with acid attacks. A direction to frame guidelines in regard to prosecutions of acid throwers and rehabilitation of acid attack victims (by providing proper treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of victims of acid attacks).

b 2. The Union of India, Law Commission of India and National Commission for Women were the three respondents in the writ petition. On 30-10-2009<sup>1</sup>, notices were issued to six States, namely, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and NCT of Delhi where there are considerable number of acid attacks.

c 3. During the pendency of this writ petition, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 has been amended and Section 357-A has been inserted by Act 5 of 2009 which requires every State Government, in coordination with the Central Government, to prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victims or their dependants who have suffered loss or injury as a result of the crime and who require rehabilitation.

d 4. Though the said Section 357-A has come into effect on 31-12-2009 and more than a year has elapsed, we are informed that no schemes have been formulated by any of the State Governments. In these circumstances, we issue the following directions:

e 4.1. Let notice be issued to other remaining States and Union Territories.

4.2. The State Governments, in coordination with the Central Government shall prepare schemes as provided in Section 357-A for the purpose of providing compensation to the victims of crimes, in particular, acid attack victims.

f 4.3. The Home Ministry, Government of India shall coordinate with the States/UTs to give effect to Section 357-A, in particular, with reference to acid attack victims.

g 4.4. As one of the matters of concern in regard to acid attacks is the free availability of acids, the Central Government and State Governments may also consider making appropriate provision for regulation of sale of acids so that it is not easily or readily available to offenders.

5. List on 29-4-2011.

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h <sup>1</sup> *Laxmi v. Union of India*, WP (Crl.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 30-10-2009 (SC), wherein it was directed:

“Issue notice in applications to the States concerned and in addition to the Standing Counsel for the States. List on 12-1-2010.”

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**ORDER dated 31-8-2012**  
(BEFORE R.M. LODHA AND ANIL R. DAVE, JJ.)  
WP (Crl.) No. 129 of 2006

6. On behalf of the Union of India, an affidavit has been filed by Shri J.L. Chugh, Joint Secretary (Judicial) in the Ministry of Home Affairs. In the above affidavit, it is stated that the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, 2012 has been approved by the Cabinet on 19-7-2012 which has the proposal for insertion of Sections 326-A and 326-B in the Penal Code, 1860 for making the acid attack a specific offence.

7. Mr Mohan Parasaran, learned Additional Solicitor General appearing for the Union of India submits that since the present Parliament session shall expire on 7-9-2012, it is unlikely that the above Bill is introduced in Parliament in this session. However, he submits that the above Bill will be introduced in Parliament in the ensuing winter session.

8. Ms Aparna Bhat, learned counsel for the petitioner is satisfied with the above statement of the learned Additional Solicitor General.

9. In the order dated 11-2-2011<sup>2</sup>, this Court, inter alia, observed that as one of the matters of concern in regard to acid attacks is the free availability of acids, the Central Government and State Governments may also consider making appropriate provision for regulation of sale of acid so that it is not easily or readily available to offenders.

10. Mr Mohan Parasaran submits that regulation of sale of acid is the State subject and the appropriate provision for regulation of sale of acid has to be made by the State Governments. He, however, submits that the Ministry of Home Affairs shall convene a meeting of the Chief Secretaries/Secretaries of the State Governments concerned and the Administrators of the Union Territories for evolving a consensus in regard to the regulation of sale of acid in the States/Union Territories.

11. The learned counsel for the petitioner invited our attention to the notification issued by the State of Sikkim amending Sikkim Trade Licence and Miscellaneous Provision Rules, 2011 by inserting Rule 17-A in the said Rules.

12. In our view, the suggestion of Mr Mohan Parasaran, learned Additional Solicitor General appears to be proper. Let the Home Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India convene a meeting of the Chief Secretaries/Secretaries of the State Governments concerned and the Administrators of the Union Territories to discuss the enactment of appropriate provision for effective regulation of sale of acid in the States/Union Territories. Let the matter come up for consideration on 9-11-2012.

13. In the meanwhile, the Chief Secretaries of the States of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Goa, Punjab, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand and Administrators of Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Andaman

2 Set out in paras 1 to 5, above.



a and Nicobar and Chandigarh shall ensure that the responses/affidavits of compliance therewith are filed on behalf of the respective State Governments/ Union Territories within eight weeks from today.

**ORDER dated 22-4-2014**

(BEFORE R.M. LODHA AND M. YUSUF EQBAL, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006

b **14.** In pursuance of the order dated 3-12-2013<sup>3</sup>, nine States and two Union Territories have filed their affidavits. It transpires therefrom that the States of Tripura, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha and Sikkim have fully complied with the directions in the order dated 3-12-2013<sup>3</sup>. The two Union Territories, namely, Andaman and Nicobar and Chandigarh have also complied with the directions.

c **15.** We are informed that though the States of Haryana, Jharkhand, Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir have not filed their affidavits of compliance but these States have also complied with the order dated 3-12-2013<sup>3</sup>. The Advocates-on-Record of these States shall ensure that the affidavit of compliance by the respective State is filed within eight weeks from today.

d **16.** As regards States of Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Puducherry, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, it appears that these States have either not complied with or partially complied with the order dated 3-12-2013<sup>3</sup>. The Chief Secretaries of these States are directed to ensure that compliance with the order dated 3-12-2013<sup>3</sup> is positively made within ten weeks from today and affidavit of compliance is filed in this Court on or before  
e 15-7-2014 failing which the Court may have to initiate contempt proceedings against the defaulting States.

**17.** List the matter on 5-8-2014.

**ORDER dated 6-2-2015**

(BEFORE MADAN B. LOKUR AND UDAY U. LALIT, JJ.)

f WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006 with WP (C) No. 867 of 2013

**18.** We have heard the learned counsel for the parties for quite some time.

g **19.** This petition pertains to acid attack victims. The first prayer in the petition is with regard to amending the Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) for dealing with acid attacks as a special offence. The necessary amendment has been made in IPC and, therefore, nothing survives in this prayer.

h **20.** The second prayer is for framing guidelines in respect of the need of the acid attack victims and the third prayer is for adopting measures for the proper treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of the victims of acid attack. Finally, it is prayed that acid in all forms should be notified as a scheduled banned chemical not available across the counter.

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21. Insofar as the second and third prayers are concerned, we find that the issue of cost of treatment of acid attack victims has been adverted to in Section 357-C of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which was inserted by the 2013 Amendment Act with effect from 3-2-2013. How the section will be implemented, particularly with regard to the payment of the hospitalisation, medical treatment, etc. expenses is not very clear from the section. a

22. We are told that some of the States have framed Model Rules for compensation, but as pointed out in *Laxmi v. Union of India*<sup>4</sup> the rate of compensation is not uniform in all the States. In fact, this Court had pointed out that the compensation should be enhanced to *at least* Rs 3,00,000 (Rupees three lakhs only) as aftercare and rehabilitation cost. We have been informed that not all the States have framed adequate rules in this regard keeping the directions issued by this Court in mind. b

23. Under these circumstances, we direct the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and the Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Government of India to jointly convene a meeting of the Chief Secretaries/their counterparts in the States and Union Territories within a period of six weeks to work out the details with regard to treatment of acid attack victims keeping in mind not only the provisions of Section 357-C of the Code of Criminal Procedure, but also the 226th Report of the Law Commission. The officers concerned should also discuss and prepare some Model Rules for compensation to be paid to the acid attack victims keeping in mind the directions issued by this Court in *Laxmi*<sup>4</sup>. c  
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24. A consolidated affidavit in the form of a chart should be filed by the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs within seven weeks from today. List the matters on 10-4-2015. e

**ORDER dated 10-4-2015**

(BEFORE MADAN B. LOKUR AND UDAY U. LALIT, JJ.)

WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006

25. Pursuant to our order dated 6-2-2015<sup>5</sup>, the Ministry of Home Affairs has filed an affidavit dated 8-4-2015. We have heard the learned counsel for the parties in considerable detail. f

26. A meeting was convened by the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and the Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India with all the Chief Secretaries/their counterparts in the States/Union Territories on 14-3-2015. g

27. From the affidavit, the provisional figures for 2014 indicate that there were 282 acid attacks in all the States. The majority of acid attacks were in the States of Uttar Pradesh (185), Madhya Pradesh (53) and Gujarat (11). As far as the Union Territories are concerned, Delhi is the only Union Territory h

<sup>4</sup> (2014) 4 SCC 427 : (2014) 4 SCC (Cri) 802

<sup>5</sup> *Laxmi v. Union of India*, WP (CrI.) No. 129 of 2006, order dated 6-2-2015 (SC)



a where acid attacks have taken place and the total number of such attacks in the year 2014 provisionally is 27. In all, therefore, 309 acid attacks are said to have taken place provisionally in the year 2014.

b **28.** As mentioned in our order dated 6-2-2015<sup>5</sup>, with the amendment to the Penal Code, 1860, nothing survives in the first prayer made by the petitioner. The second and third prayers relate to the cost of treatment of the acid attack victims and application of Section 357-C of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, which was inserted by an Amendment Act in 2013 with effect from 3-2-2013.

c **29.** In the meeting convened by the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on 14-3-2015, it has been noted that a Victim Compensation Scheme has already been notified in almost all the States and Union Territories. However, we are told today that the Victim Compensation Scheme has been notified in all the States and Union Territories.

d **30.** We have gone through the chart annexed along with the affidavit filed by the Ministry of Home Affairs and we find that despite the directions given by this Court in *Laxmi v. Union of India*<sup>4</sup>, the minimum compensation of Rs 3,00,000 (Rupees three lakhs only) per acid attack victim has not been fixed in some of the States/Union Territories. In our opinion, it will be appropriate if the Member-Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority takes up the issue with the State Government so that the orders passed by this Court are complied with and a minimum of Rs 3,00,000 (Rupees three lakhs only) is made available to each victim of acid attack.

e **31.** From the figures given above, we find that the amount will not be burdensome so far as the State Governments/Union Territories are concerned and, therefore, we do not see any reason why the directions given by this Court should not be accepted by the State Governments/Union Territories since they do not involve any serious financial implication.

f **32.** We also direct the Member-Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority to obtain a copy of the Victim Compensation Scheme from the State/Union Territory concerned and to give it wide and adequate publicity in the State/Union Territory so that each acid attack victim in the States/Union Territories can take the benefit of the Victim Compensation Scheme.

g **33.** Insofar as the proper treatment, aftercare and rehabilitation of the victims of acid attack is concerned, the meeting convened on 14-3-2015 notes unanimously that full medical assistance should be provided to the victims of acid attack and that private hospitals should also provide free medical treatment to such victims. It is noted that there may perhaps be some reluctance on the part of some private hospitals to provide free medical treatment and, therefore, the officers concerned in the State Governments should take up the matter with the

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private hospitals so that they are also required to provide free medical treatment to the victims of acid attack.

**34.** The decisions taken in the meeting read as follows: a

**34.1.** The States/UTs will take a serious note of the directions of the Supreme Court with regard to treatment and payment of compensation to acid attack victims and to implement these directions through the issue of requisite orders/notifications.

**34.2.** The private hospitals will also be brought on board for compliance and the States/UTs will use necessary means in this regard. b

**34.3.** No hospital/clinic should refuse treatment citing lack of specialised facilities.

**34.4.** First aid must be administered to the victim and after stabilisation, the victim/patient could be shifted to a specialised facility for further treatment, wherever required. c

**34.5.** Action may be taken against hospital/clinic for refusal to treat victims of acid attacks and other crimes in contravention of the provisions of Section 357-C of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.

**34.6.** We expect the authorities to comply with these decisions. d

**35.** Although it is not made clear in the meeting held on 14-3-2015, what we understand by free medical treatment is not only provision of physical treatment to the victim of acid attack but also availability of medicines, bed and food in the hospital concerned.

**36.** We, therefore, issue a direction that the State Governments/Union Territories should seriously discuss and take up the matter with all the private hospitals in their respective State/Union Territory to the effect that the private hospitals should not refuse treatment to victims of acid attack and that full treatment should be provided to such victims including medicines, food, bedding and reconstructive surgeries. e

**37.** We also issue a direction that the hospital, where the victim of an acid attack is first treated, should give a certificate that the individual is a victim of an acid attack. This certificate may be utilised by the victim for treatment and reconstructive surgeries or any other scheme that the victim may be entitled to with the State Government or the Union Territory, as the case may be. f

**38.** In the event of any specific complaint against any private hospital or government hospital, the acid attack victim will, of course, be at liberty to take further action. g

**39.** With regard to the banning of sale of acid across the country, we direct the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to take up the matter with the State Governments/ Union Territories to ensure that an appropriate notification to this effect is issued within a period of three months from today. It appears that some States/ h

Union Territories have already issued such a notification, but, in our opinion, all the States and Union Territories must issue such a notification at the earliest.

*a* **40.** The final issue is with regard to the setting up of a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. In the meeting held on 14-3-2015, the unanimous view was that since the District Legal Services Authority is already constituted in every district and is involved in providing appropriate assistance relating to acid attack victims, perhaps it may not be necessary to set up a separate Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. In other words, a multiplicity of authorities need not be created.

*b* **41.** In our opinion, this view is quite reasonable. Therefore, in case of any compensation claim made by any acid attack victim, the matter will be taken up by the District Legal Services Authority, which will include the District Judge and such other co-opted persons who the District Judge feels will be of assistance, particularly the District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police and the Civil Surgeon or the Chief Medical Officer of that district or their nominee. This body will function as the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board for all purposes.

*c* **42.** A copy of this order be sent to the learned counsel appearing for the Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for onward transmission and compliance to the Chief Secretary or their counterparts in all the States and Union Territories.

*d* **43.** The Chief Secretary will ensure that the order is sent to all the District Magistrates and due publicity is given to the order of this Court.

*e* **44.** A copy of this order should also be sent to the Member-Secretary of NALSA for onward transmission and compliance to the Member-Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority in all the States and Union Territories. The Member-Secretary of the State Legal Services Authority will ensure that it is forwarded to the Member-Secretary of each District Legal Services Authority who will ensure that due publicity is given to the order of this Court.

*f* **45.** The writ petition is disposed of in the above terms.

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*h*