

SAMACHAR EXPRESS BROADCASTING NEWS PRIVATE LTD AND  
ANR

VS

UNION OF INDIA AND OTHERS

Present : Mr. Akshay Bhan, Sr. Advocate with  
Mr. Amandeep S. Talwar, Advocate for the petitioners.

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Submits *inter alia* that the impugned order (Annexure P-1), which imposes a blanket bar of user of social media platform for circulation of news, ostensibly to prevent circulating incorrect or undesirable news or information concerning the on going COVID-19 Pandemic is violative of the Citizens Fundamental Right 'to Freedom of Expression' and that the test of reasonableness is squarely missing because if the purpose behind passing of the impugned order had been to restrict circulation of fake, incorrect or otherwise undesirable news pertaining to the Pandemic, the same could have been specified in the operative portion. On the other hand, an absolute bar has been imposed on any kind of news, even if not related to COVID-19 Pandemic directly or indirectly.

Notice of motion.

Mr. Sudhir Nar, Advocate and Mr. Rajesh Gaur, Additional Advocate General, Haryana to accept notice on behalf of respondent No.1 and 2 & 3, respectively. Let a requisite number of copies of the Paperbook be supplied to them.

Adjourned to 14.08.2020.

To be heard alongwith CWP No.9751 of 2020, which is listed on 14.08.2020.

Till then, the impugned order so far as it pertains to the present petitioner is modified to the extent that there shall be no bar to the petitioner

for using the social media platform for disseminating information concerning any general developments. But any information or reference to any item relating to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic shall necessarily have to be based on the information available from the Official Portal of the State/Central Government, as the case may be.

July 20, 2020

*Ali*

(SUDIP AHLUWALIA)  
JUDGE

