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MSHRC Recommends ₹17.95 Lakh Compensation To Family Of Woman Who Died During Childbirth, Finds Public Healthcare Negligence

The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission has recommended Rs 17.95 lakh compensation after holding the public healthcare system responsible for the 2018 maternal death of Priyanka Navar in Kolhapur. The Commission found that the absence of doctors, delayed treatment and medical mismanagement violated her right to life under Article 21.

Pranali Lotlikar | **Updated:** Tuesday, June 30, 2026, 10:54 PM IST



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The Maharashtra Human Rights Commission has held the State liable in a maternal death case and recommended compensation for the victim's family | FPJ Photo

Mumbai, June 30: The Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission, in its order passed on June 29, has held medical officials attached to the public healthcare system responsible for the death of 23-year-old Priyanka Navar, a resident of Kolhapur.

The Commission expressed concern that, despite the government introducing several schemes, severe negligence and serious medical mismanagement by the public healthcare system cost

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the life of a woman during childbirth.

Holding the State vicariously liable for the death, the Commission recommended that the Maharashtra government pay Rs 17.95 lakh as compensation to the deceased's family.

Commission Finds Medical Negligence

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The Commission, presided over by member Sanjay Kumar, passed a detailed 23-page judgment, finding that factors such as the absence of doctors, delivery by inexperienced medical staff, delayed treatment and poor coordination among hospitals violated Priyanka's right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution.

It observed that medical professionals lacked empathy and professionalism, forcing Priyanka's husband, Jotiba Dhondiba Navar, to move from one hospital to another throughout the night in search of treatment before she succumbed to her condition.

"This is a case of mournful maternal death of a young pregnant lady," the Commission observed. "The death occurred due to the absence of doctors and mismanagement by the medical administration in taking proper care of a critical situation during delivery and postpartum complications. Empathy and professionalism were found missing at each stage. Each doctor and hospital was seen passing the buck to others for one reason or another, showing complete disregard for the Hippocratic Oath and Charaka Shapath. A helpless husband, with his bleeding

wife suffering from a postpartum emergency of uterine inversion, was moving in search of a doctor who could take care of his critically ill wife throughout the night, visiting one hospital after another, and at last lost his wife. His wife succumbed to apathy, wrong treatment and mismanagement by medical professionals assigned to take care of such situations and medical emergencies for the public."

Events Leading To Death

Priyanka died on November 23, 2018, after developing severe complications during delivery. In his complaint, Navar alleged that his wife was subjected to negligent treatment and improper management at multiple government health facilities, including the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Watangi, Ajara Rural Hospital and Gadhinglaj Sub-District Hospital, resulting in the violation of her right to life.

According to the complaint, Priyanka had undergone regular antenatal check-ups throughout her pregnancy and had no major complications. She developed labour pains on November 22, 2018, and was initially taken to Ajara Rural Hospital.

However, the medical officer was absent, and she was referred to Gadhinglaj Sub-District Hospital without being personally examined. As labour progressed, she was shifted to PHC Watangi, where the delivery was conducted by two medical assistants in the absence of the medical officer.

The Commission noted that the delivery became complicated due to acute inversion of the uterus, causing excessive bleeding. The medical officer reached the PHC only after being called from home. Priyanka was subsequently referred to private hospitals in Gadhinglaj and later to Kolhapur, where she was declared dead.

Compensation Recommended

While various departmental inquiry committees had largely given clean chits to the doctors involved, the Commission relied on multiple reports, including those of the Superintendent of Police, Kolhapur, and an expert committee from Sir J. J. Hospital, Mumbai.

The SP's inquiry concluded that Priyanka's death occurred due to negligence at PHC Watangi, Kolhapur, and the absence of the medical officer during delivery despite prior intimation. The

report also highlighted the lack of a gynaecologist and an anaesthetist at Ajara Rural Hospital.

"This is a case of mournful maternal death of a young pregnant lady," the Commission observed, adding that while the government has introduced several maternal healthcare schemes, the officials responsible for implementing them failed to discharge their duties professionally and ethically.

Holding the State accountable for the violation of Priyanka's human right to life, the Commission recommended that the government pay Rs 17.95 lakh to her husband as compensation.

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Out of the total amount, the Commission directed that Rs 5 lakh be kept in a fixed deposit for five years in the name of the couple's elder daughter and Rs 7 lakh be deposited for 10 years in the name of the younger daughter. The remaining amount is to be released to the husband.

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