

HC: Spell out plan to curb snakebite deaths

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Expressing concern over deaths due to snakebite in Thane district, the Bombay High Court today asked the Maharashtra government to spell out the steps it proposes to tackle the problem.

“We want the number of deaths due to snakebites to come down. Tell us what measures would you take,” said the division bench of justices V M Kanade and P D Kode. Seeking government's reply by July 24, the court also appointed senior advocate Jamshed Mistry as amicus curiae to assist it.

The orders came on a PIL filed by Dr Sarita Parikh, who said that on an average 10 people die every month in Thane district due to snakebites, but the government does not offer any help to curb the problem. She said her organisation had made portable ventilators as victims of snakebites develop breathing problems, but the government did not give any subsidy for the project.

She claimed local politicians were harassing her NGO which was trying to help locals deal with snakebites menace.

Government pleader G W Mattos said the state was taking enough measures and it had acquired sufficient number of ambulances to rush the victims to hospitals.

If the petitioner had any suggestions to offer to improve the ways to deal with the menace, she can submit a representation to the Ministry of Public Health, which would consider it, he added.