

Hon'ble Sh. K. K. Venugopal,
Attorney General for India,
A-144, Neeti Bagh
New Delhi-110049.

Thursday, June 30, 2022.

Subject: Request for Consent under S.15 of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 to initiate proceedings for criminal contempt against Mr. Sanjay Raut, a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha, on his Twitter account.

Respected Sir,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I write to you with respect to the recent onslaught & contemptuous posts on the Hon'ble Supreme Court by various individuals on social media in the recent past including yesterday, especially after the Order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the Maharashtra Assembly Floor Test matter.

It has been in vogue these days to condemn and abuse the judiciary upon failing to receive favourable orders. One such contemptuous post was made by Mr. Sanjay Raut on Twitter at around 9:47 pm yesterday from his verified account. Mr. Raut (@rautsanjay61), as the bio of his profile reads, is the Executive Editor, Dainik Saamana, a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha and a Shiv Sena Leader. This post, based on the distorted facts, inspired by malice, not only erodes the trust in the institution of justice by casting aspersions on the justice delivery mechanism, but also interferes with administration of justice, and for the reasons as stated below, amounts to committing 'criminal contempt'.

1. The post reads as follows: "न्याय देवता का सम्मान होगा! फायर टेस्ट fire test अग्नीपरीक्षा की घड़ी हैं. ये दीन भी निकल जायगे.. जय महाराष्ट्र!" The post is accompanied by a caricature which depicts a monument named "Democracy" supported by pillars, few of which are collapsing. One pillar which is named as "न्यायपालिका" (Judiciary) is seen to be toppled and rolling down the stairs. A True Copy of the post/tweet dated 29th June 2022 is annexed herewith as Annexure-1.
2. While the caption mockingly says that the verdict shall be obeyed, the caricature accompanying leaves little for interpretation. The post is not only in bad taste but also insinuates motive to the Judges, and their judgment, portrays

them as fallen and being responsible for the crumbling of democracy in Maharashtra.

3. This audacious assault and insult to the institution is deliberate, intentional, and continuous. These comments from a widely followed social media influencer and politician (having more than 10,91,010 followers on twitter), have become viral - being widely shared and subscribed by people all over the internet, to the extent that at the time when this letter was drafted, it had 27,400 likes and 4,200 retweets.

4. The tweet mentioned herein, and the publication thereof, scandalizes the Hon'ble Supreme Court, insinuates and attributes motives behind judgments of the Court by depicting it as being fallen. The line between humour and contempt of the Court has also been clearly violated.

5. Mr. Raut has been wedded to controversies and is often in news for his inflammatory and irresponsible speeches. In the instant case as well, the tone and tenor of addressing the Supreme Court does not behove him and is unbecoming of a Member of Parliament. As a Rajya Sabha MP, being a responsible public representative, he owes answerability and accountability for his conduct not only to the political party he represents, but also to the people and to the Constitution of India. Having taken oath to bear "true faith and allegiance to the Constitution", it is expected that the MP by way of his conduct would not bring disrepute to the Parliament as well as other Constitutional Organs of the Republic. However, his scurrilous and scandalous post made on the Judiciary, in wake of failing to receive a favourable order, is nothing but appalling.

6. As held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in ***RE: PRASHANT BHUSHAN & ANR {SUO MOTU CONTEMPT PETITION (CRL.) NO.1 OF 2020}***, "Indian judiciary is considered by the citizens in the country with the highest esteem. The judiciary is considered as a last hope when a citizen fails to get justice anywhere. The Supreme Court is the epitome of the Indian judiciary. An attack on the Supreme Court does not only have the effect of tending an ordinary litigant of losing the confidence in the Supreme Court but also may tend to lose the confidence in the mind of other judges in the country in its highest court."

7. It is anguishing to see that day in and day out, aspersions are cast on courts and the independence of judiciary put to question. The illustration at hand is

nothing but an addition to the slurry of motivated attacks and attempts in the recent past to create disaffection and disrespect for the authority of the court by creating distrust in its functioning as well as to erode the edifice of the judicial system.

8. An attack on the Supreme Court does not only have the effect of tending an *aam aadmi* of losing the confidence in the Judiciary but also of the lawyers and other stakeholders in the highest court of the land. Especially, such contemptuous posts by politicians and public influencers carry greater significance and pose a challenge because of the influence they have over public opinion.

9. As such, it is high time that, in order to protect the larger public interest, such attempts of attack on the highest judiciary of the country should be dealt with firmly and the offenders be put to task. Any stretching of magnanimity already being offered may amount to weakness in dealing with a malicious and scurrilous attack on the foundation of the institution of the judiciary and thereby damaging the very foundation of the democracy. If such malicious comments insinuating motives to the judgments and demeaning the Hon'ble Supreme Court are allowed to go on undeterred, it would set a bad precedent for the bar, the bench, and the citizens of India.

10. In light of the above, it is imperative that contempt proceedings are initiated against him so as to create a deterrence amongst influencers and public figures against scandalising the judiciary. Therefore, I humbly request you to kindly grant Consent to the undersigned in Writing, to initiate proceedings for criminal contempt, as per Section 15 of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.

11. Additionally, I also request you to initiate adequate and proper action as the apex law officer of the nation against such continuous mala fide posts and the individuals hiding behind these handles, so that a precedent is established.

Thank you & Warm Regards

Yours Sincerely,

Saket Sourav

Student, National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam

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Annexure – I**Sanjay Raut** ✓

@rautsanjay61

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न्याय देवता का सन्मान होगा!

🔥 फायर टेस्ट fire test
अग्नीपरिक्षा की घडी हैं.
ये दीन भी निकल जायंगे..
जय महाराष्ट्र!

[Translate Tweet](#)

9:47 PM · Jun 29, 2022 · Twitter for Android

4,251 Retweets 773 Quote Tweets 27.4K Likes