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Mr. Abu Sohel
Advocate
6, Lawyers Chamber
Supreme Court of India
New Delhi 110 001

Sub: Your request under Section 15(1)(b) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971

Dear Mr. Abu Sohel,

I have gone through your letter of 01.10.2021, requesting me to grant consent under Section 15(1)(b) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 read with Rule 3(b) of the Rules to Regulate Proceedings for Contempt of the Supreme Court, 1975, to initiate contempt proceedings against Mr. Biplab Kumar Deb.

The contents of the statements made by Mr. Biplab Kumar Deb, extracted by you, to say the least, are deplorable, and wholly uncalled for.

However, certain subsequent events seem to have taken place. A group of lawyers appeared before a Bench of the Tripura High Court headed by the Chief Justice, and prayed for contempt proceedings to be initiated against the Chief Minister. The Advocate General appears to have shown to the Court screenshots of a subsequent statement made by the Chief Minister on social media. As reported by the Economic Times as well as NDTV, the extract of the statement is as follows:

"The reporting of my speech on 25/9/21 is being twisted and wrongly reported to some print and electronic media to project disregard to the judiciary and judicial institutions.

I firmly and unequivocally clarify that I hold all the judicial institutions in highest esteem and also am duty bound to uphold the majesty of the judiciary.

I have not told the officers or even remotely intended to convey any message to disregard courts or disrespect court orders as reported. My words have been published out of context."

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According to the reports, the request for initiating contempt proceedings, made by members of the Bar, was not acceded to by the Court. The Bench presided over by the Chief Justice accepted the statement of the Chief Minister made on social media, the screenshot of which was shown to the Court. As a result, the Court refused to list the case for contempt, and the matter was closed.

I am sure you would appreciate that, in view of the fact that the High Court has accepted the statement made by the Chief Minister that he was misquoted and that he has the highest respect for the judiciary, it would not be appropriate for me to grant consent for initiating contempt proceedings.

I, therefore, decline consent for the reasons stated.



K K Venugopal
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