

**Agenda Item No. 3**

**Section 13 – Complaints by the Press**

**Cases heard by Inquiry Committee-II in its meeting held on December 14-15, 2022 at New Delhi**

<b><u>S. No.</u></b>	<b><u>File/Case No.</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>
1.	13/207/2018-19-PCI	Complaint of Shri Jagpal Singh, Editor, Dainik Aaj, Gonda, U.P. against Shri Praveen Kumar, Commander, Gonda East Railway Station, Gonda U.P.
2.	140/2020-B	Complaint of Shri Anam Ibrahim, Journalist, Shahjanabad, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh against Director General of Police, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

## **PRESS COUNCIL OF INDIA**

S.No.1

File No.13/207/18-19-PCI.

### **Complainant**

1. Sh. Jagpal Singh,  
Correspondent, Dainik Aaj,  
District General Secretary  
UP Journalists Association (UPJA),  
Gonda, Uttar Pradesh,

2. Mr. G. C. Srivastava,  
District President,  
UP Journalists Association (UPJA),  
Gonda, Uttar Pradesh

### **Respondents**

1. Shri Praveen Kumar,  
Commander,  
Railway Protection Force,  
Eastern Railway Station,  
Gonda (U.P.).

2. Shri Chhote Lal,  
Sub-Inspector,  
Railway Protection Force,  
Eastern Railway Station,  
Gonda (U.P.).

### **Adjudication dated 28.2.2023**

Mr. G.C. Srivastava, Accredited Reporter vide undated complaint, enclosing therewith a complaint dated 8.3.2019 of Mr. Jagpal Singh, Correspondent, Dainik Aaj, Gonda, U.P. against Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander and Mr. Chhote Lal, Sub-Inspector, Railway Protection Force (RPF), Gonda for allegedly misbehaving and threatening him due to publication of critical writings.

The Complainant stated that Mr. Jagpal Singh published a news item on March 02, 2019 in Dainik Aaj, under the caption “अवैध टैक्सी स्टैंड लगा रहा आदर्श रेलवे स्टेशन के माथे पर कलंक”. Aggrieved by this Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander, Railway Protection Force, Gonda has sent two soldiers to call him on the same day. The soldiers misbehaved with the complainant and directed him to meet Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander, RPF, Gonda. Due to paucity of time, he could not meet him. The complainant has further stated that on February 03, 2019, when he was travelling by his vehicle to cover the news, the respondent stopped him and confiscated the vehicle and challaned the driver, Mr. Ashok Kumar. The respondent started using abusive language and also threatened the complainant to implicate him in false cases. The complainant has also stated that respondents warned him of dire consequences and threatened to throw him in front of the train. He has requested the Council to take action against respondents.

Notices for Statement in reply were issued on May 13, 2019 to the respondents.

### **Written Statements of respondents**

The respondents- Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander and Mr. Chhote Lal, Sub-Inspector vide their written statements dated June 08, 2019 have stated that on receiving a piece of information in connection with parking of vehicles in no parking zone of Gonda Railway Station, they went out to the premises of Gonda Railway station and found that four vehicles were parked in no-parking zone which is violation of Section 159 of the Railways Act, 1989. Mr. Ashok Kumar, driver of vehicle bearing

No.UP 32 DN 2797 owned by Mr. Jagpal Singh was one of such persons who violated provisions of Railways Act, 1989. The respondents have further stated that the said vehicle were being used to carry passengers and was found in no-parking zone, therefore, it has been taken into custody. The complainant had requested to release his vehicle and driver without any legal proceedings against them but the respondent did not accede to his request of releasing the vehicle as the complaint has already been registered and proceedings have also been held in the court of Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, Eastern Railway, Gonda for which, the complainant had to pay the fine of Rs 500 /-, which caused the complainant upset and end up in publishing various false and baseless articles in newspaper, Daink Aaj against Railway Protection Force. The respondents stated that the allegations made against them are baseless and fabricated, which only means to malign their reputation, therefore, they have requested the Council to dispose of the complaint.

### **Counter Comments**

The complainant vide his counter comments dated 26.6.2019 while reiterating his complaint has stated that the officers of RPF are trying to give clean chit to the respondents- Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander, and Mr. Chhote Lal, Sub-Inspector. He has further stated that the respondent has no proof that his vehicle was parked in no parking Zone. The RPF does not have any photograph as an evidence to show that the vehicles were being recovered from no parking Zone. He has once again requested to take action in the matter.

### **Reply from the Superintendent of Police, Gonda**

The Superintendent of Police, Gonda vide his reply dated 22.2.2021, received at the time of hearing, has submitted that the respondent-Shri Praveen Kumar, Post Commander, RPF, Gonda vide his reply dated 16.12.2020 has informed that on receiving a piece of information in connection with parking of vehicles in no parking zone of Gonda Railway Station, the respondents went out in the premises of Gonda Railway station on 3.3.2019 and found that four vehicles parked in no-parking zone which is in violation of Section 159 of the Railways Act, 1989. In this regard, case No.447/19 and 450/19 under Section 159 of Railways Act was registered in RPF Post Gonda on 3.3.2019. He has further stated that the Hon'ble Court imposed fine of Rs.500/- on every person and handed over the vehicles to their owners. He has also stated that the said action was taken by the RPF and the local police have no role in the matter. He has requested the Council to remove the name of the Director General of Police, U.P. from the array of the parties in the matter.

### **Reply from Shri Chhote Lal Yadav**

Shri Chhote Lal Yadav, Sub-Inspector, RPF, Gonda vide communication dated 23.2.2021, given at the time of hearing, has reiterated his submissions given by him in written statement dated June 8, 2019.

The matter came up for hearing before the Inquiry Committee on 17.12.2019, 17.12.2020 and 23.2.2021. The Inquiry Committee in its meeting held on 21.9.2022 considered the matter wherein the officers who were present in the meeting stated that Mr. Chandra Mohan Mishra, Senior Commandant, Lucknow, NER will now conduct the inquiry and the report will be submitted within 30 days and the said report will be forwarded to the Press Council.

## **Report filed by Railway Protection Force**

Shri Chandra Mohan Mishra, Senior Divisional Protection Commissioner, Railway Protection Force, North-Eastern Railway, Lucknow (U.P.) has filed his report dated 20.10.2022 wherein it has been stated that the complainant-Shri Jagpal Singh in his statement reiterated his complaint but could not produce any evidence in his support of his complaint. Shri Jagpal Singh further said that the respondent-Shri Praveen Kumar has been transferred and now he is not being threatened by him nor he has any complaint against Shri Praveen Kumar. He has also stated that the complainant had options to complain against the official before the higher officials of Railway and local police authorities and also to Hon'ble Court under Cr.PC 190, 156/3 but the complainant did not do so. He has submitted that Shri Ashok Kumar, Driver of the complainant was called on 29.9.2022, 4.10.2022 and 7.10.2022 for recording the statement but he did not recorded his statement physically but submitted affidavit wherein he has stated that on 3.3.2019 Mr. Jagpal Singh was dropped from the vehicle by the police at Jainarayan Chowk in front of him and he (Shri Ashok Kumar) was locked in the police station. Mr. Ashok Kumar has further stated that on the day of the incident the action was taken by the police because the vehicle of the complainant was parked in the no parking zone of Gonda Railway Station for the purpose of receiving passengers, and the complainant was not present there at that time. It has been stated in the report that Shri Ashok Kumar, Driver admitted his offense before the court of law.

He has further stated that the respondent-Shri Praveen Kumar (Respondent No.1) in his statement denied the allegation levelled by the complainant. Shri Praveen Kumar informed that taking note of the news item published on 2.3.2019 in Dainik Aaj, he directed the Sub-Inspector, Shri Chhote Lal (Respondent No.2) and his staff on 3.3.2019 to take legal action against vehicle standing in the no parking zone at the Railway Station. They registered a case No.447/2019 to 450/2019 dated 3.3.2019 in Railway Protection Force, Gonda under Section 159 of Railways Act against four drivers and these four drivers admitted their offence before the court and fine amount were deposited by them in the court. Denying the allegation of any ill-will towards the complainant, Shri Praveen Kumar stated that the complainant should have registered complaint in the police station apprehending threats. Shri Praveen Kumar stated that he was not present at the place of incident on 3.3.2019 nor did he send his staff to the complainant for being annoyed with the publication of news item dated 2.3.2019 in Dainik Aaj. Shri Praveen Kumar in his statement has further stated that the complainant came to his post and pressurized him to get the vehicle released citing being a journalist, but he took action legally due to which the complainant got and made a false and fabricated complaint against him.

He has further submitted that Shri Chhote Lal, Sub Inspector (Respondent No.2) in his statement while denying the allegation levelled by the complainant has stated that on the direction of Shri Praveen Kumar they took legal action against the four drivers, who parked their vehicle on no parking zone at Railway Station, Gonda. Shri Chhote Lal has further stated that neither the complainant nor Shri Praveen Kumar (Respondent No.1) were present on the spot.

He has submitted that the statement of other railway police officials and independent witness were also recorded and they reiterated the statement as submitted by Shri Chhote Lal (Respondent No.2).

The Senior Divisional Protection Commissioner, Railway Protection Force, North-Eastern Railway, Lucknow has stated that the allegation levelled by the complainant could not be proved in the investigation.

### **Communication dated 15.12.2022 received from the complainant**

The complainant-Shri Jagpal Singh vide his letter dated 15.12.2022, handed over at the time of hearing, while reiterating his complaint has alleged that the report submitted by the respondent is totally false and misleading. He has further submitted that the higher officers of RPF are trying to save the accused officer.

### **Report of the Inquiry Committee**

The matter finally came up for hearing before the Inquiry Committee on 15.12.2022 at New Delhi. The complainant, Shri Jagpal Singh appeared in person while Shri Parveen Kumar, Inspector, RPF, Shri Chandra Mohan Mishra, Sr. Divisional Commissioner, RPF and Shri Chote Lal Yadav, Sub-Inspector appeared on behalf of the respondent.

Mr. G.C. Srivastava, Accredited Reporter forwarded a complaint dated 8.3.2019 of Mr. Jagpal Singh, Correspondent, Dainik Aaj, Gonda, U.P against Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander and Mr. Chhote Lal, Sub-Inspector, Railway Protection Force (RPF), Gonda for allegedly misbehaving and threatening him due to publication of critical writings. It appears that Mr. Jagpal Singh published a news item on 2.3.2019 in Dainik Aaj under the caption “अवैध टैक्सी स्टैंड लगा रहा आदर्श रेलवे स्टेशन के माथे पर कलंक”। Aggrieved by this Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander, (RPF) Gonda had sent two soldiers to call him on the same day. The soldiers misbehaved with him and directed him to meet Mr. Praveen Kumar. Due to paucity of time, he could not meet Praveen Kumar. According to Mr. Jagpal Singh on 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2019, when he was travelling by his vehicle to cover the news, the respondents stopped him and confiscated his vehicle and challaned the driver, Mr. Ashok Kumar. The respondents started using abusive language and also threatened Mr. Jagpal Singh and told him that he would be implicated in false cases. They threatened him that he will be thrown in front of a train. He has therefore, requested the Press Council to take action. Mr. Praveen Kumar, Commander and Mr. Chhote Lal, Sub Inspector filed their written statements and denied the allegations. They have stated that on receiving information in connection with parking of vehicles in no parking zone of Gonda Railway Station, the respondents went to the premises of Gonda Railway Station and found that four vehicles were parked in no-parking zone resulting in violation of Section 159 of the Railways Act, 1989. Mr. Ashok Kumar driver of vehicle bearing No. UP 32 DN 2797 owned by Mr. Jagpal Singh was one of such persons who violated the provisions of the Railways Act 1989. The said vehicle was parked in no-parking zone. It was being used to carry passengers. Therefore, it was taken into custody. Mr. Jagpal Singh had therefore to go to Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate, pay fine and get the vehicle released. The respondents state that allegations made against them are false and malicious. The Inquiry Committee by its Order dated 17.12.2019 directed Commandant of the RPF to conduct an inquiry and submit the report to the Council. However, the report was not submitted as directed. This lapse of the respondents was noticed by the Inquiry Committee in its Order dated 21.9.2022. A statement was made on that day that Inquiry will be conducted and report would be filed. Accordingly, Mr. Chandra Mohan Mishra, Senior Divisional Security Commissioner, (RPF) has submitted the report dated 20.10.2022 wherein

he has denied all the allegations made by Mr. Jagpal Singh. It is not necessary to reproduce the entire report. The report is on the same lines on which Mr. Praveen Kumar and Mr. Chhote Lal have filed their reply. He has referred to the statement of Mr. Ashok Kumar wherein he has stated that vehicle of Mr. Jagpal Singh was parked in a no parking zone at Gonda Railway Station for the purpose of receiving passengers. It appears that Mr. Ashok Kumar admitted the offence in the Court.

This case involves several disputed questions of facts which only a Court of law can finally decide. The Inquiry Committee therefore, recommends to the Council to dispose of the present complaint with a liberty to the complainant to approach the Court to get his grievance redressed. Since on the merits of the complainant's and respondents case no final observations have been made by the Inquiry Committee if the complainant approaches the Court the said Court will obviously decide the matter independently and in accordance with law. The Inquiry Committee, therefore, recommends disposal of the complaint in the afore stated terms.

### **Held**

The Press Council on consideration of records of the case and Report of the Inquiry Committee accepts reasons, findings and adopts the Report of the Committee and decides to dispose of the complaint with above said terms.

## **Press Council of India**

S.No.2

F.No.140/2020-B.

### **Complainant**

Shri Anam Ibrahim,  
Journalist,  
Bhopal,  
Madhya Pradesh.

### **Respondent**

1. The Chief Secretary,  
Government of Madhya Pradesh,  
Bhopal (M.P.).
2. The Secretary,  
Home (Police) Department,  
Government of Madhya Pradesh,  
Bhopal (M.P.)
3. The Director General of Police,  
Madhya Pradesh Police,  
Bhopal (M.P.)
4. Shri Irshad Wali, IPS,  
Deputy Inspector General of Police,  
Bhopal Range,  
Bhopal (M.P.).

### **Adjudication dated 28.2.2023**

This complaint dated 13.3.2020 was filed by Shri Anam Ibrahim, Journalist, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh against Shri Irshad Wali, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bhopal for allegedly harassing and registering false case against him due to publication of critical writings.

The complainant is stated to be an accredited journalist having disability, according to his submission as he is exposing the wrongdoings of the mafias through his reportings for the last 17 years he has been receiving death threats several times. The complainant stated that the Bhopal Police had provided two gunmen in the year 2017 & 2018 for his security. In the year 2019, Shri Irshad Wali joined as a Deputy Inspector General of Police in Bhopal and he started pressurizing him to stop news against the illegal Tabliqi Jamaat's trade mafia. The complainant has further stated that this mafia gang are connected with near ones of Shri Irshad Wali's in-laws, who lives in Bhopal. The complainant alleged that Shri Irshad Wali, DIG has started pressurizing and threatening him to stop publishing news against the mafia. The complainant alleged that with a view to defame him and to implicate him in a false case, Shri Irshad Wali made a video against him with the connivance of his female constable and made it viral on social media. In the video, he was described as a rapist and a terrorist by the lady. However, he does not even know the said lady. In this regard, he gave a written complaint in Police Station Shahjahanabad on 13.12.2019 and to ASP of Crime Branch on 14.12.2019. On 14.12.2019, his accomplice told him over the phone that the Crime Branch has caught that man who made the video viral and his name is Shri Saif Ali alias Yusuf. The complainant stated that the accused confessed that he posted the viral video only at the behest of Shri Irshad Wali. In this context, he argued with Shri Irshad Wali, due to which Shri Irshad Wali lodged three false FIRs against him on 17.12.2019 in Police Station

Shahjahanabad, Police Station Govindpura and Police Station Nishatpura. The complainant stated that Shri Irshad Wali searched and sealed his house in his absence due to which his wife and children became homeless during COVID-19 pandemic. The complainant alleged that Shri Irshad Wali under a conspiracy misled the Public Relations Department by giving false documents for cancellation of his accreditation. The complainant alleged that Shri Irshad Wali is indulged in criminal activity and misuses his position. He requested the Council to take necessary action in the matter.

The respondents No.1 to 4 were served with Notice for Comments on 16.7.2020. However, in the absence of response from their end, Notices for Statement in Reply were served on 31.8.2020.

### **Written Statement filed by Shri Irshad Wali, DIG, Bhopal**

The Under Secretary, Home Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal vide his letter dated 25.9.2020 has forwarded a copy of the reply dated 12.9.2020 of Shri Irshad Wali, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bhopal Range (City), Bhopal.

Shri Irshad Wali, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bhopal Range (City), Bhopal vide his written statement dated 12.9.2020 while denying all the allegations levelled in the complaint has alleged that the complaint is false and baseless. The respondent has further alleged that the complainant used abusive language in his complaint. The respondent has submitted that ten (10) cases are registered against the complainant in Police Station Junnardev, District Chhindwara and two (2) cases are registered in Police Stations Govindpura and Kotwali.

The respondent stated that he was selected in the Indian Police Service on 6.9.2004 and was posted in Bhopal on 23.1.2019 and before that he was never posted in Chhindwara or Bhopal. The respondent further stated that most of the offenses registered against Shri Anam Ibrahim were lodged before his appointment. In many of the cases, the complainant was punished by the competent court, therefore, allegations levelled against him are totally false and baseless. The respondent further stated that in fact, once he had declared a reward of Rs.10,000/- on 20.1.2020 while discharging his duties for the arrest of the complainant and annoyed by the same Shri Anam Ibrahim lodged the present complaint against him before Press Council of India, which is illegal. The respondent further stated that the complainant was expelled out of district vide Order dated 14.1.2020 passed by the District Magistrate, Bhopal. The District Magistrate expressed in his order that the complainant is a dangerous type of criminal and his fear and terror has created panic in the area. The respondent said that the complainant has described him as closely to the Tabliqui Jamaat for the purpose of creating sensation. Denying the allegation of viral video, the respondent stated that the police took action in the matter and arrested the responsible person. Denying all the allegations of the complainant of threatening him over phone and registering three cases against him, the respondent has stated that the complainant is absconding and due to which a reward of Rs.10,000/- was declared on him. The respondent denied the allegation of misleading the Public Relations Department and submitted that the said action was taken by the Public Relations Department. The respondent stated that the house of the complainant was searched in pursuance of order dated 7.1.2020 issued by the Hon'ble Court. The respondent further stated that the complainant is absconding to

evade arrest warrant issued by the competent court and if the complainant has not committed any offense then he should prove himself innocent in the court.

### **Counter Comments**

The complainant vide his counter comments dated 29.10.2020 while reiterating his complaint alleged that the respondent has filed a false, incomplete and fabricated reply with a view to mislead the Hon'ble Council. The complainant alleged that the respondent-Shri Irshad Wali, DIG took following actions against him within a period of seven days i.e. (1) registered three cases against him (2) declared reward of Rs.10,000/- (3) expelled him out of district by showing false list of crimes (4) issued search warrant against him (5) sealed his house during COVID-19 lockdown (6) pasted his poster on the shops and crossroads. The complainant further alleged that the respondent also misled the Hon'ble Court by showing the list of offences committed by another person and thereby tried to withhold his bail. The complainant stated that he has worked for several news institutions and also received appreciation letters from them. The complainant stated that the false list of cases registered against him as mentioned by Shri Irshad Wali belongs to another person and that person has confessed his crime before the Hon'ble Court. That person is a native of Junnardev, Chhindwara with whom he has nothing to do.

### **Reply from the Government of Madhya Pradesh**

The Under Secretary, Home Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal vide his letter dated 2.12.2020 forwarded a copy of the reply dated 20.8.2020 submitted by the Assistant Director General of Police (Vigilance), Police Headquarter, Bhopal wherein it was stated that on the complaint of Smt. Jyoti Deshmukh a case No.827/19 under Sections 452/327/506 of IPC was registered in Police Station Govindpura against the complainant and Akanksha Deshmukh. The respondent further submitted that a case No.736/19 under Sections 384/506 of IPC was registered in Police Station Shahjahanabad against the complainant for extortion of money in the garb of journalism. According to the respondent, after receiving information of criminal cases registered against the complainant in Police Station Junnardev, District Chhindwara, the information in this regard was given to the Public Relations Department and they cancelled the State Accreditation of the complainant. The respondent further stated that a case No.49/2020 dated 29.3.2020 under Section 153A/506 of IPC was registered against the complainant in Police Station Kotwali, Bhopal. At present the accused is absconding and efforts are made to arrest him. In addition, ten (10) cases are registered against the complainant in Police Station Junnardev, District Chhindwara. The respondent stated that the allegations levelled against Shri Irshad Wali, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bhopal is false and baseless.

### **Communication from the Complainant**

The complainant vide communication dated 12.2.2021 stated that on the direction of the National Human Rights Commission, the Director General of Police, Madhya Pradesh has provided him with security guard but despite that he was stopped to attend a press conference by the police on the direction of the respondent-Shri Irshad Wali.

The complainant-Shri Anam Ibrahim vide email dated 13.3.2021 stated that the National Human Rights Commission provided protection to him due to threats from the respondent, Shri Irshad Wali, DIG, Bhopal and the Hon'ble Supreme Court

has also registered suo-motu PIL No.23492/SCI/PIL/E/2021, decision of which is awaited.

### **Further Communication from Police Headquarter, Bhopal**

The Assistant Director General of Police (Vigilance), Police Headquarter, Bhopal vide further communication dated 26.4.2021 & 15.6.2021 while reiterating his earlier reply dated 20.8.2020 has stated that the complainant was expelled out from the borders of Bhopal, Vidisha, Sihor, Rajgarh, Raisen and Hoshangabad districts for the period of one year vide Order dated 14.1.2020 passed by the District Magistrate, Bhopal. He further stated that the allegations levelled against Shri Irshad Wali, DIG are false and baseless.

The matter was heard by the Inquiry Committee on 21.9.2022 and was adjourned with direction.

### **Communication from Police Headquarter, Bhopal**

Ms. Sushma Singh, Additional Director General of Police (Vigilance), Madhya Pradesh Police submitted reply dated 17.9.2022 during the hearing wherein while reiterating earlier reply dated 26.4.2021 has submitted that the complainant is indulged in many criminal activities and several cases are registered against him. The respondent has submitted that the complainant filed this complaint with an aim to create pressure on the police administration.

### **Copy of FIR dated 19.9.2022 filed by the complainant**

During the hearing of the case, the complainant Shri Anam Ibrahim provided a copy of online FIR dated 19.09.2022 addressed to Additional DCP, Crime Branch, Bhopal, DGP (MP, Police) regarding threats received by him on mobile phone from unknown number. It has been stated in the FIR that on 22.08.2022 an unknown assailants attacked the complainant and his Gunman, Shri Nihal Gupta, PSO who was injured in the incident. An FIR No.854/2022 under Section 353/323/506/34 was registered on 22.08.2022 at police station Nishatpura, Bhopal. It has been further mentioned that there was a hearing regarding his security before the Hon'ble High Court on 20.09.2022 in the petition filed against Mr. Irshad Wali. It has been stated in the FIR that a day before i.e. on 19.09.2022 when the complainant was in Delhi to attend the hearing of his case before the Press Council of India, the same day someone called him from an unknown number and threatened him with life and told him that his other hand will be amputated if he appears before the court.

### **Further communication received from the complainant**

Further, the complainant in his letter dated 30.10.2022 reiterated the incidences as explained by him above on the day of hearing. He has informed that an FIR No.0120/2022 was registered in Police Station Crime Branch, Bhopal, but to no avail. The complainant further submitted that on 29.10.2022 when he reached the Police Commissioner's office to submit the application, DCP, Ms. Vineet Kapoor at the behest of Mr. Irshad Wali pressurized him to withdraw the complaint and threatened to kill him. The complainant informed that DCP, Mr. Vineet Kapoor also removed his gunman.

## **Report of the Inquiry Committee**

The matter again came for hearing before the Inquiry Committee on 15.12.2022 at New Delhi.

The complainant is not present. Shri R.S. Belwanshi Assistant Inspector General, Police Headquarter, Bhopal, Shri Abhay Kumar, Advocate and Ms. Shagun Ruhil, Advocate appear for respondent Mr. Irshad Wali, IPS before the Inquiry Committee.

Complaint dated 13.3.2021 has been filed by Shri Anam Ibrahim, Journalist, Bhopal Madhya Pradesh against Shri Irshad Wali, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bhopal who is presently holding the post of Inspector General of Police, Bhopal for allegedly harassing and registering false case against him due to publication of critical writing. The complainant is a Divyang. The Committee has perused the complaint minutely and also the reply filed by Shri Irshad Wali. The complainant has made several allegations against Shri Irshad Wali and also against several other officers. Shri Irshad Wali has denied these allegations. The allegations of the complainant inter alia are that Shri Irshad Wali is instrumental in registering false cases against complainant; he has continuously harassed and ill-treated him; he has also been physically harmed and he fears that his life is in danger.

As stated earlier Shri Irshad Wali has denied all these allegations. The complainant is not present today, he has sent a letter in which he has stated that he is unable to attend today's hearing because though he had purchased train ticket Shri Irshad Wali and Zahir Khan have restrained him from going anywhere, saying that they will shoot him if he goes to Delhi. He has further stated that they have confined him in his home and have told the guards not to allow him to go anywhere till 15.12.2022 and therefore he is unable to reach the Press Council of India. There are some other allegations also in the said letter. The Inquiry Committee has been informed that Writ Petition No. 7364/2022 has been filed by the complainant on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 before the High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Jabalpur. In that Writ Petition similar allegations have been made and Shri Irshad Wali is respondent No.7, therein. Several Police officers have also been made party to the said writ petition. The complainant has prayed in that writ petition as under:

“The petitioner prays that this Hon'ble Court may kindly direct the respondents to provide immediate protection to the petitioner and his family members from some independent agency inter alia like the Central Reserve Protection Force (CRPF) which is outside the control and influence of the respondent no. 7 so as to safeguard the petitioners rights to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India, 1950”.

Thus, the complainant has sought protection from some independent agency like the CRPF which is outside the control and influence of Shri Irshad Wali so as to safeguard his Right to Life guaranteed under Article 21 of Constitution of India.

Since the High Court is seized of the petition the Inquiry Committee is sure that the High Court will consider all the allegations made by the complainant and the reply filed by the respondents and give appropriate directions, if necessary.

The matter is sub-judice and therefore does not warrant interference from the Press Council of India. The Inquiry Committee is however concerned about the grievance made by the complainant who is a journalist that he is confined in his home and there is a danger to his life. The Press Council of India has to protect and look after the safety of the journalists. Mr. Raguvendra Singh, AIG Bhopal is present in the Inquiry Committee meeting. The Inquiry Committee directs him to examine the grievance of the complainant and if found true, take immediate action to ensure his safety.

It bears repetition to say that the High Court will take care of all the grievances made by the complainant.

In the circumstances, the Inquiry Committee recommends to the Council to dispose of the complaint as the matter is subjudice.

**Held**

The Press Council on consideration of records of the case and Report of the Inquiry Committee accepts reasons, findings and adopts the Report of the Inquiry Committee and decides to dispose of the complaint being subjudice.