

News

Madhya Pradesh High Court rejects remedy for "journalists" who referred to a teacher as "chindi chor" in a news report under the SC/ST Act.



The accused said that because they had visited the teacher's school to cover a story on the unlawful recovery of student funds, a bogus case had been filed against them.

In a recent ruling in **Mukesh Kumawat v. State of Madhya Pradesh and Others**, the Madhya Pradesh High Court denied anticipatory release to two journalists who were charged with beating a female teacher and referring to her as a "chindi chor" or petty thief in a news report.

According to Justice Gajendra Singh, the case involving the female instructor who belonged to the Scheduled Caste (SC) category had a prima facie aim of humiliation or insult.

The intent is clear from the context, and the appellants assert that they are journalists (**although the Sardarpur, Dhar police station has stated that they are not recognized in M.P.**) and that they write news in the **Dainik Sach Media daily**, which was published from Jodhpur on March 26, 2025. The news story, which was published with appellant Mahesh Kumawat's reference, referred to respondent No. 2 as "**Chindi Chor**." If translated, the term "Chindi Chor" means "petty thief" or "myserly thief." As a result, it is assumed that respondent No. 2 intended to be humiliated or insulted, and the First Information Report's contents do not meet the requirements of the prima facie case test," the Court stated.

The defendants **Mukesh Kumawat** and Mohit Jat were accused of questioning the teacher during an exam for labeling a student as "private" due to low attendance in the March case.

The accused were prevented from taping the examination after they identified themselves as media.

After leaving the school grounds, they are accused of assaulting the instructor as she was leaving for her home. In addition, the accused allegedly used casteist epithets on her and blackmailed her.

The accused, however, contended before the court that since they had visited the school to cover a story on the unlawful recovery of funds from the pupils, a fake case had been filed against them.

The state attorney argued against the petition, claiming that because there was a prima facie case against the accused, the prohibition against anticipatory bail under Section 18 of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) (SC/ST) applied in this case.

Additionally, it was stated that an investigation of Jat's allegation against the teacher revealed no evidence against her.

The Court dismissed the applications for anticipatory bail after determining that there was a

prima facie case against the accused based on the record and submissions.

"The appellants are neither SC nor ST. Respondent No. 2 submitted the case, revealing that her caste is classified as Scheduled Caste, but the appellants' caste is unquestionably not. The accused were defended by advocate Mayank Mishra.

Rajendra Singh Suryavanshi, a government advocate, represented Madhya Pradesh.

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