

News

The Supreme Court requests the Center's answer to 4PM News's appeal against the YouTube channel's blocking.



According to the petition, the Center disabled the channel for "public order" and "national security" reasons.

On Monday, the Central government received notice from the Supreme Court in a plea contesting the blocking of 4PM News' YouTube feed on "national security" grounds.

Within two weeks, a bench consisting of **Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan** requested responses.

According to the appeal submitted by Sanjay Sharma, editor of 4PM News, the station was shut in response to an unreported directive from the Center citing "public order" and "national security." He asserts that no official blocking order has been issued to him.

He has maintained that in accordance with Section 69A of the Information Technology Act of 2000, blocking must be preceded by reasoned orders and a fair opportunity to be heard.

It is well-established law that the Constitution forbids the indiscriminate removal of content without a hearing. "Public order" and "national security" are not talismanic invocations to shield presidential conduct from criticism. Article 19(2) of the constitution recognizes them as grounds, but they must pass the proportionality and rationality tests. The plea says, "The Petitioner is deprived of his fundamental right to free speech and a fair hearing because the allegation cannot be challenged or remedied due to a vague reference to these grounds, without even revealing the offending content."

The petitioner called the Center's conduct a "chilling assault on journalistic independence" and asked that the banning order be revoked. The Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009, which allow blocking without notice or hearing, are also contested in the plea as unlawful under Rules 8, 9, and 16.

Advocate Talha Abdul Rahman filed the petition, and Advocates Shaz Khan and Muhammad Haider Rizvi drew it.