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Cont. Case (Crl.) No. 4 of 2024

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KERALA AT ERNAKULAM

PRESENT

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V

&

THE HONOURABLE MR. JUSTICE K. V. JAYAKUMAR

TUESDAY, THE 9TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025 / 18TH BHADRA, 1947

CONT.CAS.(CRL.) NO. 4 OF 2024

PETITIONER:

SUO MOTU

HIGH COURT OF KERALA, ERNAKULAM, PIN - 682031

RESPONDENTS:

- 1 P.C.JOSE
(GENERAL SECRETARY), HUMAN RIGHTS ASSOCIATION OF
INTERNATIONAL (HRAI), S/O CHACKO, RESIDING AT P.N.HOUSE,
POOCHAKKAL. P.O., CHERTHALA, PIN - 688526
- 2 P. R. SOMDEV
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, KARMA NEWS CHANNEL, 1ST FLOOR,
TC NO.38, SAROVARAM BUILDING, MARUTHANKUZH, Y,
KANJIRAMPARA THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, PIN - 695030
- 3 MR. VINCE NEDUMPARA MATHEW
MANAGING DIRECTOR, GALAXY ZOOM INDIA PRIVATE LTD.,
KARMA NEWS, CHIRAKKULAM ROAD STATUE, PALAYAM,
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, KERALA - 695 001.
- 4 MS. ROSILY
DIRECTOR, GALAXY ZOOM INDIA PRIVATE LTD., KARMA NEWS,
CHIRAKKULAM ROAD STATUE, PALAYAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
KERALA - 695 001.
[ADDL. R3 & R4 ARE SUO MOTU IMPEADED AS PER ORDER



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DATED 29/05/2025 IN CON.(CRL.) 4/2024]

BY ADVS.

SHRI.JIJO THOMAS, FOR R2

SHRI.LUKE J CHIRAYIL, FOR R3 & R4

SMT.M.D.BEENA

THIS CONTEMPT OF CASE (CRIMINAL) HAVING COME UP FOR FINAL HEARING ON 09.09.2025, THE COURT ON THE SAME DAY DELIVERED THE FOLLOWING:



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J U D G M E N T

Raja Vijayaraghavan V, J.

The instant contempt proceeding was initiated suo motu pursuant to a news report dated 05.05.2024, which appeared on Karma News, a Malayalam web-based news channel.

2. A recording of a press conference addressed by one Mr. P.C. Jose, as broadcast by the channel styled "Karma News," led to the initiation of contempt proceedings by this Court. The broadcast carried the caption that Mr. P.C. Jose is a "human rights activist," and alleged that, since he had instituted proceedings to make the provisions of the Indian Penal Code applicable to Judges, Magistrates, and other Judicial Officers, he was wrongfully detained in a mental asylum and false criminal cases were maliciously foisted upon him. In the course of the interview, which was telecast to an audience exceeding one million subscribers of the channel, Mr. P.C. Jose proclaimed that he had constituted, by himself, a so-called "constitutional court" and had issued an order to a learned Judge of this Court directing implementation of provisions of the Constitution. He further declared that, upon the said Judge's alleged failure to comply, he had purported to sentence the Judge to undergo Rigorous Imprisonment for a period of five years and to pay a fine of Rs.One Crore. He then proceeded to level reckless allegations that Judges of this Court render decisions at the dictates of politicians and religious authorities, and that some had even procured



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their appointments through payment of money. He proceeded to hurl abuse at the judiciary in general, branding the Courts as nothing more than "bootlickers of the British."

3. The above statements, made publicly and disseminated through a mass-media channel, are not only false and scurrilous but are also calculated to scandalise the Court, to lower its authority in the eyes of the public, and to erode public confidence in the independence and integrity of the judiciary. The tenor, content, and mode of dissemination of these allegations, on the face of it, constitute prima facie criminal contempt within the meaning of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.

4. This Court, by order dated 19.07.2024, noting that a prima facie case of criminal contempt has been made out, issued directions to the Registry to issue notice to the respondents, in terms of Rule 9(ii)(b) of the Contempt of Courts (High Court of Kerala) Rules under the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.

5. It was then brought to the notice of this Court that, insofar as the 1st respondent is concerned, he is a person who had undergone prolonged treatment at the Mental Asylum at Oolampara. In that view of the matter, we thought it fit not to proceed against him.

6. Insofar as the 2nd respondent is concerned, material was placed before this Court which disclosed the fact that he had been nominated as one of



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the Directors of Karma News Channel, only on 29.09.2024, much after the airing of the program.

7. Thereafter, when the matter came up for consideration on 29.05.2025, this Court, suo motu, impleaded additional respondent Nos. 3 and 4 as parties to the proceedings, based on information available on the official website of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, which disclosed that they are the Managing Director and Director, respectively, of Galaxy Zoom India Private Limited, which runs Karma News. Notice was then issued to the respondent Nos. 3 and 4.

8. In the order dated 29.05.2025, we had noted that irrespective of the status and competence of the 1st respondent, the News Channel broadcasting his views should have exercised editorial discretion and ought to have refrained from airing such scandalous, contumacious and manifestly contemptuous allegations against the judiciary or an individual judge. The freedom of the press, while sacrosanct, carries with it an equally weighty responsibility. Media platforms cannot become conduits for vilifying the judiciary or undermining public confidence in the administration of justice. Such reckless dissemination of derogatory and unverified assertions strikes at the very foundation of the rule of law and cannot be countenanced.



9. The respondents 3 and 4 have entered appearance through counsel, and they have filed I.A.No. 1 of 2025, tendering their unconditional apology and requested that their apology be accepted in absentia. The said request was rejected. They were directed to appear in person before this Court for consideration of their prayer to offer unconditional apology. In terms of the directions, respondents 3 and 4 have appeared in person.

10. In the affidavit filed by respondents 3 and 4, they have asserted as under in paragraph Nos. 3, 5 and 7:

"3. It is respectfully submitted that, there occurred a press conference that was hosted and led by the first Respondent in this case. The said press conference was hosted and conducted by the first Respondent himself wherein, the channel that is owned and managed by me got to be made aware regarding the same. It is the 2nd Respondent who is the CEO of the Karma News Channel on and from 17.12.2022 by way of the Order of Appointment. As myself and my husband who is the 3rd Respondent in this case are Australian citizens, who are residing at Australia since 2006 are not physically available to manage the affairs and to personally handle the conduct of the news channel, all the affairs of the news channel including the administration, day-to-day functioning and all the proceedings of the news channel is being conducted by the 2nd Respondent as authorised by myself and my husband by way of the Order of Appointment dated 17.12.2022. At present the 2nd Respondent stands terminated also. Accordingly, neither myself nor my husband had any kind of knowledge in regard to the coverage of the said news item that got to be published by the news channel. It was the



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2nd Respondent himself who had managed and conducted the entire activity which led to the publication of the news article. However, as myself and my husband are the directors of the said entity, we take responsibility on the act of the news channel. I am expressing my unconditional apology before this Hon'ble Court. I shall duly be vigilant on all matters and further publications by the news channel.

4. xxxxx xxxxx xxxxx

5. Our company Galaxy Zoom India Pvt. Ltd., respects and honours the courts and court officers, abides by the all its governing structure. Our company repeatedly declares and pledges its respect and honour for the courts and judges, repeatedly and is underlining the same. At the cost of repetition, I once again clarify that I shall conduct the affairs of the news channel with more vigilance and prudence. I once again express my unconditional deep apology from the bottom of my heart. I shall ensure that no such incident of this kind will ever happen with the news channel.

6. xxxxx xxxxx xxxxx

7. At the cost of repetition, I once again clarify that I shall conduct the affairs of the news channel with more vigilance and prudence. I once again express my unconditional deep apology from the bottom of my heart. I shall ensure that no such incident of this kind will ever happen with the news channel."

11. Under Rule 14(a) of the Contempt of Courts (High Court of Kerala) Rules, 1988, if the respondents tender an unconditional apology after admitting that they have committed the contempt, the Court may proceed to pass such orders as it deems fit.



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12. The respondent Nos. 3 and 4, who have appeared in person before us, have reiterated the statements contained in their affidavit. They have further assured that they shall ensure that no such incident will recur in future, for which necessary preventive measures have already been put in place.

13. After hearing the respondents as well as the learned counsel, we are satisfied that the apology tendered by respondent Nos. 3 and 4 is bona fide and in consonance with the requirements of Rule 14(a) of the Contempt of Courts (High Court of Kerala) Rules, 1988.

14. In that view of the matter, we accept the unconditional apology tendered by respondent Nos. 3 and 4, and they are accordingly discharged. We have decided not to proceed against the 1st respondent and have discharged the 2nd respondent, as he was not in charge and responsible for the day-to-day conduct of the business of Galaxy Zoom India Pvt. Ltd., which runs Karma News.

This Contempt Case is closed.

Sd/-

**RAJA VIJAYARAGHAVAN V,
JUDGE**

Sd/-

**K.V. JAYAKUMAR,
JUDGE**



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APPENDIX OF CONT.CAS. (CRL.) 4/2024

PETITIONER ANNEXURES

Annexure A	VIDEO CONTAINING THE NEWS REPORT DATED 05.05.2024 THAT APPEARED IN KARMA NEWS, A MALAYALAM WEB CHANNEL, SHOWS THE PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY MR. PC JOSE, PURPORTEDLY AT PRESS CLUB, ERNAKULAM (DOWNLOADED FROM YOUTUBE UNDER THE LINK "https://youtu.be/_4RFWqx3OJo?si=qFzg7XbBp5bBnVnr")
Annexure B	COPY OF ORDER DATED 20/06/2023 IN CRL. MC NO. 1282/2016.
Annexure C	CERTIFICATE U/S 65B OF INDIAN EVIDENCE ACT

RESPONDENT ANNEXURES

Annexure R2 (a)	TRUE COPY OF THE COMPANY INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS
Annexure R3 (A)	ORIGINAL OF THE AFFIDAVIT DATED 19.06.2025 FILED BY THE 3RD RESPONDENT HEREIN.
Annexure R3 (B)	ORIGINAL OF THE AFFIDAVIT DATED 19.06.2025 FILED BY THE 4TH RESPONDENT HEREIN
Annexure R3 (C)	TRUE COPY OF THE OFFER CUM APPOINTMENT LETTER DATED 17.12.2022 TO THE POST OF CEO KARMA NEWS CHANNEL ISSUED TO THE 2ND RESPONDENT BY THE 3RD RESPONDENT
Annexure R3 (D)	TRUE COPY OF THE IMAGING REQUEST DATED 22.07.2025 ISSUED BY DR. DINESH KODUMPILLI BHASKARAN, SOUTHERN RIVER SHOPPING CENTRE, SOUTHERN RIVER 6110
Annexure R3 (E)	TRUE COPY OF THE MEDICAL CONSULTATION RECORD DATED 12.04.2025 ISSUED BY PHC KOTTIYOOR IN THE NAME OF THE 3RD RESPONDENT.
Annexure R3 (F)	TRUE COPY OF THE MEDICAL CONSULTATION RECORD DATED 26.04.2025 ISSUED BY FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE, KOTTIYOOR IN THE NAME OF THE 3RD



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RESPONDENT .

Annexure R3 (G)

TRUE COPY OF THE APPOINTMENT DATED 06.06.2025
ISSUED BY THE ARMADALE HEALTH SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN
AUSTRALIA.

Annexure R3 (H)

TRUE COPY OF THE EMPLOYMENT LETTER DATED
14.04.2016 ISSUED BY GENERAL MANGER, MOUNT
HOSPITAL.