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ADVOCATE

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PUNJAB & HARYANA HIGH COURT

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Dated: 20.4.2020

Hon'ble Shri Manoj Kumar Parida, IAS,

Adviser to Administrator,

UT Chnadigarh

SUBJECT : Harassment of Shri Devinder Pal, a Senior Journalist of
"Punjabi Tribune" by SHO of Industrial Area, Phase-1 Police Station;
Demand for strict action against said Police official:

Dear Sir,

As you must have come to know by now that on Saturday, 18th April, Shri Devinder Pal, a senior journalist, when going to his office (The Tribune) was picked up by SHO of Industrial Area Phase-1 Police Station, for alleged violation of curfew, and was taken to the said Police station in a Police vehicle. He was carrying his identity card, as well as a Curfew Pass, but nothing could persuade the Police official, who humiliated him. He sent whatsapp messages and made phone calls also to his colleagues, who tried to intervene, but the Police official stuck to his arbitrary stand that the journalist was violating curfew. He was made to sit in the Police station for about one hour, before he was released.

I understand that the DGP, Chandigarh Police has marked an inquiry into the matter to DIG, Shri Ombir Singh Bishnoi, to ascertain the facts. My humble submission in this matter, as a Social activist lawyer, is that this is not a case which requires some prolonged procedural inquiry. It is an open and shut case. It requires no lengthy evidence. The Journalist was carrying a valid curfew pass, apart from his identity card. The presumption is that he must have produced those documents before the Police officials, as no sane person would withhold such vital documents when he is in trouble. His phone calls would show that he was crying for intervention by his colleagues and others for ensuring his rescue from the Police. I would therefore, call upon you to please ensure that inquiry into this matter must be completed in a day or two, and

the Police official, on being found guilty, be imposed exemplary punishment, as such an inhuman and insensitive behavior with a senior journalist, during the Covid-2019 crisis, when journalists /media men are playing a crucial role as saviors of the people, is bound to demoralize them, and the high handed behavior of one particular Police official is also likely to tarnish the otherwise clean image of Chandigarh Police,

With regards.

Yours Sincerely,

(H.C. ARORA)

ADVOCATE AND SOCIAL ACTIVIST