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Jagan Mohan not first Andhra chief minister to complain against judges

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

EVEN as the controversy surrounding Andhra Pradesh chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's letter to Chief Justice of India S A Bobde containing allegations against Supreme Court judge Justice N V Ramana continues to rage, an interesting letter written in 1961 by the then state chief minister D Sanjivayya to Union home minister Lal Bahadur Shastri has surfaced.

In the scathing letter sourced from the National Archives of India, Sanjivayya accused the then Andhra Pradesh high court chief Justice P Chandra Reddy of being "communal-minded" and acting at the behest of fellow judges Justices P Satyanarayana Raju and Jagan Mohan Reddi.

Sanjivayya said "the high court had fallen on evil days" after Justice Chandra Reddy took over as the chief justice. "The sad degeneration in every aspect is beyond description," Sanjivayya wrote, adding that "politics have crept into the high court where also groupism on communal and other lines has been predominant."

Sanjivayya alleged that in all appointments and transfers, Justice Chandra Reddy was guided by considerations of communalism and favouritism.

Citing an example, the then CM said "E Venkatesam, though he is average type of lawyer, has been recommend-

ed by the chief justice for appointment as high court judge" because he was "a junior under Mr P Satyanarayana Raju."

"On the whole, I hear sickening reports about these persons," Sanjivayya said and requested Shastri, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the chief justice of India to do justice to the people of the state.

Sanjivayya said the "chief justice Mr Chandra Reddy openly encourages his caste-men in the bar much to the heartburn of other members of the bar."



The degeneration in every aspect is beyond description... politics have crept into the HC where also groupism on communal and other lines has been predominant

D Sanjivayya in his letter to Lal Bahadur Shastri

"How can there be real national integration if such high placed dignitaries behave in such unbecoming manner and if they are allowed to continue like that? The confidence of the public will be shaken if the judiciary favours one group or community," the letter stated.

"It is not good for the institution or the state or even for himself if people lose faith on some account or other. I can assertively state that the confidence of public is badly shaken in his regime as Chief Justice," the former CM wrote and sought Justice Chandra Reddy's transfer.

"If he is not transferred from the high court immediately, the reputation thereof will be damaged beyond repair. I therefore strongly press for his transfer at once in the interests of the state and its people and the reputation of the high court itself," the letter stated.

'Letter contempt of court, bid to overawe judges'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court Bar Association (DHCBA) on Wednesday condemned the allegations of Andhra Pradesh CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy against Justice N V Ramana that he has been influencing the sittings of state high court and acting in favour of the Telugu Desam Party.

The association said the letter written by Reddy to the CJI, which unfairly and without reason casts aspersions on the alleged conduct of the SC judge and other judges of the Andhra High Court, is an abject and uncalled for interference in the due administration of justice by the high court judges.

"The writing of the said letter and its circulation in public domain is clearly a dishonest attempt at overawing the independence of judiciary and tantamount to contempt of the Hon'ble Court.

"The Delhi High Court Bar Association condemns this blatant attempt to shake the confidence of the public at large in the judicial institution which has been performing its duty of due administration of justice assigned to it by the Constitution of India," the association said in its resolution.

Supreme Court Advocates-On-Record Association has also issued a statement condemning Reddy's letter and has said that the act of circulating such a letter in the media lacks propriety and scandalizes the court.