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Remove unauthorised govt tags from private vehicles, HC tells state govt

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THE Karnataka High Court directed the state government to give a week's time to motorists 'misusing' names of government and governmental organisations on vehicle number plates, to have them removed. Justice R Devdas passed an interim order to that effect on December 11, while hearing a criminal petition filed by a resident of Mangaluru, questioning a case registered against 'misusing' the name of the Human Rights Commission.

The court said that the use of such names on number plates was a clear violation of provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. The court asked the state



to issue a public notice to the general public, cautioning all such organisations and individuals, who use such number plates, of consequences. It asked the government to direct them to remove the names from their vehicles in a week from the date of publishing the notice. The court adjourned the matter to December 18 to enable the government to file a report on the action taken in this regard.

Before issuing this direction, Additional Advocate General Prasanna Deshpande submitted that a PIL was also pending before the Division

Bench on a similar issue. Some organizations and individuals were also using/misusing such names on the vehicles and

the number plates in such a manner as to give an impression to people that the vehicle belonged to the state government or a governmental organisation, he argued.

Deshpande cited examples of names commonly used such as 'Karnataka Sahakara', written to misguide the general public (and traffic police) as a vehicle belonging to 'Karnataka Sarkara' which is the state government. Names such as 'POLITE' are being written on number plates or vehicles to portray as 'POLICE', he said.

The petitioner Ananda Shetty, a resident of Kulshekar in Mangaluru North police station limits, was allegedly using 'National Federation of Human Rights Council' on his number plate. It is a misuse of the name of the National Human Rights Commission.