

Supreme Court notice to Gujarat on social scientist's plea

The Supreme Court Monday asked the Gujarat government whether it was ready to pledge before it that it would not arrest social scientist Ashis Nandy for an article criticising the state's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

A bench of Justice Altmas Kabir and Justice G.S. Singhvi posed this query to Gujarat government counsel Hemantika Wahi while hearing a lawsuit by Nandy, challenging the registration of a criminal case against him by the [Ahmedabad](#) police.

An opinion piece written by Nandy and published in the Times of India Jan 14 had criticised Chief Minister Narendra Modi for the alleged hate politics and blamed the Gujarat middle class for his success in the assembly election in December.

This prompted an NGO to file a police complaint against Nandy, one of the country's leading political and social commentators.

Nandy last week moved the Delhi High Court, seeking annulment of the criminal case and protection against his possible arrest.

Though it issued notice to the state government on Nandy's petition, the Delhi High Court did not give him any protection against his possible arrest.

Nandy subsequently moved the apex court, seeking protection against his possible arrest in the case.

The bench asked if the state government was prepared to give an undertaking to the apex court that it would not arrest Nandy.

Wahi then said she had no proper instructions from the state government on this count and she could apprise the bench of the government's mind on the issue only after seeking instructions from it. She sought adjournment of the hearing for a day.

While adjourning the hearing till Tuesday, the bench also issued notice to the state government, demanding its formal stand on the question of arresting Nandy.

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