

11.08.2023

To

The Honourable President of India

Rashtrapati Bhavan,

New Delhi

**Sub: Bharat First: Call for Decisive Action Against
“NewsClick”**

Respected Rashtrapati Ji,

We are writing this letter as Indians who are deeply pained by the anti-India agenda originating from fake news peddlers and vested lobbies. A recent investigation by *The New York Times*, exposing the news portal NewsClick as an organisation funded by millionaire Neville Roy Singham, at the behest of China, is the cause at the centre of our pain and anguish.

The question that inevitably arises is should we not check such forces which are spreading misinformation and trying to interfere with our democratic processes at the behest of foreign powers? Can we allow such forces to let the voice of reason, of patriotism, of integrity be muffled for petty agendas? The news media portal, NewsClick, notorious for peddling fake narratives, has been found guilty of questionable links to a country openly inimical to India's interest, China.

The first reason for our anger is that we are giving too wide a leverage to all kinds of inimical forces under the garb of 'free press'. What such immunity which is not founded upon any law does is that it not only harms the national interest but also opens the door for tarring those legitimate organs of media who should unquestionably be free.

Factually, in early 2021, the Enforcement Directorate had raided NewsClick founder and Editor-in-Chief Prabir Purkayastha in connection with a money laundering case pertaining to foreign funding to the tune of about Rs 76.9 crore between 2018 and 2021.

It is crystal clear that Neville Roy Singham is associated with the propaganda arm of the Communist Party of China (CCP). Reportedly, Mr. Singham transferred a huge sum as FDI to NewsClick by purchasing its shares at an astronomical premium. NewsClick also received foreign remittances – huge

and unexplained sums – from several other countries under the dubious garb of 'export of services'.

The raids at NewsClick premises unearthed regular email exchanges linked to the CCP. These email exchanges were alarming since they involved not just journalists but also senior members of political parties in India who have access to state power.

It is also undeniable that large sums were paid to certain journalists who were complicit. All those who are today pretentiously fighting for freedom of the press, merely glossed over the truth even when our national agencies unearthed surrogate fundings by the CCP to build a 'media narrative' directly linked to Beijing's interests.

The second disturbing point is that we, Indian taxpayers, are being manipulated by fake news and subterfuge manufactured in China. The fact that a website based in India is actively working for China makes us concerned, distressed and angry.

The issues on which these forces were getting paid to build a media narrative in India are similar to the agenda of saving China's reputation when questions were asked of it in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. They are akin to the agenda of making China look good and India look bad with regard to how these countries managed the aftermath of the pandemic.

If this were not enough to shock the national conscience, the email exchanges prove that these media houses and paid mercenaries, in guise of journalism, were also engaged in building a pro-China narrative in India in the wake of the bloody Galwan clashes in which China's conduct is widely known.

We have no words to describe such people except as traitors. They were exchanging emails with a Chinese agent on how to get world maps changed so as to show undisputed Indian territory as either disputed or even part of China!

Third, and perhaps the most disappointing takeaway here is the undermining of the Indian democratic fabric. The so called 'free press' covertly funded by China has had a field day challenging our democracy.

NewsClick has had the temerity to portray India's elected government as fascists, while simultaneously being on the payroll of China. Worse, there have been worrisome instances of the Indian opposition supporting this

mouthpiece of China on social media where their senior party spokespersons speak in support. Other political leaders from India feature as partners in an NGO that funded NewsClick. This is an extremely sinister conspiracy.

In effect a significant section of the opposition machinery, a most valuable component in any democracy, is conveniently playing into the hands of an anti-nationalist agenda peddler. Now it is clear that it was no coincidence but by design that there was complete congruence on the coverage of the Rafale fighter jets deal in NewsClick and the agenda picked up by the opposition parties.

Today, when this nexus has yet again been exposed by an international daily, in other words by an uninterested, third party, also a member of the press, the aforementioned report in New York Times (NYT), we are still seeing several pseudo liberal forces cry foul. This propaganda machinery comprising a predictable nexus of some journalists, select media houses, some businesses, and NGOs is silently but aggressively targeting the democratic fibre of our nation. These paid media houses have been in the business of setting false narratives, at various levels to undermine our democracy – from seeding hate and discord between communities to whitewashing a nation which has the blood of our soldiers on their hands- the

modus operandi is of turning terrorists into activists, activists into nationalists and nationalists into traitors.

The tragedy is that the anti-national activities of these mercenaries are an insult to lakhs of media personnel at the grassroots who are actually working for making a positive difference.

The email exchanges that are in public domain establish beyond doubt that these people are not leaders but dealers. They are not columnists but actually fifth columnists.

It is high time that this manufactured consensus of anti-national, anti-democratic, and ironically anti-free press agenda is exposed and redressed.

We, the undersigned, are respectfully writing this letter to request you to direct the Union Government to initiate an enquiry forthwith, at the highest levels, to ascertain the full extent of this anti-India conspiracy and thereby bring these enemy agents to justice. No country in the world is indulgent towards treacherous conduct and neither should our Motherland.

We are also enclosing a copy of this letter to the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India for appropriate action. The oath taken when accepting any Constitutional office is binding, both legally and morally, on the incumbent to make all efforts to preserve and protect the unity and integrity of our country. The present case, where foreign agents have openly infiltrated our democratic space, is a wakeup call that it is essential to respect and uphold the binding oath of constitutional office.

With highest regards

Yours Faithfully

**Bhaswati Mukherjee, IFS
Former Ambassador,
Mobile: 8130104016**

**B.L. Vohra, IPS
Former DGP, Tripura & DG, SSB
Mobile: 9811881063**

(List of Signatories attached)

**Copy to:
Hon'ble Chief Justice of India**