

## PRESS RELEASE

A report has appeared in the Press that the Leader of the Opposition sought to lay siege to the area around Raj Bhavan to protest against the district visits of the Hon'ble Governor.

In this connection, attention is drawn to the Press release issued on a similar matter in December, 2017, stating the official stance of the Raj Bhavan explaining the legal provisions.

It is felt necessary to reiterate the correct factual position so as to avoid any legal misinterpretation. The institution of the Governor is that of a Constitutional authority who enjoys full authority and freedom to visit any part of the State. During such tours protocol dictates that the District Collector shall receive him and extend the prescribed courtesies. In the capacity of the Hon'ble Governor being the Head of the Executive, he enjoys unhindered freedom to meet and interact with officials of the State who are members of the Executive wing.

It is very important to remember that for the Hon'ble Governor to take the right decisions at critical times and for being able to send meaningful monthly reports to the Hon'ble President, he should be familiar with the features and characteristics of the various districts and also be aware of the problems faced by the people.

The Hon'ble Governor during the course of his district visits interacts with district officials who make presentations about the prevailing conditions. **In no case so far has there been an instance of the Hon'ble Governor criticizing the performance of any department or of giving a direction to any official.** To the contrary, district officials take delight in informing the Governor about their schemes, programmes and achievements. The use of the word 'review' by the Leader of the Opposition is an attempt to mislead the people. He is either ignorant of the law or attempting to overawe by threatening to besiege Raj Bhavan or block the roads leading to the Raj Bhavan.

The office of the Governor is protected under Section 124 of the IPC which reads as follows:

**“ Whoever, with the intention of inducing or compelling the President of India, or the Governor of any State, to exercise or refrain from exercising in any manner any of the lawful powers of such President or Governor, assaults or wrongfully restrains, or attempts wrongfully to restrain, or overawes, by means of criminal force or the show of criminal force, or attempts so to overawe, such President or Governor, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine. ”**

Any attempt to overawe or assault or use criminal force will be dealt with as per the law. During the times of the initial district visits the Hon'ble Governor was engaged in trying to inform the provisions of the law to the Leader of the Opposition and other members of the opposing parties by inviting them to Raj Bhavan. Sufficient time was given for understanding the law so as to change course and abide by it.

The Hon'ble Governor is vested with the responsibility of protecting and defending the Constitution and this involves ensuring that the State is run according to the provisions of the law. Those who do not understand the correct legal position or do not wish to abide by the law should desist from making comments or pursuing actions which are violative of the law.

For the sake of the common people who are benefiting from the district visits of the Hon'ble Governor it is added, that such visits will continue in the same manner in the coming months.

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Raj Bhavan, Chennai.  
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