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PRESS STATEMENT — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bengaluru, 24th August 2026

Response to the press release dated 24.08.2026 issued in the name of the Karnataka State Bar Council

My letter of 22 August 2026 to the Chairman of the Bar Council of India raised specific matters: the transfer of funds of the order of Rs. 150 crores to a newly registered trust whose Trust Deed no Member of the Bar Council of India has ever seen; appointments to the Council made without a single advertisement, selection committee proceeding or merit list on record; and the direction of 13 August 2026 against the graduating batch of NALSAR University, issued without any material being placed before the Council. The press release issued today does not answer any of them. It is addressed entirely to me. I therefore respond briefly, and only on facts.

- **The release does not come from an elected Chairman.** Shri V. D. Kamaraddi was not elected to the office he holds. He was nominated by Shri Manan Kumar Mishra. His own release describes him as the "administrator" of the Karnataka State Bar Council, awaiting the formal takeover of office by the newly elected Members. A person nominated by the very office-bearer whose conduct is in question is not an independent voice, and a caretaker nominee is not well placed to speak of electoral mandate. Nominations of this nature have been challenged elsewhere: in Kerala, Members of the State Bar Council moved a writ petition against such a nomination and obtained an order of stay. In Karnataka the nomination was not challenged only because the general elections to the State Bar Council had by then been notified.
- **I am not a "former member" of the Bar Council of India.** The general elections to the Karnataka State Bar Council have been held and the counting is complete. Until the new Council is constituted and elects its representative to the Bar Council of India in my place, I continue to hold office as a Member of the Bar Council of India and as its Co-Chairman. That the person who issued this release does not know the composition of the very body he purports to speak for is itself an answer to the question of how the release came to be issued, and on whose instructions.
- **On the assertion that I "endorsed the decisions of the Council without objection".** Shri Kamaraddi has never sat in a meeting of the Bar Council of India. He has no means of knowing what I said or did not say in those meetings. I opposed the resolution for transfer of the Council's funds to the new trust when it was moved, and I placed that opposition on record. The minutes of that meeting will show it. Let them be produced. I would welcome nothing more.
- **On the resolution said to have removed me.** Under the Rules of the Bar Council of India as amended, a State Bar Council has no power to recall or remove its representative to the Bar Council of India. That is precisely why no consequence followed from the resolution now relied upon. A resolution passed without the power to pass it is not a finding of inefficiency, and it did not, and could not, affect my membership. I did not continue in office at anyone's mercy. I continued in office because the Rules so provided.
- **On "inefficiency" and "unsatisfactory performance".** These are large words. I will not return them. I say only that the Bar of this State has had occasion to see for itself the manner in which the office now occupied by Shri Kamaraddi has been discharged in public functions before the High Court of Karnataka, including at the welcome of newly appointed Judges, and the advocates who were present have formed their own view of it. I leave the assessment of efficiency to the advocates of Karnataka, who will shortly express it in the only manner that counts, through their elected representatives.
- **On the charge that my letter is politically motivated.** I do not belong to, and have never supported, any political party. I have practised at this Bar for over three decades and I have

never sought or held office at the hands of any political patron. The charge is a curious one to receive from this quarter. Shri Kamaraddi is a well known adherent of a political party. He holds his office not by the vote of the advocates of Karnataka but by nomination, and that nomination was made by the Chairman of the Bar Council of India, who — as the very first paragraph of the release itself takes care to state — is a sitting Member of Parliament. A release issued by a political nominee, in defence of the office-bearer who nominated him, is not the voice of the Bar of Karnataka. It is the voice of the person whose conduct is in question, conveyed through a person obliged to him for his office. I leave the readers of that release to draw their own conclusions as to who introduced politics into this matter.

- **The substance remains unanswered.** The matters I have raised are matters of record — a trust deed, a set of minutes, a staff list, a direction issued on 13 August 2026. Every one of them is capable of being produced, or disproved, in a single day. Not one of them is addressed anywhere in the release. An institution that can answer a question by producing a document, and instead answers it by questioning the standing of the person asking, has told the profession everything it needs to know.
- **This is not a solitary grievance.** Five Members of the Bar Council of India have separately and jointly written to the Chairman requesting him to step down, on grounds including the amendment extending the Chairman's tenure, the conduct of General Council meetings, the treatment of elected State Bar Councils, and the non-disclosure of the records of the new trust. Those Members are not from Karnataka alone, and they too await an answer.

I have no personal quarrel with Shri Kamaraddi, and nothing I have said above is a reflection on him as an advocate. My concern is with the Bar Council of India, which is a statutory body holding funds contributed by lakhs of advocates. Let the Trust Deed be circulated to the Members. Let the minutes be produced. Let the staff position be placed on the Council's website. Let the accounts be audited by an independent firm empanelled with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. If that is done, the question of my standing will not matter in the least — and if it is not done, no press release will answer it.