

**MOHIT SINGH & ASSOCIATES**

**ADVOCATE, SUPREME COURT & DELHI HIGH COURT**

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To,

Date: 15/06/2020

Mr. Aroon Purie,  
Chairman and Editor-in-Chief,  
The India Today Group,  
FC-8, Sector-16A,  
Film City, Noida – 201301.

**Subject : Legal Notice for Defamation**

Sir,

I, Adv. Mohit Singh, write this in the time of grief to address the hurtful statement published by a news platform owned by the India Today Group, Aaj Tak.

The day, 14.06.2020, marks a day of lament for the Indian cinema and every Indian citizen who is connected with the Bollywood industry, either as an artist or as a viewer. We all mourn the death of the renowned actor Mr. Sushant Singh Rajput, who passed away on this day, at the young age of 34. Being an actor of high stature, this event was heavily covered by every news media platform.

Pursuant to this, your channel Aaj Tak, also being one of the news media platform covering the sorrowful event, flashed a news, at 07:27 p.m., displaying in Hindi, the following words :

“Aise kaise ‘Hit Wicket’ ho gaye Sushant?”

A picture of the said news flash has been attached along with this letter, for your reference. As **Annexure A.**

Vide the Mumbai police comments, it was informed that it is apparent that Mr. Sushant died by suicide in his apartment located in Bandra, Mumbai. However, no suicide note has been found to corroborate the statements and we all wait, with heavy hearts, for the post-mortam reports to provide clarity on this.

In this light, your channel, Aaj Tak, has, by commenting in the manner stated above, casted aspersions on the integrity of Mr. Sushant, who spent most of his career life in entertaining the Indian citizens by being a part of the Indian cinema industry, and has, in turn, grievously hurt the sentiments of every Indian citizen who is agonized by this loss.

By this comment, Aaj Tak has insinuated that the death of Mr. Sushant by suicide, is equivalent to that of a batsman in cricket who breaks his own wicket with his bat or any part of his person while playing the ball or setting off for a run. The careless use of such language portrays that the news channel, Aaj Tak, with its high viewership, has shed its responsibility towards the Indian masses and has reached the stage where it considers it right to demean the loss of an individual who had gained a fandom by his work and whose loss has sent a wave of shock throughout this country.

In addition to negligently commenting on an event of a critical nature, the news channel Aaj Tak, has normalised the act of suicide. The words used, carry the imputation that the act of committing suicide is an act of cowardice and is one to be looked down upon. Such doings of public platforms, especially one which has a high viewership, has the power of causing boundless pain to a large chunk of the Indian society. This news media platform, in its course of gaining viewership by sensationalizing the events, has forgotten that its reach is so wide that, if misused, it can wreak havoc. I, as an Indian national, who, like other residents/citizens of this

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country, relies on news platforms, expecting them to provide true and verified information as well as support in such times of grief, am appalled by the callousness of the news channel, Aaj Tak, and its Chairman, Mr. Aroon Purie, who, vide their statements, are promoting and spreading misinformation about the mental health issues prevalent in our society at present. It is not unknown that even Many Big personalities of India , mourned the death of Mr. Sushant which goes on to prove that the citizens of this country, who mourned this loss with these big personalities , are in need of kind words and support, and Aaj Tak owned by Mr. Aroon Purie have ashamedly done the very opposite.

It is in this light, that your aforesaid statement amounts to defamation under Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code ('the Code'), punishable under Section 500 of the Code with imprisonment which may extend to 2 years. There are so many leading case laws of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India which supports my arguments. By this Legal Notice, you are hereby required to retract the abovementioned statement, as well as any other statement of the similar nature published/displayed on your channel, and issue an unconditional public apology for your vexatious act. The said apology should include that you take full responsibility of the mistake committed by your channel and that the news of suicide is a mere comment by the police and that the post-mortem report is awaited. Further, you are required to desist from passing such careless and loosely worded statements/comments, in future, on any social platform owned by India Today, which has the capacity of hurting the masses residing in this country or the Indian society as a whole. The apology should be published and shown on your news channel.

In case you fail to comply with the requirements stated above within 15 days, from the receipt of the present legal notice, please stand advised that I shall pursue all possible legal actions against you in the appropriate courts of law, which legal actions shall be solely at your own risk, cost and peril.

Yours faithfully,

  
15/6/20  
**MOHIT SINGH**

ADVOCATE