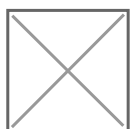


News

The Supreme Court releases an Andhra journalist who was detained due to a panelist's comments during a television program.



A panelist on Rao's KSR Live Show allegedly called Amaravati a "capital of prostitutes" where "only AIDS patients live."

Journalist Kommineni Srinivasa Rao, who was detained on June 9 for allegedly making disparaging statements during a chat program on Sakshi TV, was granted bail by the Supreme Court on Friday.

The statement was not uttered by Rao himself, and his right to free speech must be upheld, according to the Bench of **Justices PK Mishra and Manmohan**.

"Considering that petitioner himself has not made the statement and his journalistic participation in a live TV show needs to be protected and his freedom of speech is also to be protected, petitioner is to be released on bail,"

the judge said.

Rao is the host of Sakshi TV's KSR Live Show. According to reports, one of the show's panelists called Amaravati a "capital of prostitutes" where "only AIDS patients live." The incident prompted a complaint alleging that the remarks had offended women's feelings. Additionally, Rao was accused of giggling over the statement rather than objecting to it.

Rao's representative, Senior Advocate **Siddharth Dave**, stated today that he was unrelated

to the panelists' comments. Senior Advocate **Mukul Rohatgi**, speaking on behalf of the State, countered that Rao was aiding and abetting the statement's maker.

"He was laughing," commented Rohatgi.

The Court, however, was not persuaded by the submission.

"We chuckle when someone says something ridiculous. 'He's not saying it,'" said the Bench.

Rao's age was also brought up by the Court, which noted that he is a senior journalist who is almost 70 years old. He was then given bail.