



**EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION**  
**EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND ORGANISATION**

Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India

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**Ajay Kumar Singh, APFC**

Dated: 19.08.2016

To

The Editor – in – Chief  
The Times Of India  
Times of India Building  
Dr. D N Road, Fort,  
Mumbai – 400001

Subject: Complaint against the news item published in its  
edition dated 17.08.2016 with heading “ Labour

Minister’s OSD sacked over graft charges” - reg.

Sir / Madam,

At the very outset, to clarify the Locus Standi of  
the complaint, it is informed that the undersigned is General  
Secretary of the Employees’ Provident Fund Officers’  
Association, which is body of member officers of the EPFO,  
responsible to further the well being of its constituent  
members and Mr. Shayam Veer Tonk, whose has been  
mentioned in the above referred news item, is a member of  
this Association.

Before, I delve further in the details of the complaints it would not be impertinent to congratulate one of the oldest esteemed newspaper dailies for its feat to be one of the most trusted hundred (100) brands in India and one of the six (6) best newspapers in the world, as it is the credibility of this newspaper which has made itself questionable by publishing a baseless piece of news in respect of a respected and responsible officer, Mr. Shayam Veer Tonk, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner of Employees Provident Fund Organisation.

The undersigned believes that it is not wrong to expect that The Times of India, being a newspaper daily published within the political jurisdiction of a sovereign state of India is bound to follow the journalistic ethics as defined by the Press Council of India through its norms of journalistic conduct. Thereby it is duty of this newspaper daily to abide by the codes enumerated therein.

Attention of the Editor – in – Chief is drawn to the following statements made by the Times of India in the said news item. It states that:

1. Mr. Shayam Veer Tonk OSD to Ministry of Labour sacked. Whereas a clarification was published in your esteemed newspaper on the very next day wherein it was stated that “he has been serving as an informal officer on special duty (OSD) to Labour Minister Sh. Bandaru Dattatreya since 2 years & he has not been sacked from the post”. This contradictory reporting in itself shows lack of sensitivity & responsibility and thus, is in violation of code regarding accuracy and fairness which states that press shall eschew publication of inaccurate, baseless allegations.
2. It is alleged that huge sums have been paid as bribes by officers of the Rank of RPF – II, to avail better pay scales. As this news piece itself starts with “it is alleged”, hence it is again in violation of code / norms regarding caution against defamatory writings, which states that newspaper should not publish anything which is manifestly defamatory or libelous against any individual / organisation unless after due care and verification, there is sufficient reason/evidence that it is true and its publication will be in public good.
3. The bribes were allegedly paid to members of Central Board of Trustees of EPFO and the Officers of labour ministry. This is again an allegation without any reason / evidence maligning / affecting the credibility of institution having public interface and hence against the code of journalistic ethics.
4. Sources said that a CBI team visited the office of Central Board of EPFO last week. The undersigned has no information regarding that and finds it highly unlikely. This piece of news is again in violation of the code regarding caution against defamatory writings, which states that a newspaper cannot claim privilege or licence to malign a person or body claiming special protection and immunity on the plea of plea having published the item as gossip and that insertion of uncalled for and irrelevant statements likely of malign a person or organisation must be eschewed.

In the light of above facts, the whole news-piece seems to be a malignant design by unidentified vested interests, unfortunately and inadvertently, causing your esteemed daily to breach the code of journalistic ethics, to cause baseless defamation to certain officers of the Organisation. The piece of news, as has been published by The Times Of India is in gross violation of code of journalistic ethics.

Apart from the above mentioned specific objections, the undersigned would like to draw your attention to one more code of journalistic ethics as defined by press council of India in the words that it is necessary that the press realize its responsibility to the society due to the unique position enjoyed by it in being able to interact.....rather than indulging in giving credence to rumours and sensationalism.

Sir, it is evident that newspaper daily, The Times of India, has aspersed all baseless

allegations of inappropriate behavior and corruption upon Shri Shyam Veer Tonk, RPFC – II, on Regional PF Commissioners, Gr- II of EPFO, on the members of Central Board of Trustees and on the officers of the MoLE. Even in a clarification published regarding this in the newspaper daily published on 18.08.2016 none of the above mentioned baseless aspersions of inappropriate behavior and corruption has been retracted. This has caused grave sufferings to the person named in your baseless news-piece and irreparable loss to the social dignity of officers of EPFO and the Organisation itself. Such condemnable and irresponsible kind of news reporting cannot be taken as anything near to a light aberration in abidance of set code of ethics of Journalism.

Therefore the undersigned, in total understanding of his locus standi in this case and following the procedure as prescribed by Press Council of India vide Press Council's Powers, Practice and Procedures under Press Council Act, 1978, hereby write to file a complaint to get the remedy for the defamation, as mentioned above, caused by the news piece published in newspaper, The Times Of India, dated 17.08.2016. It is requested to retract the baseless allegations made in the referred news-piece within 7 days of the receipt of the letter. In the event of failure of your authority to redress the complaint, the undersigned shall be obliged to move to the Press Council of India and other appropriate authorities for lawful remedy in this regard.

It is expected that in future, your esteemed daily would not cause such errant aberration ever.

Yours Sincerely,



**(Abhaya Nand Tiwari)**  
**Secretary General**