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05. 15.02.2021

Heard, learned counsel for the petitioner, learned counsel for the informant and learned counsel for the State.

During course of hearing, it is observed that the learned counsel for the informant does not wear neck band at the time of argument, which clearly reveals that the said counsel has violated the dress code prescribed under the Advocates Act.

Every profession has certain dress code and people belong to particular profession are recognized by their attires. The lawyers' dress code is governed by the rules prescribed under the Advocates Act, 1961, making it mandatory for lawyers to wear black robe or coat with white shirt and white neck band. The Rule framed under Section 49(1)(gg) of the Advocates Act, 1961 prescribes the dress code for Advocates irrespective of designated Senior Advocates or other Advocates. However, during COVID-19 outbreak, while following the video conferencing mode, the Hon'ble Apex Court has directed the Advocates that they may wear plain white shirt/salwar kameej, plain saree with white neck band since they were appearing through virtual court. On the same footing, some High Courts across the country also invited the change of new dress code for lawyers to

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appear through virtual court. Because of medical exigencies, especially during pandemic, such changes were allowed. However, the etiquette, courtier and attire are subtle indicators of erudition and professionalism especially for lawyers and this strongly influences people's perception on the profession. The profession is solemn in nature and its profundity is complemented by its attire. Being an Advocate, he is expected to appear before the Court in a dignified manner with proper dress, even if it is a virtual mode.

This Court is duty bound to restore the dignity of the profession including the prescribed dress code. In view of the above, the learned counsel for the informant is directed to deposit an amount of ₹500 as cost with the Welfare Fund of High Court Bar Association and receipt thereof be filed before this Court by the next date.

List this matter one week after.

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S. K. Panigrahi, J.