

CAMPAIGN FOR JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND REFORMS

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CJAR welcomes SC intervention in Justice Yashwant Varma Case: Calls for fair inquiry and continued transparency

23rd March 2025

The Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR) welcomes the timely steps taken by the Chief Justice of India and the Supreme Court collegium in addressing the recent allegations concerning the reported discovery of unaccounted cash at the official residence of Justice Yashwant Varma—one of the judges of the Delhi High Court. In responding promptly and lawfully, both in letter and spirit, the Supreme Court sought a report from the Chief Justice of the High Court, constituted a committee of sitting High Court judges to examine the allegations and Justice Varma's explanation, and requested that Justice Varma be relieved of judicial responsibilities in the interim.

The Campaign also commends the Supreme Court for its considered decision to place in the public domain not only the nature of the allegations but also the report submitted by the Chief Justice of the High Court of Delhi and the response of Mr. Justice Yashwant Varma even as it has judiciously withheld by redacting those portions whose publication may impinge on confidentiality or fairness. These disclosures will quell wild speculation and rumour mongering and reassure people that the Supreme Court is seized of the matter. Transparency is key to ensuring public trust in the processes and integrity of the higher judiciary—an institution whose functioning has too often been marred by opacity and unwarranted secrecy.

The Campaign has advocated for greater transparency in the functioning of the higher judiciary including in the selection and appointment process, the system for allocation of matters to benches, the complaints and in-house enquiry processes and the disclosure of assets and liabilities of judges. The Campaign sincerely hopes this marks the beginning of a new and enduring standard in the context of judicial accountability, and that there will be no retreat from this path. We look forward to the court continuing this transparent approach in this case and all future incidents.