

JUSTICE BOBDE PANEL GIVES CJI CLEAN CHIT

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She said she was “extremely scared and terrified”. “I and my family members remain vulnerable to the ongoing reprisals and attack,” she said. The woman said she would consult her lawyers on the future course of action.

The woman’s apprehensions may stem from the fact that a three-judge Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra has already ordered a probe into claims about a “larger conspiracy” against Chief Justice Gogoi by a gang of “disgruntled” former Supreme Court employees.

The pending committee hearings did not deter Justice Mishra from lauding Chief Justice Gogoi in open court as a “CJI who wants to clean up the system”.

“No CJI had dared to take such an action, but this CJI has the courage to take a decision. This CJI is taking action after action after action,” Justice Mishra had stated to an assembled court room.

The committee had seen many unprecedented twists, turns and happenings over the past week. The roller-coaster hearings of the committee saw the woman “walk out” of the hearings after she was refused a lawyer. The committee chose to carry on *ex parte* without her and went on to examine Chief Justice Gogoi, which is a first in the country’s history.

The crisis has tested the Supreme Court since Easter day when several online websites published excerpts from the woman’s complaint made out in affidavit form and sent out to 22 judges of the Supreme Court. The woman had sought a fair and free inquiry into her allegations.

Within hours of the publication of the article, a Bench led by Chief Justice Gogoi himself presided over a suo motu hearing on the allegations. The hearing saw several disparaging oral comments made about the woman in her absence. The CJI had also indicated that a “larger plot” was on to besmirch the judiciary. The hearing later drew much flak with many claiming that the CJI had acted as “a judge in his own cause”.

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