

PRESS STATEMENT

20 August 2026 | New Delhi

**In Solidarity with Advocate General Amit Kumar and with Every
Woman Lawyer and Law Intern Who Has Ever Been Told to Stay Quiet**

The Lawyers' Association for Constitution (LAFC) stands in solidarity with Shri Amit Kumar, Advocate General of Meghalaya, against the resolution of the High Court of Meghalaya Bar Association and the Shillong Bar Association expelling him from their rolls for telling the High Court, during a hearing on the safety of women at the Bar, that the Bar had failed its women.

LAFC records what has stayed at the margins of this controversy: a young woman alleged sexual harassment by a senior advocate within the Bar's precincts and was allegedly offered money to stay silent. This is not the first such instance. The same advocate was accused in 2017 in a similar allegation involving a woman intern, yet no inquiry or institutional response followed from either bar association or the State Bar Council. That the Bar could convene an Extraordinary General Body Meeting within days to expel its Advocate General, but has shown no comparable urgency towards either complaint, speaks for itself. Articles 14, 15, 19(1)(g) and 21 of the Constitution guarantee women a safe, dignified workplace free from discrimination. These provisions form the constitutional foundation of the Vishaka guidelines and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act). It is pertinent that the two bar associations in question have not constituted the Internal Complaints Committees mandated by the POSH Act.

A submission made by counsel in judicial proceedings is protected by the doctrine of absolute privilege so that difficult institutional truths can be spoken without fear of reprisal.

Bar associations do not have the power in law to strike an advocate's name off the rolls. Under Section 17 of the Advocates Act, 1961, the roll is maintained solely by the State Bar Council, and a finding of professional misconduct can follow only from proceedings before the Disciplinary Committee under Sections 35 to 44.

The conduct of the bar associations in question constitutes an act of intimidation against the complainant and has a chilling effect, silencing those who represent her or speak for accountability.

LAFC calls for:

1. Withdrawal of the resolution dated 5 August 2026 by the High Court of Meghalaya Bar Association and the Shillong Bar Association.
2. A time-bound, confidential investigation of the intern's complaint of sexual harassment and the constitution of a POSH-compliant Internal Complaints Committee.
3. Accountability under ordinary criminal law for those responsible for the unlawful assault and public parading that followed.

LAFC stands with Advocate General Amit Kumar's right to have said what he said in court without professional reprisal, and with the woman intern whose complaint occasioned this entire controversy.

Issued on behalf of the Lawyers' Association for Constitution.