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PAPER CLIPPINGS

9

ಇಲಾಖೆ / ವಿಷಯ : DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Constitutional matters

ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: The Hindu ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 12/11/20

## Supreme Court grants interim bail to Arnab

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NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered the Maharashtra government to release forthwith Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami and two others on interim bail in an abetment to suicide case, saying personal liberty is increasingly becoming a casualty in the country.



Mr. Goswami was released late in the evening.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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"People are now put in jail for a tweet... We are travelling through the path of destruction of liberty. You may not like his ideology. Left to myself, I will not watch his channel. But citizens are sent to jail, High Courts don't grant bail. We have to send a strong message," Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, heading the Bench, orally observed.

The Bench, also comprising Justice Indira Banerjee, directed Mr. Goswami and two others to execute a personal bond of ₹50,000 each with the jail superintendent. The court said they should co-operate with the probe and not influence witnesses.

Mr. Goswami had appealed to the Supreme Court after the Bombay High Court refused him bail on November 9.

During the day-long hearing, Justice Chandrachud referred to a recent case of a

woman who was hauled up by the West Bengal government for a tweet.

"We are deeply concerned. If this is how human liberty is persecuted, the Supreme Court has to be there for every person... We are getting cases for personal liberty in multitudes... Our democracy is extraordinarily resilient. Our point is governments should ignore them [taunts on TV]. You think what they say makes any difference in the elections?" Justice Chandrachud observed.

The court asked the Maharashtra government whether custodial interrogation of Mr. Goswami was really necessary in a case of abetment to suicide in which a person may have taken his own life under financial stress.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, for Mr. Goswami, urged the court to transfer the case to the CBI.

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