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Ad from man accused in suicide case not proper: Achuthanandan

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Veteran Kerala CPI-M leader and former chief minister V.S. Achuthanandan said Friday that it was improper for the party organ to feature an advertisement by a man accused of abetting a company secretary's suicide.

Achuthanandan has, in the past also, taken a stance at variance with the party position.

"Yes, it was not proper for this to have appeared. Enquiries will be made," Achuthanandan said, while speaking to reporters.

The contentious advertisement appeared Friday, on the day when the three-day plenum of the Kerala unit of the Communist Party of India-Marxist is set to conclude in Palakkad district. The meeting has seen much discussion on morality in public life.

The advertisement, featured Friday on the front page of Deshabhimani, the party organ, is a greeting from the Surya Group of Companies and carries a picture of V.M. Radhakrishnan who heads the company. The Surya Group wished the party all success at the three-day plenum.

Radhakrishnan is charged by the Central Bureau of Investigation with abetting the suicide of a company secretary and his two sons,

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CPI-M central committee member and senior party legislator E.P. Jayarajan, however, reacted with anger to the flurry of questions on the propriety of the advertisement.

"What do you know of the plenum? There is really nothing wrong with the advertisement. You (the media) can conclude what you please, as is your wont," Jayarajan said.

Radhakrishnan began his career as a small time contractor with the Palakkad-based Malabar Cements and later rose to control all major contracts of the profit-making cement manufacturer. He also entered into close association with top political leaders, across parties, in the state.

Speaking to IANS, P.C.George, chief whip of the Congress, which leads the coalition government in the state, said the advertisement was a sign of the hypocrisy of the Communist Party of India-Marxist.

"They say the plenum is discussing how best to bring a new face to the party and to improve moral conduct, and their newspaper carries an advertisement of a 'murder'-accused man. No one can beat the CPI-M, because they say one thing and do something else," George said.

Meanwhile, Radhakrishnan claimed that there was nothing new in the reaction to the advertisement: "I give advertisements to all newspapers, like Veekshenam (Congress party organ), Janayugam (CPI), Janmabhoomi (BJP)."

"Please check the Deshabhimani newspaper, even as the CPI-M boycotts all programmes of Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, that newspaper carries all state government advertisements and even carries photographs of the chief minister," he said.

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