

Press Release

CJP intervenes for Peace in Ayodhya

Citizens for Justice and Peace, a human rights and legal resources platform dedicated to fighting communalism and discrimination, and for the rights of one and all, is now intervening in the Ram Janm Bhoomi – Babri Masjid case along with a galaxy of prominent Indians from various walks of life, from across the length and breadth of the country. CJP's plea is that the Supreme Court exercise its jurisdiction, not treat this matter like a narrow property dispute and instead recognise the ramifications of letting religion dictate the fate of a piece of land.

CJP implores the court to take cognisance of the meaning of the word Ayodhya, a compound word formed by adding together 'a' meaning 'without' and 'yudh' meaning 'war'. Ayodhya, a space that should exist for all, without conflict, has come to symbolise a vicious and bigoted conflict between communities.

This voice of peace-loving and conscientious citizens, held hostage to the conflict, has appealed to the Supreme Court not to treat the dispute as just a property dispute between the litigants but one that has a bearing on the fundamentals that this country stands on, its Constitution.

Interveners include close to three dozen Indians from across the country and from various walks of life, from Shyam Benegal, Aparna Sen, Om Thanvi, RB Sreekumar, Anand Patwardhan (Ram Ke Naam), Ganesh Devy, Medha Patkar, Aruna Roy, Anil Dharker, Ganesh Devy, Teesta Setalvad, Joy Sengupta, Cyrus Guzder, Ram Rahman, Sohail Hashmi, MK Raina, to Dr. BT Lalitha Naik and John Dayal. Others include: Suman Mukhopadhyay, Kiran Nagarkar, Kumar Ketkar, Kalpana Kannabiran, KL Ashok, KP Sripala, AK Subbaiah, Suresh Bhatt Bakrabail, Prof G Haragopal, N. Babaiah, Tanaz Dara Mody, Muniza Khan, Tanveer Jafri and Dolphy D'souza.

"The outcome of this dispute, perpetrated and violent, has the potential to affect the very foundations on which Indian democracy stands," says Teesta Setalvad, Co-founder and Secretary, CJP. "It is time for the wounds caused by this conflict to heal and for peace-loving citizens of all communities, young and old to speak up for an inclusive and forward looking solution. This matter concerns the very soul of India," she adds.

CJP filed its intervention application to the civil suit on Dec 1 and is likely to present its stand when hearing begins on Dec 5 at the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, it has uploaded an online petition on its website, seeking ordinary Indians sign up in support of Peace in Ayodhya. Citizens can read and sign the petition at cjp.org.in/peace-in-ayodhya

For more information, please write to info@cjp.org.in