

Citizens for Justice and Peace

Posts on social media and local newspaper clippings allege a conspiracy to change the name of the area from Gautam Nagar to Islam Nagar, stoking and provoking a Dalit-Muslim divide. This has a potential to flame up intra community passions. The truth of the allegations need to be addressed dispassionately

To
Justice HL Dattu
Chairperson,
National Human Rights Commission,
New Delhi

From:
Citizens for Justice & Peace,
Mumbai

Dear Chairperson Sir, Hon'ble Justice Dattu

UP, a densely populated and extremely poor state continues to simmer with the communal cauldron recently exploding in central UP's Kasganj, not far from Aligarh. Now it's back to Amroha district in western Uttar Pradesh, not far from the nation's capital, Delhi. Some newspaper clippings attached here as also linked to Facebook posts that are efforts to provoke a Dalit-Muslim clash in Gautam Nagar. The posts in social media allege that the boards naming the locality 'Gautam Nagar' are being changed to 'Islam Nagar.' One Prashant P. Umrao's post openly alleges that "1500 Dalits live in fear of conversion."

Repeated 'stories' of 'forced conversions' of Dalits to Islam, in this locality with a 42 per cent concentration of Muslim population, are being used to provoke and stoke communal tensions. The UP police, if aware of this, should take adequate steps, in advance. These posts are being made 'viral' on social media.

“42% होते ही 'शांतिप्रिय कौकौम' 'दलितोंपर मौत बत बनकर मं र मंडरा रहा है! जिग्नेश *** और सबकैत पां त पांडे , यही चाहते थे न तुम ?”

(With a 42 per cent majority, this community looms like a death warrant over Dalits.)

The posts are typically inflammatory, "Now the lives of Dalits living in Gautam Nagar are under threat and a so called 'peaceful community who's population has increased to 42 per cent is threatening to change the name of the locality from Gautam Nagar to Islam Nagar." Then these posts abuse those among secular politicians and young Dalit leaders who have taken a stand on communal harmony and unity.

“बकैत पां पांडे याद है है तुम्हें, तुमने पूछा था कि भारत में अल्पसंख्यक यदि बढ़ ही जाएंगे तो क्या होगा? आज तुम्हारे कलेजे को ठंडक ले तो खूबि मल र ल रही होगी! कश्मीर, करैना, मुर्शिदाबाद आदि के बाद अब गौ ब गौतमनगर में र में तुम्हारे सपनों का देश बन न रहा है!”

(Bankait Pandey, you had been asked what happens if the population of the minority increases?

Today you will be satisfied: your dreams are coming true in Kashmir, Kairana, Murshirdabad and now Gautam Nagar.”

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माया-*** से लेकर जग्नेश ***, और *** गांधी से 'पेटि** पत्रकार' जैसे दलितों के तथाकथित 'हमदर्द' 'शांतिप्रिय कौम' के टुकड़ों (अरबी-आईएसआई फंडे ड 'पाक-मनी') पर सपलते हैं ताकि दलितों का खून पीया जा सके और सउन्हें 'शांतिप्रिय कौम' में धर्मांतरित कराराया जा सके!"

(Maya..and Jignesh..., from Gandhi to –journalists, all the friends of this 'peaceful community' are funded on Pak money are happy that Dalit blood is sucked through conversions)

The posts go on to abuse the Muslim community for its stand on the Khilafat movement and also abuse it for its stand in Malabar, distorting history completely. Finally these posts and articles completely ridicule efforts at Dalit-Muslim unity, be it secularists, socialists, Ambedkarites and taunt the Muslim community in the name of being 'peace-loving.' In Kasganj recently, the social media had a hand in fomenting violence further. There is a huge responsibility on the UP Police's Cyber Cell, too. There should be an effort to get to the facts on the ground and curtail these efforts to stoke passions.

Hon'ble Sir, the CJP has received detailed grievances about these inflammatory posts. We urge that the NHRC urgently institutes an inquiry into these social media posts, urges the UP Cyber Cell to investigate the veracity of these posts to contain the efforts to fuel tensions and ensure that they do not spill over to other parts of Uttar Pradesh. Sir, as a civil rights group, committed to the rule of law and equality before the law as enshrined in the Indian Constitution, we urge that the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) takes *suo motu* cognisance of this under the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA).

Under Section 12 of the PHRA the NHRC can "(a) inquire, suo motu or on a petition presented to it by a victim or any person on his behalf [or on a direction or order of any court]1, into complaint of (i) violation of human rights or abetment thereof; or (ii) negligence in the prevention of such violation, by a public servant.

Under Section 14, (2) For the purpose of investigating into any matter pertaining to the inquiry, any officer or agency whose services are utilised under subsection (1) may, subject to the direction and control of the Commission:- (a) summon and enforce the attendance of any person and examine him; (b) require the discovery and production of any document; and (c) requisition any public record or copy thereof from any office."

Sir we are taking the liberty of enclosing the posts and references that we have received and have tracked from the Social Media. A quick google of 'Amroha' and the kind of provocations that are being unleashed become clear. All of these are not enclosed here. There appears to be serious efforts to foment tensions. We know that rumours and half-truths play a role, very mischievous and incendiary in a democracy. The truth of whether at all such forced conversions are being attempted, whether or not, locals boards have changed or blackened 'Gautam Nagar' to 'Islam Nagar', all these need to be independently verified and checked. In any case efforts to promote communal strife and tensions need to be nipped in the bud.

Sir, we urge that you look into this complaint at the earliest.

Yours Sincerely,

Anil Dharker, President

Teesta Setalvad, Secretary

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