



Date: April 16, 2020

To,

Ms. Jyothi Suresh Kumar

Legal Authorised Representative

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Subject: Complaint against Times Now channel's telecast of defamatory content and for running a smear campaign on Teesta Setalvad defying the ethics and fundamental principles of journalism in India

Ms. Teesta Setalvad, the Secretary of Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), is a well-known human rights defender in India and has to her credit a history of speaking up for marginalized, oppressed and persecuted people whose voices fail to reach those in power.

In recent times, Setalvad's NGO CJP has continued efforts to help people from across Assam during the complex and tedious National Register of Citizens (NRC) process. CJP reached out to people in some of the state's remotest areas, and helped them collect and submit necessary documentation to defend their citizenship.

However, despite these efforts to help Indian citizens, we at CJP are concerned about the smear campaign that your channel appears to be running against Ms. Setalvad to create a negative image of her in the eyes of the public. Your channel has resorted to inordinate and unwarranted labelling of Ms. Setalvad as a "Modi Baiter" to fuel jingoism in general and in utter disregard of journalistic ethics. While this has been happening for many years, the attacks have become particularly vicious of late.



An article and a video uploaded on your website dated March 9, speak about Ms. Setalvad's views on National Population Register (NPR) in a manner that wrongly and maliciously interpret her stand as being against the conduct of Census in the country. This despite the fact that she clearly said, "We do not want census work to stop, but our demand is that the census work should not begin until NPR is withdrawn."

<https://www.timesnownews.com/delhi/article/npr-suspicious-leading-to-nrc-shaheen-bagh-tutor-teesta-setalvad-demands-census-halt-till-npr-is-withdrawn/562801>

Times Now even broadcasted an entire show purely based on their own views, devoid of facts and extrapolating a self-created narrative that only maligns Ms. Setalvad's image as a human rights defender. This show titled "**Teesta Setalvad COACHES Shaheen Bagh protestors**" can be found on the following link, was published on February 19:

<https://www.timesnownews.com/videos/times-now/india/watch-teesta-setalvad-coaches-shaheen-bagh-protestors-plants-5-questions-to-protestors/53843>

In this program, Ms. Setalvad is being called, a "Modi Baiter" yet again, despite of her having made no statement against the Prime Minister at Shaheen Bagh. The program does not present any proof to show that the questions that were being read out to the protestors at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi, were in fact framed by Ms. Setalvad. Her mere presence and assistance to the volunteers at Shaheen Bagh have been twisted by your channel to portray that she is orchestrating the mediation process sanctioned by the Supreme Court.

Your channel has unapologetically made false allegations such as "she deputed people to talk to protestors"; the incident amounts to "contempt of court". In the program the journalist also makes utterly baseless claims such as "Teesta 'tuition' scuttles talks", referring to the mediation proceedings that took place in Shaheen Bagh with Supreme Court appointed mediators. Your channels' anchor, Rahul Shivshankar, even stooped low enough to term the apex court appointed mediators as "Modi haters" and it comes as no surprise that if he can label senior advocates of Supreme Court, he must not have given a second thought before labelling Ms. Setalvad.

You are also put on notice that failure on your part to satisfy the aforementioned, may result in legal consequences for your channel at the appropriate fora, at your risk to costs.

Authorised representatives of CJP

Anil Dharker, President

Teesta Setalvad, Secretary