

LET'S FIGHT
HATE TOGETHER

मज़हब नहीं सिखाता
आपस में बैर रखना



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CITIZENS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

We, the people of India are at a critical juncture. On one hand we have violent, divisive forces that seek to dominate our thoughts and emotions, promoting a narrow vision of our country through propaganda and coercion. In contrast, India embodies ancient wisdom, diversity, and a nurturing homeland. It thrives as a convergence of countless faiths that have coexisted for millennia. Throughout history, practitioners of these faiths have engaged in dialogue, love, and struggle, fostering a shared existence. We have acknowledged our internal disparities and advocated for change. However, they now aim to fracture us. Deliberate, brutal hatred is their chosen weapon, fuelled by baseless falsehoods propagated through official and unofficial channels. Our once peaceful communities suffer deliberate disruption. Meanwhile, urgent concerns such as livelihoods, hunger, education, health, the environment, and the future of our children are disregarded.

What can we do? Should we passively witness hate engulfing our lives? As swords and trishuls replace the rule of law, suppressing rational discourse, do we allow this reckless devastation of lives and properties to go unchallenged?

Shouldn't we unite and take action? Spot and stop hate in its tracks. We join forces within our neighbourhoods, housing societies and bastis, professions and workplaces. We become the vocal voices of reason who can dispel the gathering clouds of violence around us.

HATE HURTS HARMONY WORKS we say. We together demand that the Indian Constitutional vision, clear in its Preamble; EQUALITY, LIBERTY & FRATERNITY, yes communal harmony and peace in our neighbourhoods, is guaranteed to us, as citizens of free India. It's a simple concept that merely necessitates unity and an expression of our shared humanity.

STEP 1: HAVE FAITH IN EACH OTHER

Yes, our names are different and the way our hands join together in prayer are different. Yes, we seem to have different tastes in food and our festivals are different. But are we really so different? We have coexisted for millennia, our lives intricately intertwined. We are present in each other's languages, in the words we use, words that express love and anger, words we pray with. We can ask, is the khatti dal Hindu or Muslim? What about the music we enjoy? Here, Khusro's tabla harmonises with Saraswati's veena. This is our shared culture, our way of life. We know each other's names, respect each other's traditions, partake in joys and sorrows, dine together, celebrate festivals, and care for each other's children. We are neighbours, not foes, despite the politically motivated attempts to convince us otherwise.

ईश्वर अल्लाह तेरो नाम
सबको सन्मति दे भगवान

We must nurture and demonstrate our faith in one another. Trust and open communication are vital. Differences, inevitable as they are, should be resolved through dialogue, discussion, and even respectful disagreement. However, we must unequivocally reject the use of weapons or stones against each other. In Buddha's land, Gandhi's and Maulana Azad's India, and Ambedkar and Phule's Bharat, violence has no place.

Let us honour and embrace our divergences. And because we are more alike than different, loving our neighbours may ultimately mean loving ourselves even more.

STEP 2: BEWARE OF MANIPULATION

Is the news filling you with anger and helplessness? Are you only now learning about injustice perpetrated against your community that nobody knew about before? Are your religious sentiments being constantly undermined? By a minority?

Have you considered the possibility of a skilled organised team selling us propaganda? Are you consuming opinion as news? Could the 'urgent news,' 'undeniable truth,' 'real history,' and disturbing media, often very grainy, you received be FAKE NEWS, intended to provoke anger or sow division in your heart?

These days every household has at least one mobile phone, and almost everyone has a social media account or at the very least, uses chat services like WhatsApp. This is where we often encounter most of the hate. It can originate from faceless trolls, IT cell members promoting hateful hashtags, or influential leaders inciting violence through inflammatory speeches.

Be cautious of misinformation (false claims spread unknowingly) and disinformation (deliberately fabricated or hateful information) across various platforms such as phones, TV, conversations, and political gatherings. Combatting this propaganda follows a similar approach to the 'test-and-trace' method used for tracking the spread of Covid-19. The steps include:

1. Test the accuracy of the content:

Google it. Check multiple sources. If it's true then you may encounter it many times over. If it's fake, a number of fact checking websites online may have already called it out.

2. Trace it back to the source:

Who is sharing it? Where did they get it? Is the same person sharing the same kind of stories repeatedly? Why?

3. Isolate it to keep it from spreading further:

Just stop. Don't forward it. If it calls for violence or contains violence imagery, don't share it further. Break the chain.



Always be sceptical – don't share content unless you verify it

If a message evokes extreme emotions, fuels hatred towards minorities, increases anger or anxiety, and prompts a desire for revenge, it is likely a form of propaganda.

Creating Youth Groups and Peacemaker Initiatives that employ creative messaging, theatre, and music can help combat and eradicate the poison of hate. This approach not only dispels hatred but also empowers and strengthens our collective determination. Taking action and reporting instances of hate, which are in violation of Indian law (specific sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology Act), make us responsible and engaged citizens.

We at CJP can help you train yourselves to spot and counter this Hate. If you are concerned about the spread of such hate and would like to see action against perpetrators, then send the content to CJP at cjpindia@gmail.com or WhatsApp it to us on 7506661171 OR go to cjp.org.in/hate-hatao to REPORT HATE. We will help you fight it.

STEP 3: KEEP CALM AND TRUST THE CONSTITUTION

India has clear laws against hate speech and any attempt to incite disharmony, enmity, or hatred based on religion, race, place of birth, residence, or language is a punishable offence. Babasaheb Ambedkar's constitution offers us more clarity:

Article 14: Equality Before the Law (all Indians are equal in the eyes of the Law)

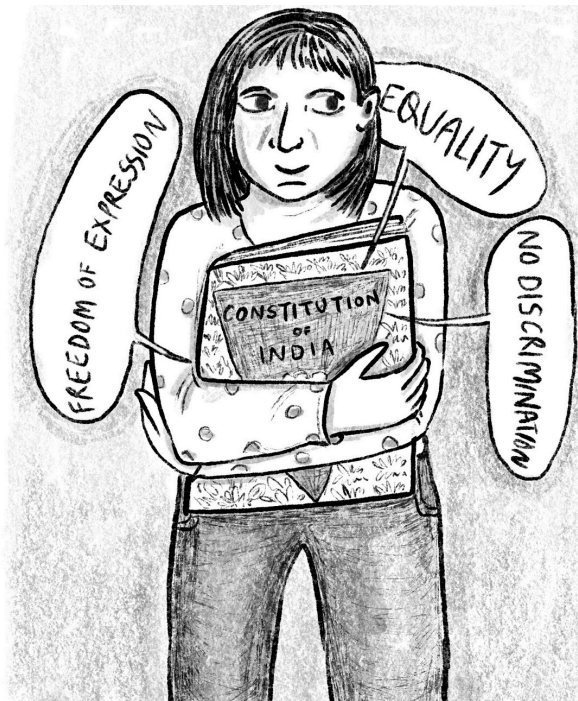
Article 15: Prohibition of Discrimination on Grounds of Religion, Race, Caste, Sex or Place of Birth (No discrimination in State and society)

Article 16: Equality of Opportunity in Matters of Public Employment

Article 17: Abolition of Untouchability

Article 19: Right to Freedom of Expression, Association, Movement and Freedom to perform Business

Article 21: Protection of Life and Personal Liberty (Right to Life).



These fundamental rights, guaranteed under Chapter III of the Indian Constitution, are non-negotiable.

Chapter IV of India's Directive Principles of State Policy aims for a just society with fair wages, decent work conditions, early childhood care, worker participation, and access to nutrition. These goals require our collective efforts. Our inspirations may vary, from religious to secular, but our focus should be on upholding principles of equality, freedom, dignity, and non-discrimination for all Indians. We must defend these values individually.

STEP 4: DON'T BE AFRAID, DON'T BE ANGRY

Do not be scared or incited by political operatives using religion as a tool. In India, we elect governments to ensure job opportunities and control prices, not to divide religious groups. Their role is to create laws, not break them. Remember, hate speech and coded messages can incite violence and embolden followers to take matters into their own hands. This display of violence aims to intimidate and silence us, sometimes even recruiting us for their hateful agendas. Stay fearless, avoid anger, and refuse to be provoked. Stay calm and help others stay calm too.

Violence often occurs despite efforts to prevent it. In such instances, our unity is tested. Will we watch as harm befalls our friends or will we defend them? If you witness abuse or targeting, especially towards minority groups, speak up. Stand together with your fellow citizens and show solidarity.

STEP 5: FORM MOHALLA COMMITTEES

At CJP, we lead unique Citizens Initiatives, like the Mohalla Committee, to enhance neighbourhood protection. These committees, comprising diverse residents, collaborate closely with authorities such as police, fire department, and municipality. In the event of violence, they serve as the first line of defence. By streamlining crisis interactions with local authorities, these committees foster peace and organise regular activities, ensuring effective communication. This approach not only dispels rumours but also helps prevent violence. Together, we can establish a robust system for neighbourhood safety and harmony.

STEP 6: CAPTURE IMAGES OF EVERYDAY HARMONY AND CO-EXISTENCE

Remember the powerful image of Police violence survivors offering roses to their offenders, or the smile that shines through tears? These images, videos, and stories have the potential to change the tide of hatred. Start a neighbourhood campaign to capture and share such moments of #EverydayHarmony and #EverydayCoexistence on various platforms, both physical and digital. Let your community and town be recognised for their citizens' creativity in promoting peace. We must unite in small and large groups, in public spaces, roads, parks, and neighbourhoods, to showcase our caring, diverse, and hopeful spirit.



Organise a communal feast, an inclusive Iftar, interfaith gatherings for peace, or distribute sheer korma on Eid. Exchange cards and flowers in schools, celebrate sisterhood with Raksha Bandhans, or have neighbourhood Santa Clauses distributing books and art supplies. Let our communities echo with acts of care and joy.

As we learn, care, and share, let's capture these hopeful moments. Together, we can identify and put an end to hate.

We, the resilient majority of India, encompass a diverse spectrum of people - the seekers and believers, the faithful and the sceptics, agnostics and atheists of India. We are its poets, philosophers, weavers, tillers, emperors and soldiers. This is our country, our land. We are its past, present and future. Together, we can combat the epidemic of hate and thwart those seeking division and control. Let's initiate change by fostering harmony in our thoughts, homes, and Mohalla's. By uniting, we can quell violence and prioritise harmony.



To learn more about how to set up different Citizens Initiatives (including a Mohalla Committee) or any other information pertinent for maintaining communal harmony, contact CJP at:

EMAIL: cjpindia@gmail.com/info@cjp.org.in

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**DM on Twitter/Facebook/Instagram:
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AND IT CAN BE STOPPED!