

## PEOPLE'S UNION FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS (PUDR)

The Secretary General  
National Human Rights Commission  
New Delhi

10<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Subject:** Request for NHRC to visit and enquire into increasing cases of violence and deaths in Tihar Jail under Section 12(c) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993

Hon'ble Sir

People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) would like to draw your attention to media reports on increased cases of violence and deaths in Tihar Jail located in the national capital, beginning this year. The issue of custodial violence is a serious one and in times of the Covid-19 pandemic when restrictions had been imposed by the jail authorities on weekly *mulaqats* between jail inmates and their families, and regular meetings between inmates and their lawyers, news of violent incidents and deaths in judicial custody have become all the more disturbing.

Given below is a list of violent incidents and deaths that occurred in the Tihar complex between January and September 2020:

- **Jan 31<sup>st</sup>** - Twenty-five year old man reported to have died at Deen Dayal Upadhyay hospital after he attempted to commit suicide ([PTI, 31 January 2020](#))
- **April 26<sup>th</sup>** - Woman named Kavita found hanging in Jail no. 6 alleged to have caused the murder of her parents-in-law ([PTI, 28 April 2020](#))
- **June 16<sup>th</sup>** - Violence between jail staff and foreign inmates in Jail no. 6, with reports of 25 persons injured ([Indian Express, 30 June 2020](#))
- **July 17<sup>th</sup>** - Inmate Ravi lodged in Jail no. 4, reportedly committed suicide. He was in custody for allegedly killing his mother-in-law. ([Times of India, 18 July 2020](#))
- **July 25<sup>th</sup>** - One Ugandan woman inmate died in DDU hospital on account of injury sustained in the violence that had occurred on June 16<sup>th</sup> in Jail no. 6. ([Indian Express, 8 August 2020](#))
- **June 29<sup>th</sup>** - Mehtab, an inmate of Jail no. 8, was stabbed to death by another prisoner Zakir. ([Indian Express, 30 June 2020](#))

- **September 20<sup>th</sup>** - Gulfisha Fatima, Inmate of Jail no. 6 complained of mental harassment and verbal communal abuse by prison staff in front of Mr Amitabh Rawat, Additional Sessions Judge, Karkardooma Courts. She was reported to have stated *"I have a problem in jail. Ever since I was brought here, I have been constantly facing discrimination by the jail staff. They called me an educated terrorist and hurled communal slurs at me. I am facing mental harassment here. If I hurt myself, only jail authorities will be responsible for it"*. ([Indian Express, 21 September 2020](#))
- **September 24<sup>th</sup>** - Sikander, an inmate was stabbed to death in Jail no. 1 by four other inmates. ([PTI, 25 September 2020](#))

PUDR is a democratic rights organization based in Delhi since late 1970s ([www.pudr.org](http://www.pudr.org)). Over the years, we have taken up several issues concerning violence and deaths in police custody as well as in jails, by way of reports, representations and press statements.

Through the present petition, we would like to request that a team of persons be constituted by the NHRC to visit Tihar jail and enquire into the above-mentioned incidents of violence and deaths. The NHRC is so empowered under Section 12(c) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. Representatives from organisations who have been engaged with issues of prisoners can be considered for nomination for such a team.

We look forward for a positive response.

Yours faithfully

Radhika Chitkara, Vikas Kumar  
Secretaries,  
PUDR