



# NHRC notice to Gurugram police chief over Assam maid assault

SPL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, Sept 6: Taking *suo motu* cognisance of media reports, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sent notice to the Gurgaon Police Commissioner over reports that a domestic help hailing from Assam was allegedly detained for several hours, stripped and thrashed by police personnel after her employers accused her of theft.

The Gurgaon Police has reportedly initiated a departmental enquiry into the incident and sent four policemen, including the SHO, to the police lines, the National Human Rights Commission was informed.

“The 30-year-old maid was detained for several hours, stripped and thrashed badly on allegations of theft by the police personnel of DLF-I Police Station, Gurugram, Haryana near here on Tuesday,” the NHRC said in a statement.

The NHRC has issued a notice to the Gurgaon Police Commissioner, seeking a detailed report, along with action tak-

en against the guilty police personnel, in four weeks.

The Commission in its notice observed that the contents of the media reports, if true, are a matter of concern as the “inhuman, barbaric and atrocious act”, allegedly perpetrated by police personnel inside the police station raises serious issue of violation of human dignity, liberty, life and safety of the victim.

It further observed that the media reports also seem to suggest “gross violation of duty by the public servants, destroying the fundamental edifice of the rule of law, which clearly ensures that no one shall be deprived of the safety of life and limb, much less, an outrageous act of dehumanising a helpless woman, whose modesty appears to have been trampled down by the police personnel”.

The woman was working as a domestic help in a house located at DLF Phase-I, Gurgaon. On July 31, a theft occurred in the house. The owner of the house suspected two women, including the do-

mestic help in connection with the incident. DLF Phase-I police registered a case against the woman and called the suspect to the police station for questioning at 9 am on Tuesday, the NHRC said, quoting the reports.

“Allegedly, the police officials took her to a room in the police station and removed her clothes and severely assaulted her fragile limbs. It has also been reported that her lower back was hit so badly that the skin had peeled off and as a result she was not able to walk,” it said.

It is further reported that around 9 pm, the same day, the woman called her husband to the police station. The police personnel asked him to take her home and bring her back the next day, the statement said.

The incident came to light when several NGOs of North-East after coming to know of her ordeal staged demonstration in front of the police station demanding action against the erring police personnel.



# Probe rape allegations in Gandhidham orphanage: NHRC tells Kutch collector

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THE NATIONAL Human Rights Commission has directed the police and the district collector to investigate allegations of sexual exploitation of children living in an orphanage in Gandhidham town of Kutch district. The NHRC direction has come based on a plea filed by a resident of Gandhidham town.

Vinod Khubchandani filed a complaint with the NHRC in January 2017, alleging that 34 children had gone missing since an NGO established the orphanage in 2001-2002 after the devastating earthquake in Kutch rendered many children orphans. NHRC then directed the Kutch collector to look into the complaint and file a report.

The Kutch collector served a show-cause notice on the NGO asking why action should not be initiated against it for not main-

**Vinod Khubchandani filed a complaint with the NHRC in January 2017, alleging that 34 children had gone missing since an NGO established the orphanage in 2001-2002**

taining records of the children. In its response, the NGO claimed that no child had gone missing and added that some of them had returned to their relatives. Having not received satisfactory answers, the Kutch collector brought the matter to the notice of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) of Gujarat, which then cancelled the registration of the orphanage.

The NGO then moved the Gujarat High Court against the cancellation of its registration, following which the order of the

CWC was stayed. The Kutch collector then filed a report with the NHRC in January this year, apprising the human rights watchdog of the country that the registration of the Gandhidham orphanage had been cancelled but also underlined the fact that no police case had been registered in connection with the missing children.

The NHRC sent the collector's report to Khubchandani in May this year for his comments. However, Khubchandani contested the contents of the collector's report saying the statements of parents and relatives of the missing children had not been recorded. He also alleged that a girl living in the orphanage had allegedly been raped and that she even become pregnant.

Taking cognisance of Khubchandani's allegations, the NHRC has now directed the Kutch collector and SP of Kutch East to probe these allegations. "The commission is of the opinion that the complainant has raised seri-

ous allegations which need to be thoroughly investigated by the Police. The Commission therefore directs SP (Superintendent of Police) Kutch, DM (District Magistrate/Collector) Kutch to file a status report regarding the allegations levelled by the complainant in his comments," the NHRC directive issued on August 26 states. The collector has been asked to respond within six months.

"I have credible information that one girl was allegedly raped in 2014 and that she had been taken to another orphanage for abortion," Khubchandani, who runs an electrical appliances shop said, speaking to The Indian Express on Friday.

Incidentally, a girl was allegedly gang-raped by two juvenile boys in the toilet of a school run by the NGO in August last year. The victims and the offenders were both among the children living in the orphanage which runs the school.