



All 17 inmates were allegedly kept together and forced to share toilet facilities at the Indapur sub-jail in violation of social distancing rules

NHRC notice to Gujarat Chief Secy over 'falsely implicating' lawyer

PARIMAL DABHI

GANDHINAGAR, AUGUST 30

THE NATIONAL Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a show-cause notice to the chief secretary of Gujarat asking him why the state government should not pay Rs 1 lakh as compensation to a human rights lawyer in South Gujarat who was "admittedly" falsely implicated in a criminal case by police in Surat district.

The chief secretary has been directed to submit a reply within four weeks.

The lawyer has been identified as Bilal Kagzi (39), a native of Kosamba village in Surat district. The NHRC passed the order dated August 17, 2020, while acting on a complaint lodged by Human Rights Defenders' Alert (HRDA) – India, a Tamil Nadu-based forum.

The HRDA had lodged a complaint in September 2019 on the basis of a communication it received from Kagzi and other sources. As per the complaint, Kagzi and seven others were booked for attempt to murder and other offences on August 12, 2019. "The complainant in this case (against Kagzi and others) alleged that all the accused attempted to kill him. But Bilal was at his home due to Bakri Eid and was nowhere near the place where the alleged offence took place... his name was inserted by the police in collusion with the complainant," says the complaint.

Following the complaint, the NHRC asked Surat's SP to file an action taken report, which was eventually submitted.

GUJARAT

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The HRDA had lodged a complaint in September 2019 on the basis of a communication it received from Kagzi and other sources. As per the complaint, Kagzi and seven others were booked in Kosamba village for attempt to murder and other offences on August 12, 2019.

"The complainant in this case (against Kagzi and others) alleged that all the accused attempted to kill him. But Bilal was at his home due to the festival of Bakri Eid and was nowhere near the place where the alleged offence took place... his name was inserted by the police in collusion

with the complainant as he is representing the co-accused in a number of criminal cases against the complainant," says the complaint.

Following the complaint, the NHRC asked Surat's SP to file an action taken report, which was eventually submitted.

Referring to the district police report, the Commission said, "It is reported that the allegation levelled against the victim was not substantiated during the course of inquiry and the victim had supply (sic) CCTV footage wherein he was not present at the alleged incident spot. The IO of the case had been directed to investigate the case and file the chargesheet with deletion of the name of the accused." The order further also said it has considered the report and there was an admitted lapse on the part of the police officials as the victim was falsely implicated.

Speaking with *The Indian Express*, Kagzi said, "Apart from my regular legal practice, I have also been fighting for the rights of Dalits, tribals and the underprivileged... as part of which, I got several complaints of police atrocities lodged. So, they (police officials in Kosamba) have been nursing a grudge against me."

"Also, there are two groups in my village fighting against each other for local dominance. They are involved in a number of criminal cases and I represent one of the groups. In the FIR on August 12 last year, the police connived with the opposite group who lodged the complaint and framed me..."

Gujarat Chief Secretary gets NHRC notice over 'falsely implicating' lawyer

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GANDHINAGAR, AUGUST 30

THE NATIONAL Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a show-cause notice to the Chief Secretary of Gujarat as to why the state government should not pay Rs 1 lakh as compensation to a human rights lawyer in South Gujarat who was "admittedly" falsely implicated in a criminal case by police in Surat

district. The Chief Secretary has been directed to submit a reply within four weeks.

The victim lawyer has been identified as Bilal Kagzi (39), a native of Kosamba village of Mangrol tehsil in Surat district. The NHRC passed the order dated August 17, 2020, while acting on a complaint lodged by Human Rights Defenders' Alert (HRDA) – India, a Tamil Nadu-based forum that functions "to initiate action on behalf of hu-

man rights defenders under threat or with security concerns".

The HRDA lodged the complaint in September 2019 after a communication it received from Kagzi and other sources.

As per the complaint, Kagzi and seven others were booked by Kosamba police in Surat district for attempt to murder and allied offences on August 12, 2019.

"The complainant in this case (against Bilal Kagzi and others)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Gujarat Chief Secretary

alleged that all the accused persons attempted to kill him. But Bilal was at his home due to the festival of Bakri Eid and was nowhere near the place where the alleged offence took place... his name was inserted and added by the police in collusion with the complainant, in order to nurse a grudge against him as he is representing the co-accused in number of criminal cases against the complainant," reads the complaint.

Following the complaint, the NHRC asked the Superintendent of Police, Surat, to file an action taken report, which was eventually submitted.

Referring to the report filed by Surat district police authorities, the Commission's order dated August 17 recorded, "It is reported that the allegation levelled against the victim was not substantiated during the course of inquiry and the victim had supply (sic) CCTV footage wherein he was not present at the alleged incident spot. The IO of the case had been directed to investigate the case and file the chargesheet with deletion of the name of the accused."

The Commission order also said it has considered the report and there was an admitted lapse on the part of the police officials as the victim was falsely implicated. "The state is vicariously liable for their act. The Commission considers this case to be a fit case for award of compensation, therefore, issue notice u/s 18a(i) of PHR (Protection of Human Rights) Act, 1993 to the Chief Secretary, Govt. of

Gujarat directing him to show cause within four weeks as to why the Commission should not recommend payment of compensation of Rs. One Lakhs only to the victim, whose human rights have been infringed due lackadaisical behaviour of police personnel," the order added.

Speaking with The Indian Express, Kagzi said, "Apart from my regular legal practice, I have also been fighting for the rights of Dalits, tribals and the underprivileged... as part of which I got several complaints of police atrocities lodged. So, they (some police officials of Kosamba) have been nursing a grudge against me."

"Also, there are two groups in my village fighting against each other for local dominance. They are involved in a number of criminal cases and I represent one of the groups in the court. In the FIR registered in August 12 last year, the police connived with the opposite group who lodged the complaint and framed me in the criminal case," he added.

"However, when the alleged incident happened, I was at my home and the footage of CCTV installed at my home proves that... Police did not consider the CCTV footage because they hold a grudge against me and want to harass me as I am responsible for a number of complaints of human rights violations, such as custodial torture, filed against them. I eventually had to secure anticipatory bail from the sessions court while taking the

strong defence of alibi on the basis of CCTV footage in the case," Kagzi added.

The lawyer also alleged that he has three other similar false cases registered against him by local police in which legal fight is on.

tion turns linen management into an opportunity to earn non-fare revenue. And with modern temperature control settings in AC coaches, the need for blankets could be eliminated, said an official.

A Railway Ministry spokesman, however, said no decision has been taken yet. "Currently, we are not giving linen because of the Covid situation. When the situation becomes normal, all these decisions will be up for review. It is hypothetical to say anything at this point," he said.

The Railways are also not serving cooked food on trains, opting for packed and ready-to-eat items instead. Sources said this practice too may remain "for some time" even after normal train operations resume. Some railway divisions are learnt to have started discussions with packaged food manufacturers and suppliers on the possibility of long-term contracts.

NHRC raps Gujarat Govt 'framing' rights lawyer

The NHRC has issued show-cause notices to the Chief Secretary asking why compe

Shishir Awasthi

New Delhi: In a clear case of police targeting human rights defenders, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has slapped a notice to the Gujarat Government asking why a Surat lawyer should not be compensated for being proven to have been falsely implicated in a criminal case.

The notice was recently served to Gujarat Chief Secretary Anil Mukim with a direction to submit a reply in 4 weeks.

The 39-year-old human rights lawyer, Bilal Kagzi, hails from Kosamba village of Mangrol takula's Surat district. The NHRC passed the order on



National Human Rights Commission has issued notices to the Gujarat Government in a Surat district case.

August 17, following a September 2019 complaint lodged by Human Rights Defenders' Alert (HRDA)-India, a Tamil Nadu-based fo-

rum.

The Kosamba Police had booked Kagzi and 7 others on charges of attempt to murder on August 12, 2019. The com-

plainant had alleged that Kagzi and others tried to kill him. But at that time, Kagzi was at his home for Bakri Eid while his name was falsely insert-

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The NHRC has issued show-cause notices to the Gujarat Government asking why compensation should not be given to Bilal Kagzi, a human rights lawyer from Surat, who was falsely implicated in a criminal case in 1993, under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, for a period of 1 lakh rupees since then. Officials on the ground have said that the compensation of a pe-

ed by the complainant. The cause of the criminal case against