

December 4, 2024

Global Rights Groups Urge Withdrawal of Criminal Cases Against Indian Activist Nadeem Khan and Fact-Checker Mohammed Zubair

Washington, DC

We, the undersigned organizations and activists based in the US and Europe, strongly condemn the filing of false criminal charges by India's police against Nadeem Khan, a prominent civil rights activist, and Mohammed Zubair, a well-known fact-checker. We call for the immediate withdrawal of these bogus charges, which aim to intimidate and harass individuals who are globally recognized for their fearless efforts to expose the democratic backslide in India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014.

The Delhi and Uttar Pradesh Police's actions represent blatant attempts to silence Khan and Zubair's courageous years-long work that has exposed human rights violations by India's federal and state governments, and anti-minority hate speech and violence perpetrated by Hindu extremist organizations and supremacist leaders.

The Delhi Police must immediately halt all harassment and coercive actions against Khan and his associates, ensuring adherence to due process and legal norms. Similarly, the Uttar Pradesh Police must cease their illegal targeting of Zubair for exposing hate speech and incitement to violence against India's Muslims. We urge the Indian government to initiate an impartial investigation into the misuse of power by the police in both cases and hold the responsible officials accountable.

As General Secretary of the Association for the Protection of Civil Rights (APCR), Khan has played a pivotal role in advancing justice through the courts, including securing Supreme Court rulings against illegal demolitions and discriminatory practices targeting Muslims. A co-founder of AltNews, a prominent fact-checking website, Zubair was freed by the Supreme Court two years ago after being jailed on fabricated charges.

The charges against Zubair stem from his sharing a video of a Hindu extremist leader, Yati Narasinghanand, making violent Islamophobic remarks. Instead of taking action against this hateful rhetoric, the police filed charges against Zubair. If convicted, Zubair could face up to seven years in prison. We urge the Allahabad High Court, which is currently hearing Zubair's petition, to throw out these charges against him.

The police complaint against Khan similarly accuses him of "illegally promoting enmity" in a video in which he is speaking of the atrocities being committed against India's

Muslims. Based on this pretext, Delhi Police attempted to forcibly detain Khan without a notice or arrest warrant—actions that constitute a gross violation of legal norms.

The pattern of targeting activists on fabricated pretexts reflects a systematic assault on the defenders of constitutional rights in India. These actions undermine India's democratic fabric and embolden extremist forces that threaten communal harmony.

We stand in unwavering solidarity with Nadeem Khan, APCR, Mohammed Zubair, AltNews, and all advocates of human rights in India who face relentless oppression for their vital work. We urge the international community to take note of these alarming developments and demand that India uphold its commitments to democratic principles.

Signed,

Indian American Muslim Council
Hindus for Human Rights
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations of North America
Justice For All (Save India From Fascism campaign)
Foundation The London Story
India Labour Solidarity (UK)
International Solidarity for Academic Freedom in India (InSAF India)
Association of Indian Muslims of America
World Without Genocide
International Society for Peace and Justice (ISPJ)
New York State Council of Churches
The Humanism Project, Australia
ICNA Council for Social Justice
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/delhi-police-book-human-rights-activist-nadeem-khan-for-promoting-enmity-criminal-conspiracy-9701104/>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3dx9gy0k9no>

<https://scroll.in/latest/1076272/delhi-police-trying-to-detain-activist-nadeem-khan-without-warrant-in-bengaluru-civil-rights-group>

<https://pucl.org/>

<https://countercurrents.org/2024/12/pucl-condemns-harassment-of-and-malicious-fir-against-human-rights-activist-and-national-general-secretary-nadeem-khan-of-the-apcr-by-delhi-police/>

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/karnataka/delhi-police-try-to-detain-civil-rights-activist-in-bengaluru-pucl-condemns-action>

<https://thewire.in/rights/nadeem-khan-association-for-protection-of-civil-rights-delhi-police-mr-sinha-fir>