



To
Sri Narendra Modi,
Honourable Prime Minister in India,
South Block, Raisina Hill,
New Delhi -110011

Date: 16th April 2018

Open Letter to Prime Minister of India

End Culture of Rape & Sexual Violence on Girls, Children & Women in India !

Honourable Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi,

Greetings from the National Council of Churches in India.

National Council of Churches represents around 14 million Christians in India from Reformation and Syrian Christian Traditions.

We write this letter at the darkest hour of our country when our Government is failing to protect girls, women and children. We express our deep anguish and pain, regarding the barbaric and heinous act of gang rape and murder of the little eight year old girl in Kathua and the rape of young 20 year old girl from Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.

We write this letter not merely to express our collective pain and anguish but also to express our rage regarding the increasing crime and sexual violence being committed on women and girls in India. The bodies of women and girls in our country have become battle fields where wars of hatred, religious and communal intolerance are being fought. Rape is being used as an instrument to create terror. The repeated targeting of women and children as a tool or agenda for personal, religious and political gain is nothing but an unforgivable crime against humanity. Politicization of religion is further leading to feminization of violence.

It is a shame that that our National Tri-Colour is used by 'mafias' and 'goons' or humans with political agendas, who have lost their conscience, during protest rallies to support the rapists instead of the victims, their families and communities.

The National Council of Churches in India condemns this horrific barbaric gang rape and murder of the little girl from Kathua and the rape of the 20 year old young woman from Unnao. We also grieve over the death of the father of the young woman from Unnao, and denounce the way in which the people in power brought his life to an end. The country is aware of the pressure the young girl is facing to withdraw her rape complaints against the perpetrator who is a political leader.

Sexual violence has become pandemic in our country and it is one of our greatest national problems and needs to be addressed immediately and strategically. Respected Prime Minister we cannot think of development and call ourselves a progressive country, unless we provide safe space for our girls, children and women to survive and live life without fear of being sexually abused from childhood.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN INDIA

Regd. Under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 (Regn. No. 13 of 1933-34) and under the Bombay Public Trusts Act 1950 (Regn. No. F/715[N])

QUADRENNIAL THEME: TOWARDS JUST AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

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TREASURER: Rev. Dr. A. G. Augustine Jeyakumar | GENERAL SECRETARY: Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad

We urge our Respected Prime Minister -:

- To take steps to punish the culprits and remove from Government anyone who is associated with hate crimes and hate speeches and punish those who are triggering communal hatred, or else violence will breed violence.
- To express solidarity with, and apologize and seek forgiveness from the family members of the little girl from Kathua and the young woman from Unnao on behalf of the entire country and to heal the wounds and memories of horror and pain.
- To take action immediately against the perpetrators because 'Justice delayed is Justice denied'.
- To assure women, girls and children of our country, as well as minority communities, their rights to life and dignity, and affirm and uphold our Constitutional Rights so that they can live life without fear.
- To end the culture of sexual crimes and rape by-
 - (a) Not just by making new laws but to see that laws are properly implemented without any bias.
 - (b) Changing the mindset of people by introducing gender justice and peace studies in our educational curriculum as mandatory from very early age.
 - (c) Creating national polices and strategies to empower our citizens, both rural and urban, to end gender-based violence. India is the fourth dangerous country in the world for women to survive. 53 percent of children in our country face sexual violence including boys; that means one out of two children face sexual abuse. Such violence is vicious, and this pandemic needs to be properly addressed by our Government.

We hope and pray Honourable Prime Minister that our voice is heard and steps will be taken to address these barbaric acts of sexual violence and crimes. We hope and pray that our Government is able to create and promote a culture of peace with justice.

Yours Sincerely,

Most Rev Dr. P.C Singh
President, NCCI

Rev Dr Roger Gaikwad
General Secretary, NCCI

Rev Moumita Biswas
Women Concerns Ministry, NCCI

cc: Mrs Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Union Minister of Women & Child Development