

Re: KADKOL village (Basavanabagewadi Taluk, Bijapur District) Social boycott and systematic starving of 93 Scheduled Castes (Holayas) families with hundreds of Children from 27th July 2006 by Caste Hindu Landlords as a punishment for exercising their basic “Right to Water” from public tank.

Dear Sir:

We like to bring to your kind attention the following facts for immediate action:

- 1) As reported by “The Hindu” Daily newspaper on 21st October 2006 and verified by our social workers team, 93 Scheduled Caste (SC) families, mostly landless laborers, are at a starving level including hundreds of children since the Caste Hindu Landlords (400 families) socially boycotted them on 27th July 2006 because they (SC) exercised their right to water from village tank due to shortage of water from their well. The Caste Hindu Landlords felt that their water supply got polluted as per Caste System and practice of Untouchability.
- 2) As a result they were fired from their landless laborer jobs, which barely paid 2 Kilo Jawar worth Rs.15 a day... Basic food and necessities were denied for sale. Under the dictate of Hindu landlords, neighboring village shopkeepers also doubled the prices of basic food items for them thus causing extreme hardship and starvation.
- 3) Area Police and Bijapur District administration were informed about the situation in advance. But they failed to find the permanent solution. In all the Taluq Basavanabagewadi ,even today after 59 years of independence, Untouchability is practiced in all its forms with vengeance.
- 4) In the Village of Kadkol, our social workers team also found another violation of Bonded Labour and Child Labour Acts. Out of 93 landless labourers, 15 of them were BONDED LABOURERS and out of them 7 were CHILD LABOURERS who are barely paid .
 - a. One Mr. Muniappa Akkoolkot, now 80, worked as a bonded labourer in Caste Hindu family from the age of 7 till now for nearly 70 plus years and barely paid .
 - b. One Mr. Shetappa Bamanjogi, now 12, had been working as a child labourer in the family of Mr.Sahebgaua Kesuraya Gunnpur, an Ex-Taluka Panchayat Member..
 - c. None of the Dalits were paid minimum wages as per Minimum Wage Act.
- 5) The SC (Holayas) were also threatened that they may have the same fate as SC in village “Sasanur”in 1946 where 50 SC (Holayas) were BURNT ALIVE and now no Holayas are staying there. Sasanur is 20KM from there.
- 6) We also confirmed that during the election period Holiyas as landless labourers have not been allowed to exercise their right to vote or they would lose their jobs, and their votes were manipulated as per wishes of the Caste Hindu Landlords.

- 7) Indian Constitution guarantees Equality, Liberty , fraternity and Social Justice. The practice of Untouchability is a Criminal Offence as per 1989 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. And 1995 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Rules (Prevention of Atrocities) .
- 8) Bonded Labour (System Abolition) Act 1976 declares bonded labourers as a serious criminal offence ,and Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986 along with October 2006 amended Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986 makes it a criminal offence to employ the children below 14 years of age.
- 9) India is also signatory to 6 United Nations fundamental rights Conventions such as
 - a. Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948,
 - b. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965
 - c. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1976
 - d. Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979
 - e. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984
 - f. Convention on the Right of the Child 1989.
 - g. ALL THESE INSTRUMENTS ARE VALID IN INDIA AND ARE FULLY APPLICABLE IN INDIAN JUDICIARY SYSTEM.

In the case of gross human rights violations of Scheduled Castes (Holayas) of Kadkol village, their dignity as a human being is violated, caste system and Untouchability is practiced and their enjoyment of equal rights is denied which is the violation of Civil and political rights, right to water has been denied and social, economic and cultural rights are violated, they are forced to starve including children thus depriving them of food which means Child rights are violated, women have to suffer the inhuman and degrading treatment which is discrimination against them as well as Torture, Inhuman treatment for all. In short there is a clear violation of all above stated Indian Acts as well as UN fundamental rights conventions.

The situation would explode if timely intervention by your government is not done and Holayas families are desperate for help.

Therefore we strongly urge you to meet the following demands of these marginalized Scheduled Castes as follows.

- 1) ALL LANDLORDS REponsible FOR THIS PRACTICE OF UNTOUCHABILITY SHOULD BE BOOKED UNDER SC/ST (PREVENTION OF ATROCITY) ACT.
- 2) ALL SC (HOLAYAS) FAMILIES NEED TO REMOVED FROM THERE AND REHABILITATED WITH 5 ACRE STATE LAND TO BE GIVEN TO EACH FAMILY FOR THEIR SERVIVAL.
- 3) ALL BONDED LABOURERS TO BE FREED AND EACH ONE TO BE COMPENSATED WITH Rs. 5 LAKH FUND COLLECTED FROM

EXPLOITING LANDLORDS AND CHARGED AS PER LAWS OF THE LAND.

- 4) Mr. MUNIAPPA AKKOLKOT WHO SERVED HINDU LANDLORD FROM AGE 7 TO 80 SHOULD BE COMPENSATED FOR 10 LAKH RUPEES AS HE CANNOT GET HIS LOST LIFE BACK AND FUNDS SHOULD BE TAKEN FROM THE EXPLOITING LANDLORD AND CHARGES TO BE LAID FOR VIOLATION OF BONDED LABOUR ACT.
- 5) ALL 7 CHILD LABOURERS HAVE TO BE FREED, REHABILITATED AND REEDUCATED TO BE THE CONTRIBUTING CITIZENS WITH COMPENSATORY FUND OF Rs. 5LAKH. EACH . PERPETRATORS TO BE CHARGED AS PER CHILD LABOUR ACT .
- 6) STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION SHOULD START CONTINUING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR THE WHOLE STATE ON A LONG TERM BASIS WITH ADEQUATE FUNDING “*AIMED AT ELIMINATING THE INSTITUTIONALISED THINKING OF HIGH CASTE AND LOW CASTE MENTALITY*” AS PER UNITED NATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS(refer Article 31, CERD Report, #CERD/C/304/Add.13-dated 17/09/96)

Pro-active and progressive state like Karnataka can lead the nation in creating a new India with social justice for all and for that all the credit will go to your government.

Please acknowledge this letter and let us know what steps you have taken to diffuse this explosive situation and bring the relief to more than 3-4 hundred suffering humanity.

Sincerely yours,

Full Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Signature: