

# **Statement (India): Feminists and Feminist groups condemn the horrific rape and murder of a young Dalit woman from Hathras, UP**

Tuesday 6 October 2020, by [Thousands of feminists](#) (Date first published: 5 October 2020).

CASTE AND PATRIARCHY ASSERT THEIR UGLY POWER AGAIN.

AND THE STATE STANDS WITH THEM AGAINST THE BETIS OF INDIA!

**Women's groups condemn the horrific rape and murder of a young Dalit woman from Hathras, UP.**

Stand with the family in their sorrow. Extend support, solidarity and rage.

Shame on the State that stands with the guilty. Shame on the State that increases the impunity with which upper caste forces who commit violence and hate crimes.

Demand immediate action against the state officials responsible for mishandling the case, destroying key evidence, and further traumatising the family and community.

14 years after the horrific Khairlanji case. 8 years after the brutal December 2012 case. Almost 3 years after the hideous Kathua case. And despite a continuing saga of countless other cases of brutal sexual assault and murders especially of young Dalit women the conscience of this nation does not seem to be shaken enough to do anything serious to stop the systematic targeting of women, Dalits and the poor. Worse yet, in almost every case, the actions of the state have further traumatised the victims and/or their loved ones, obstructed the cause of justice, and shielded the guilty.

The gory details, the visuals, the total caste and gender insensitivity with which the whole case has been handled by the powers that are supposed to protect people and implement the law, the violation of Article 21, that she was accorded no dignity even after death... the cries of the Hathras case leave us stunned, but raging. **After more than four decades of relentless struggles against violence on women, we understand that the marginalisation of women as determined by caste, religion, class, sexualities and other markers of powerlessness in society aggravate, make them so much more vulnerable - not just at the social level, but also at the hands of state agencies which are hand and glove with powerful, castiest, communal and other forces of society.**

The Hathras case is a blatant case of upper caste power and patriarchy operating through socially sanctioned violence and through state agencies. The details of the manner in which the police has wilfully manhandled the case - from their refusal to file of an FIR, to not providing the victim enough medical aid, to denying her rape to inhumanly cremating her in the middle of the night without the consent or presence of her parents and family members... raises so many questions on the conduct of the administrative authorities and the impunity given to police force by the ruling government. **All**

**these actions have resulted in destruction of key evidence. It is evident that the ruling powers have no interest in pursuing the cause of justice and holding the guilty accountable for their heinous actions.**

The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh remained indifferent until compelled to act. Not surprisingly, **crimes against women and Dalits have increased under his government, and police have been given unlimited powers without any accountability. Even as the tragic news of the death of the victim from Hathras was coming in, more reports of aggravated sexual violence on Dalit women and brutalising injuries have come in from Balrampur, Bulandshahar, Azamgarh, all in UP. The actions of the state in the Hathras case will only further strengthen those who continue to commit such crimes without any fear of punishment.**

We believe that a proper course of justice, fair investigation, holding the guilty persons and police and other state officials responsible are the only way forward. It is only fear of certain justice and accountability that can stop privileged men from committing such crimes. The state must not, we repeat NOT, push a rhetoric of death penalty for rape - for we have seen time and again that that is not the answer to stopping crimes, sexual or otherwise, anywhere in the world!

After all, in our own country, it is barely 6 months since the hanging of those held guilty of the December 2012 gang rape and murder in Delhi. Has it stopped the guilty of Hathras, or Balrampur, or Bulandshahr or Azamgarh... or anywhere else?

TOGETHER WE DEMAND:

- **Both, the criminals and negligent state officials who failed to fulfil their duty towards the victim be prosecuted for caste atrocities, by invoking SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act**
- The present UP government must resign. It has lost all moral ground to rule the state where women, people from oppressed castes and anyone raising their voice in protest are systematically and repeatedly being targeted.
- **Police officials who refused to file an FIR must be booked under the CLA 2013.**
- Police personnel responsible for cremating the victim surreptitiously in the dead of the night must be immediately dismissed and charged with destroying evidence.
- **All officials involved in covering up and attempting to destroy the case, be they the District Magistrate, Police, and other members of the ruling government must be held accountable.**
- **Instead of the SIT as instituted by the state government, we urge the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court to commission an independent and fearless enquiry against the guilty without any delay.**
- **Action be taken against the BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya who shared a video of the Hathras gang rape victim on Twitter and hence revealed her identity, in violation of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).**
- **The recommendation of the Justice J.S. Verma Committee, 2013 must be implemented to ensure that women, especially women from oppressed identities, are able to exist with dignity and without fear in this country.**

**The family of the victim must be provided with security and safety**

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**P.S.**

• Kafila. 05/10/2020 :

<https://kafila.online/2020/10/05/over-10000-feminist-groups-and-individuals-condemn-gangrape-and-murder-of-dalit-woman-in-hathras/>