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19th May 2020

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP

House of Commons

London SW1A 0AA

Email: keir.starmer.mp@parliament.uk

Regarding: A letter addressed to you, dated 08 April 2020 from Mrs Trupti Patel of Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB)

Dear Sir Keir,

A letter addressed to you by Mrs Trupti Patel dated 8th April 2020 has come to our attention today, which contains quite a few disconcerting issues that we as an organisation representing Indians and their interests would like to address through this letter to you.

Before we do that, we take this opportunity to congratulate you upon taking up the leadership of the opposition party in the parliament of the United Kingdom, we call our home. We are an organisation registered as International Network of Democratic Indians Abroad (I.N.D.I.A.), created by a union of Indians of diverse cultures, languages, religions (or no religion) living in the UK. The genesis of this organisation was natural and essential, as it was a moral and political responsibility of British Indians to separate the true identity of Indians from right-wing Indians whose sole agenda is to mirror Hindutva ideology (not Hindu ideology) in Britain. You would appreciate that the word 'Indian' reminds you of – Mahatma Gandhi, who was the personification of human values of non-violence, equality, social justice and tolerance. Mahatma Gandhi was an Indian Hindu. Gandhi was killed by one Nathuram Godse, who was a member of an organisation called Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) that is founded on Hindutva ideology. The two, Hindu and Hindutva are opposing ideologies. The Hindutva ideology is a political phenomenon that nurses the goal to annihilate the secular fabric of India and turn it into a Hindu-only country. The Hindu Forum of Britain is linked to RSS. We would like to seek an opportunity to provide reasonable evidential nuances to establish this before you, in another letter or a personal meeting.

The issues we have with Mrs Trupti Patel's letter are:

1. In the letter from Mrs Patel, she says that she would like to address issues of Hindus/Indians. Whilst in the same letter she acknowledges that HFB represents one million Hindus. There are mainly three issues with this claim-
 - a. According to The Migration Observatory in Oxford (2018) there are approximately 1 million people of Indian origin in the UK. Of these 1 million, 44% people follow Hindu religion. Therefore 56% Indians are clearly not represented by HFB.

- b. Of the 44% Indian Hindus, HFB does not represent all Indian Hindus. In Hindu religion there are 6500 castes, amongst which some vehemently oppose RSS Hindutva ideology and each caste has its own organization based on this. It is hard to believe that she is talking on behalf of all 6500 castes of Hindus. HFB is only representing Hindutva ideology of RSS. Labelling the organisation with the word Hindu is deceptive and utterly misleading. The RSS ideologically is an organisation of upper-caste Hindus that oppress Hindus of lower castes. These people do not associate with RSS for that reason.
- c. A large section of Indian Hindus are followers of Hindu ideology followed by Mahatma Gandhi and not his killers'. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that those progressive Hindus are not part of HFB. Many Hindus do not associate with RSS in the same way as most Christians do not associate with white supremacists or Muslims do not associate with ISIS or Germans do not associate with Neo Nazis!

Speaking of necessity, let me remind you, that when the hard-line Hindutva ideologist Hindus worked against the Labour party's interest during the General elections of 2019 in UK, British Indians in one of the country's most diverse boroughs (Harrow) warned them against attempts to divide voters in [the general election](#) along ethnic or religious lines. At that time, it was important to assure the Labour party that a large majority of Indians are still with the Labour party. We speak for this section of Indians who have supported the Labour party keeping in mind the ethics and values of the Labour party and the interest of the UK. We keep the interests of India separate from the interests of the UK.

- 2. Caste Legislation- This legislation is brought into existence to protect the Dalits who form a sizable section of Indian diaspora, from the hard-line Hindus who believe in and proactively practice caste system in the UK. This legislation is brought to effect to protect the interests of the citizens, and if that affects the 'image' of certain communities, then it is a clear indication for a dire need of introspection within that community. Until the inhuman discrimination stops to exist, we prefer to have the legislature over appeasement and phony image.

Those Hindus practicing this primitive, ghastly, and inhuman practice of casteism, must reform their practices such that not a single person has to go through discrimination and bullying for being born in a certain blood line. We unanimously support this legislature.

Some facts for you to consider- Caste plays an intrinsic role in Hindu religion. Caste system is a social hierarchy which keeps Brahmin (priestly) caste people on top of the hierarchy and looks down upon all other castes. All the castes have someone superior and someone inferior. This social structure has existed in India for the past 2000 years. Hindu religious books define the type of inhuman treatment the lower caste should be subjected to. As a result, the lower caste people have been brutally punished and inhumanly treated for 1900 years. Lower caste is considered impure and dirty. This thinking is deeply engraved in the minds of all Hindus for 1900 years.

After the democratic rights and laws were established in India, people of upper caste to a greater extent stopped showing their disgust towards lower caste in physical form because it is punishable by law. However, the show of nonphysical and behavioural disgust towards this community has never stopped. It is mainly by psychological and financial oppression, unequal access to opportunities, right to grow at workplace etc. This is the racism of Hinduism. Wherever there are Hindu communities in the world, there is a caste mentality, of disgust towards lower caste.

The caste legislation in the UK was brought into existence to protect the lower caste from becoming a victim of that disgust at psychological, financial, workplace, and equal opportunity level. Lower caste has been suffering discrimination and bullying till today in the country like the UK. It is not easy to change the mentality of people overnight but needs a long-term continuous effort in the right direction. The caste legislation is one such extraordinarily strong step to deter Hindu caste discrimination practices. We as INDIA support caste legislation whole heartedly.

3. We do not believe there were any attacks on Indians because they are Indians. Expressing dissent towards the policies of a specific government or the party ruling a country, does not make anyone anti-India. It is the same as speaking against the policies of the conservative government does not make anyone anti-Britain. When Barack Obama advised Indian Prime minister N D Modi to ensure minorities protection from communal hatred, he was not being anti-India. He was being humanitarian.

Clashes that took place between individuals, were not because the people were Indians. We completely dissociate ourselves from any such incidents, as we do not support any violence, mutual disharmony, or attempt to trample or curb the fundamental rights of any individuals or communities, including the right to protest and the right to express dissent for decisions made by governmental bodies. Members of our group were personally witness to the planning of a counter congregation by the members of HFB in front of the Indian High Commission, to stop people of Kashmiri origin from protesting and expressing their concerns.

We strongly object on behalf of all those Indians who believe that India is not just about Hindus (which makes that 56% Indians in the UK) and all those Hindus who do not subscribe to Hindutva agenda in the UK, at the use of the term 'Indian Diaspora' by HFB or any such organisation that only represents individuals based on the religion they practice alone.

In the context of the above point, we would like to insist that there is no such thing as Hindu-phobia in the UK. There may be Hindutva-phobia for the right and obvious reasons. Without an iota of doubt, we can say that, Hindutva-phobia is as appropriate as Nazi-phobia. We are sure, like the Indians represented by I.N.D.I.A. in the UK, you too will agree that the world would have been better place if Nazi phobia existed at the right time.

This letter comes to you from > 56% Indians

I would therefore like to reiterate that HFB do not represent Indians or as a matter of fact Hindus like myself.

On a positive note, we would like to assure you that we are ideologically with the Labour party and will continue to be so. We would like to meet you and welcome you to let us know how we can strengthen the party.

Please advise us on how this can be made possible.

With warm wishes for safety and good health.

Yours Sincerely



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