

Bihar Police are Over-Stepping the Limits!

It is apparent that the police in Bihar are over-stepping their limits and are attempting to cow-down the public. Two recent circulars issued by the police expose the over-zealous threat of the police, attempting to circum-scribing freedom of expression and trampling upon the right to free speech. It is also apparent that the Bihar police intend to curb the right to protest which is guaranteed by the constitution.

One of the circulars issued by the economic offences unit of Bihar police reads as "It has come to the light that certain people and organisations have been sharing defamatory and offensive posts on social media against the government, respected ministers, M.Ps, legislators and government officers. This is totally against the law and falls under the category of cyber crimes". This circular was issued to the principal secretaries and secretaries of various departments. this circular adds that those found guilty will be treated in accordance with law.

The tenor of the warning suggests that cyber crime wing may initiate proceedings against those who post offensive messages. However, it, is to be remembered that police cannot register FIRs for defamation, and it is not a subject of police investigation. But the Bihar state government justifies such a police encroachment that the proposed action would only be against rumour-mongering and insulting language.

R.J.D leader Tejaswi Yadav called the circular as an attack on freedom of speech, and he challenged to arrest him under this new order. He stated that Bihar police sells liquor, saves criminals and implicates the innocent.

By issuing the Bihar police have over stepped the limits-support of the state government do not give them any legal or constitutional sanctity. Dissent is legitimate and it cannot be trampled upon by police nor the muzzle those who criticise them or expose their corrupt ways. If this over zealous police threat is allowed, it will be reaching nearer to is making a police state.

The Bihar police have issued another circular which says that the police will issue a verification report about the persons character and also find out about his past history. This curcular also states that people indulging in violent protests and the road blockages will not be eligible for government jobs.

The irony of this directive is, the government of the very chief minister of Bihar who himself is a part of many protests, allowing police to issue such a notice.

With this circular they threaten people that those involved in protest activity will not be taken in to government jobs and contracts are annulled. This a mockery of the right to protest. It is appetent that police are allowed to decide the destinies of our citizens. This is nothing but pure and simple authoritarian trend of the rule.

In the same way the Madhya Pradesh government has made character certificates mandatory for getting a driving licence in the state. The state government issued an order to the effect. The state government claims that the move will help curb crime against women in the state and it will also ensure safety for movement of women in public transport. With such flimsy claims the state government intends to control its citizens.

The Uttarakhand police have decided to scrutinise social media behaviour of passport applicants before giving clearance for pass-ports. The police justify this decision stating that this measure is needed to stop growing misuse of social media platforms to, foment trouble and claim that the police stand against any thing that falls in to the category of anti-national activities as defined by our constitution. Thus in the very name of the constitution the police chose to trample on the freedom of expression and speech of the citizens.

On the other hand the Nagaland governor has directed the chief secretary to initiate criminal proceedings against state government employees indulging in seditious and subversive writings challenging the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country and posting them on social media.

The pattern of all these police edicts clearly shows that our rulers have chosen to cow down the public who dissent with the views of rulers and who criticise them and incarcerate them in the name of anti-national, seditions, subversive activities, and violently trample the right of freedom of speech

and expression supposed to have been guaranteed by our constitution and that they have decided to rule "democratically" by converting our state in to a totalitarian police state.

These trends warn about the immediate necessity of the protection of democratic rights in our country.

All democratic minded people and forces of our country shall immediately rise to this occasion and resist such police attempts to trample on the people's right of freedom of speech and expression.

* * *