

OMCT writes to Stalin on Ambasamudram custodial torture

The victims alleged that the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Balveer Singh, broke their teeth using a stone and pulled them out with pliers; put stones into their mouth; and struck them on their cheeks, causing severe bleeding

April 13, 2023 12:06 am | Updated 12:06 am IST - CHENNAI

The World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), a network of civil society organisations fighting against torture, summary executions, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detentions, has written to Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, expressing serious concern over cases of custodial torture reported from the Ambasamudram police sub-division, covering the three police stations of Ambasamudram, V.K. Puram and Kallidaikurichi.

Of the 10 cases of torture reported so far, one involved a young man, Arunkumar, and his 17-year-old brother, Santosh, both Dalits, who were arrested on March 10 for their alleged involvement in a couple of cases.

The victims alleged that the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Balveer Singh, broke their teeth using a stone and pulled them out with pliers; put stones into their mouth; and struck them on their cheeks, causing severe bleeding.

Other police personnel also assaulted them. They were allegedly threatened with further torture if they reported these acts to anyone, including doctors or the Judicial Magistrate.

“The OMCT is further informed that the Judicial Magistrate had not entered any of the injuries sustained by the survivors of torture produced before him on March 11, 2023. Neither were these injuries recorded by the medical officer of the Ambasamudram Government hospital,” OMCT Secretary-General Gerald Staberock said in his letter. He said the OMCT noted with regret that the Supreme Court directions in *Paramvir Singh Saini vs Baljit Singh & Others*, as regards the installation of CCTV cameras in all rooms in police stations, had not been implemented.

Internationally, the Government of India proclaimed that “the culture of torture is completely alien to Indian culture” and had made promises to ratify the United Nations Convention against Torture and amend domestic law in order to criminalise torture. Mr. Staberock urged the Chief Minister to pass suitable orders to immediately investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of the alleged torture through an independent investigation team.

He called for providing the victims with the highest level of medical and dental care at the State’s cost, and with compensation for the loss of days of employment due to medical treatment. He also called for the protection of victims and witnesses.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/omct-writes-to-stalin-on-ambasamudram-custodial-torture/article66730641.ece>