

# JAACT-T.N. seeks compensation, apology for Ambasamudram custodial torture victims

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July 19, 2025



## [The Hindu Bureau](#)

Members of Joint Action Against Custodial Torture – Tamil Nadu, through a press meet here on Saturday, sought compensation and apology for the victims of Ambasamudram custodial torture case.

Henri Tiphagne, Executive Director of People’s Watch, said that the incidents of the horrific crime committed by an IPS officer on the suspects had faded away from the public memory over the period of two years.

“When the police personnel who were responsible for the custodial death of B. Ajith Kumar of Sivaganga were suspended and arrested, why a preferential treatment for IPS officer Balveer Singh who’s offence was no less than theirs,” he asked.

While on March 29, 2023, Ambasamudram Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) was placed under compulsory wait and then suspended on January 22, 2024, the Tamil Nadu Government revoked his suspension, citing that he had already been under suspension for nine months, he added.

“Now he receives his full salary and since March 18, 2024, has been serving as Assistant Commandant (ASP), Tamil Nadu Special VIII Battalion in Tihar Jail, New Delhi,” he noted.

Mr. Tiphagne wondered whether the transfer to a place far away from Tamil Nadu was to hide the officer from the public and media.

As the first hearing in the Judicial Magistrate Court No 1, Tirunelveli, was held on December 13, 2023, so far, Balveer Singh had appeared for only 10 of the 22 hearings and the trial was yet to begin, he said.

Despite serious allegations, he and other police personnel continued in service without suspension or accountability, he charged.

He further noted the CB(CID) that investigated the four cases in connection to the custodial torture cases had withheld the caste identity of two other accused who belong to Backward Class (BC) to avoid invoking the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act in the charge sheet, though the initial FIR was under the SC/ST (POA).

The SC/ST Act, which was there in the original FIR, was removed in the charge sheet, merely because Balveer Singh belonged to the Scheduled Tribe status though his other co-accused were from the backward castes, he observed.

This clearly amounts to institutional cheating and suppression of material facts in an investigation by the CB CID, he added.

Further, he demanded compensation for all the victims as the pain they endured could have cost many of them their lives. “Fortunately, as the pus formation did not take place, their lives were saved,” Mr. Tiphagne stated.

Above all, as per the “UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law, 2005,” the State owed them an apology, he noted.