

TN human rights commission begins probe after cop smashes detainees' teeth

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CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2023 - 17:20

The Tamil Nadu State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) initiated suo-motu proceedings to investigate the alleged custodial torture by Ambasamudram Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Balveer Singh. A notice issued by the SHRC on Tuesday, March 28, said that it has taken

up the matter after seeing news reports on the incident. The Inspector General of police or the director of the investigation division of the SHRC has been directed to submit a detailed report within six weeks.

On March 26, three men from Ambasamudram recorded a video saying that they were tortured and their teeth were knocked out by ASP Balveer Singh. One of the men in the video, Chellappa, alleged that his brother was kicked and sexually assaulted by officers at the Ambai police station. A total of nine men were taken to the police station on March 10 and were allegedly subjected to custodial torture. The men in the video said that they were also made to take their clothes off and were beaten with lathis. In the video, the men also said that they were threatened by the police to not divulge details about their torture in court.

After multiple allegations of custodial torture came to light, the Tamil Nadu government transferred Balveer Singh and has put him on a compulsory waiting list. The move came after Tirunelveli District Collector KP Karthikeyan ordered an enquiry into the issue. Tamil Nadu-based human rights organisation People's Watch issued a statement regarding the alleged violence and demanded that criminal action be taken against Balveer Singh and the police officers involved. The organisation also emphasised that Balveer Singh must undergo a psychiatric examination before he is put back into any form of policing.

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