



PRESS CLUB OF INDIA

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PRESS STATEMENT

The Press Club of India strongly condemns the FIR against journalists of The Caravan under serious sections such as IPC 354 and 153(A) at the Bhajanpura Police Station in North East Delhi.

In August of 2020, the journalists concerned were reporting on allegations against the police officials at Bhajanpura PS in Delhi and on communal tensions in the North East Delhi area. During the course of their work, they had faced a life-threatening communal attack and sexual harassment by a mob in the area. At the time, the PCI had raised serious concerns about the attack on the journalists and demanded an FIR as well as a judicial probe.

Instead of holding the attackers to account, the Delhi Police not only delayed the registration of the FIR but has taken forward an investigation against the journalists instead. The details of the FIR against the journalists are completely counter to the facts of the incident, which were widely reported by the media. It is extremely concerning that the police did not inform The Caravan of this FIR for four years.

Most disturbing is the fact that the journalists who were reporting on allegations against the police were attacked and are now facing a serious FIR at the same police station. The same police has not followed up on the FIR by the Caravan journalists.

This is a clear attempt to suppress journalists and to throttle press freedom. The PCI extends its full support to the journalists of The Caravan who are being persecuted simply for carrying out their journalistic duty. We also condemn the biased and vindictive conduct of the Delhi Police.

We call on the Delhi Police to carry out its duty fairly and without bias, to halt the FIR against the journalists and to properly investigate the FIR by the Caravan journalists. We also call on the Delhi High Court to monitor the investigations so that power is not misused to attack press freedom.

Sd/-

Gautam Lahiri
(President)

Neeraj Thakur
(Secretary General)