



Countering Media Slander

Dear Friend,

The arrests of HH Senior Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam on the night of Deepavali, 2004 was preceded and followed up in a slanderous way by the self righteous media – newspapers, magazines and the ubiquitous TV. The stinking smell of a viciously orchestrated propaganda was all pervasive – trial by the media in collusion with powers that be – even as the prosecution was saying 'investigations are in early stages'! And the devotees of Sanatana Dharma, let alone the devotees of Kanchi Srimatam, were in a deep shock and pain. They were too numbed to respond – to do something about this barrage of innuendo and character assassination!

Soon their faith in the Srimatam looked up. Across the countries. From those touched to the heart by the activities of the Srimatam. For example, BBC whom we trusted to be fair went about a radio programme in the end of January, 2005 with the editor of an Indian magazine – him loosely talking, riding on his reputation for whatever. Some of the well-wishers and devotees communicated back strongly to protest the slander.

We, your local colony devotees too felt that we could do something to counter this falsity in the reportage. Yes, we seek an authentic and professional investigation into the whole episode to nail the real murderers.

So that justice is done. But how will one reign in the falsehoods spread by the media? By our friendly local reporters who perhaps do not understand neither the falsity nor the hurt that has been caused? We share with you a bunch of letters written by some of the citizens of the world who care for the values of humanity and the values of Srimatam... in short the values of Sanatana Dharma!

You too can do something. To start with express your thoughts in a concise way to your local media organization about something you did not like in the way they recently portrayed the Kanchi problem. And seek that fairness and integrity be delivered!

Yours sincerely

Concerned Devotees in your neighbourhood colony and locality.

Professor Farokh Merat complaints to BBC

A summary of the BBC Radio 4 interview with a Indian journalist on the Kanchi episode is available over the internet at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4225387.stm

B.B.C. Complaints
P.O. Box 1922
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United Kingdom

OBJECT(ION): B.B.C. Radio 4 program, "View from India," broadcast first on Friday, 28 January 2005 and rebroadcast on Sunday, 31 January 2005 at 8.50 a.m.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I was appalled by the "View from India" report about the Shankaracharya of Kanchipuram, Sri Jayandra Saraswati, and the institution of which he is the pontiff, Kanchi Shankara Matam.

Your guest speaker, the editor-in-chief of Outlook Magazine, happens to be one of the very people who have been relaying the lies and calumnies about the Shankaracharya and the Matam. Surely we are entitled to more objectivity from B.B.C. Radio 4.

Innuendos are one thing, facts another. If your guest had any pretensions of objective journalism, he could have, instead of churning the cesspool of slander and slime, alluded at least in passing to some of the following verifiable facts:

1) While on 11 November 2004 the Shankaracharya was performing religious rites in Andhra Pradesh, the Government of Tamil Nadu flew an armed commando there to arrest him. The shocking manner of the arrest of one of the highest icons of the Hindus was justified by the fact that he was going to flee to Nepal, more than one thousand miles away, in a helicopter! The 70-year-old diabetic was directly thrown into prison on charges of murder and subsequently refused bail by all the courts in Tamil Nadu.

But when after two months the bail appeal finally reached the Supreme Court in Delhi, the latter declared that there was not the least prima facie evidence justifying the refusal of bail, no material evidence, and no proof of an evident motive for the accused to commit such a crime. Nor had the prosecution any witnesses. Among the 25 accused, two were said to have confessed to the crime and stated that it was ordered by Sri Jayandra Saraswati. But they denied this before the court, saying that they had been tortured by the police and forced to undersign empty pages of paper.

2) The very day Sri Jayandra was let out, the Tamil Nadu Government thrust into prison the junior pontiff of the Kanchi Matam, Sri Vijayandra Saraswati, and refused him bail under the very same charges which, according to the Supreme Court, did not constitute sufficient reason for the refusal of bail to the senior Pontiff.

3) Determined to get the two Shankaracharyas out of the way and seize the Matam's vast assets, the Tamil Nadu Government and police tried a different strategy. Under a dubiously overstretched interpretation of the "Goondas Act," any person who has three distinct charges against him is no longer eligible for bail. So they dug up two older cases of assault and battery and tried to foist them upon the Shankaracharyas. The accused having filed for bail, the judge reacted as follows:

Regarding the first case (Radhakrishnan accuses Jayandra Saraswati and co-assailants of assault with intention to kill), this is what Justice M. Thanikachalam of the High Court in Madras had to say to the prosecuting attorneys: "Why wasn't the investigation conducted for the past two years? What are the intentions of the Government?...What have you been doing the last two years?...Does your case diary show the investigation was not pursued because of want of materials?" The prosecutor admitted "some slacking off" and said that thanks to the recent murder case (in which the Shankaracharyas are the accused), the police had at last found the weapon used against Mr. Radhakrishnan two years earlier. The judge snapped back: "You found the weapon after two years – the Court should believe this? Where is your forensic report?"

Regarding the second case (Madhavan accuses Sri Jayandra Saraswati and co-assailants of assault), the same judge wrote: "Considering the facts of the case, as well as the inordinate delay in preferring the complaint, and considering the towering fact that at the earliest opportunity, the complainant reported that he sustained injuries only in a road accident, I am of the undoubted view that this case must be a foisted one."

4) In order to bolster the case for rejection of bail before the Tamil Nadu courts, the police illegally videotaped Sri Jayandra Saraswati without his knowledge or consent and announced to the public that he had confessed to the crime. After the bail was granted by the Supreme Court, the police illegally gave or sold portions of the videotapes to television stations. Viewers could see a groggy-eyed Sri Jayandra stretched out on the floor as if he had been drugged. But ironically enough, instead of confessing he said he was innocent. Needless to say, these "leaks" were illegal and their content disavowed by the Shankaracharya.

5) Samples of supposed sexual misconduct: The police claimed that Sri Jayandra Saraswati spent long hours of the night speaking to a certain lady on his cell phone. She was moreover wanted as a key member of the gang that had leagued to slay the victim. For 48 hours two T.V. stations and the press out-did one another in spreading rumors about this affair. Finally the truth came out: She was a 53-year-old advanced cancer patient who had undergone some 130 chemotherapy sessions paid for by one of the Shankara Matam charity organizations.

The day after the police admitted this lady's innocence, a Tamil writer went on television and accused the Shankaracharya of having tried to abuse her "modesty" 12 years earlier. The media now used this "news" for weeks to sell their muck to the public. Meanwhile, the Shankara Matam produced proof that, at a ceremony at one of their hospitals, this same lady had made a speech in praise of Sri Jayandra Saraswati only last May. But this item got very little print footage.

Speaking on B.B.C. Radio 4, the Outlook Magazine editor stated that there were so many complaints of sexual aggression against the two Shankaracharyas that the Kanchipuram police have been obliged to create a special squadron of policewomen to investigate the cases. The truth of the matter is the reverse: It was the police and the muck media that accused some female visitors of the Matam of sexual relationship with the Shankaracharyas and subsequently pretended to "probe" the cases. (To transpose this to your own country, you would have to imagine the British police accusing women of having sex with the priest simply because they go to church to attend mass or whatnot.) It is here that the media have totally betrayed their

A distressed devotee from the Americas writes to the BBC.

Dear Sir or Madam,

Your program "View from India" broadcast on the 28th and 31st January 2005 has shocked and deeply offended the sentiments of Hindus both in India and abroad. I had the highest esteem of BBC as a news organization that prides itself in unbiased and fair reporting, but I have to sadly write that such news reporting shakes my faith in BBC.

Sir, please note that (A) It is wrong to allow a speaker to make such outlandish declarations without checking the facts; (B) That Outlook Magazine is well-known for its vicious bias; (C) That the Hindu Conference of Canada has formally complained against Outlook; (D) That the BBC must now look into the matter and make an apology; (E) That the feelings of Hindus have been hurt and we are planning to organize a collective protest.

Please read the letters that have already been sent to your organization by Prof. Farokh Merat dated 03.02.2005 where he eloquently describes the report as blatantly unfair. Farokh Merat has published this open letter in our discussion forums. I fully support his views on this topic. We hope you will consider this letter in due earnest and make an apology.

Thanks,
Venky

profession. Instead of independent investigation, they have simply cashed in on the lies of the TM Government and police by amplifying them.

6) Samples of supposed financial malfeasance: The police first claimed that the money paid to the killers was drawn from the Matam's account at the ICICI Bank. The Matam authorities pointed out that they had no accounts there, and indeed no documents of any such accounts could be found by the police. The latter then pinpointed another account in another bank. But investigation showed that no unaccounted-for withdrawals had been made from that account prior or after the crime. The police finally told the Supreme Court that the money had come from the sale of a piece of land belonging to the Matam. This, too, turned out to be a lie: The Matam lawyers proved that the payment received in cash for the land had been deposited in their Indian Bank account four months prior to the crime and the total sum was still in the same account.

All the above facts have been reported by the press. The Matam has set up a website (Kanchi-sathya.org) where, under the heading "Mediascan," press reports about events related to the case are presented everyday. The articles are from major nation newspapers such as "The Times of India," "Indian Press," "The Hindu," (for which "Anti-Hindu" would be a more appropriate appellation!), and "The New Pioneer." If you consult "Archives" and the click on "Media archive," you will find past articles reporting all the above facts.

Thus far, the TN Government and police have not been able to substantiate their accusations of misuse of funds. But once again the media have served as a handmaiden. They have magnified the assets of the Kanchi Shankara Matam, referring to them as if they were Sri Jayandra Saraswati's personal possessions. This has created suspicions in the minds of a portion of the public. The philosophy of the TN Government and police and of the hostile media is simple: Repeat the same lies over and over again until they take root in the public's mind.

It is true that the Matam has vast assets coming from donations made by the devotees in India and throughout the world.

But the money is spent in charity works and various social services. The Matam's accounts are regularly examined by several independent auditing houses. Shankara Matam has always helped the poor. Now under the present senior Shankaracharya, Sri Jayandra Saraswati, these activities have vastly increased. He has erected over 50 schools and a large number of hospitals, child-care centers, charitable trusts for aiding poor families, old-age homes, food donation projects, rural development trusts, research projects, professional colleges and universities throughout India. The services in these institutions are free of charge or available at nominal fees.

Sri Jayandra Saraswati is also singularly known for three other initiatives: 1) He has combated untouchability and endeavored to integrate the Dalits ("untouchables") religiously, socially and professionally; 2) He has vigorously opposed mass conversion of poor Dalits, agreed to by a handful of their leaders at the instigation of Western evangelists. (Gandhi used to call such destitute converts "rice Christians."); 3) In the explosive Ayodhya dispute between Hindus and Muslims over a temple/mosque site, Sri Jayandra Saraswati has tried to find a solution acceptable to both parties. The issue remains unsettled. The Shankaracharya is understandably sympathetic to Hindu causes. But his efforts as a peacemaker have also been lauded by a few Muslim observers such as the distinguished columnist Saeed Naqvi.

His social and political initiatives created enemies as well as friends. As he and the Shankara Matam grew in national stature, they became the targets of financial, political and religious jealousies. More conservative Brahmins, too, were unhappy: Whereas his predecessors walked the length and breadth of the subcontinent barefoot, the present Shankaracharya uses the Matam's modest mini-bus or at

BBC Responds to Professor Merat's Complaint.

Dear Prof. Merat,

Your comments about Vinod Mehta's "A View From India" (which was broadcast on January 28 and 30 on BBC Radio 4) have been forwarded to me. I am the editor of the series.

I am sorry to hear that you were upset by Mr Mehta's talk. We appreciate that the subject matter is of a controversial nature. Indeed, Mr Mehta himself makes it clear a number of times that there are many people in India who do not believe the police charges against Sri Jayendra Saraswati, the Kanchi seer. However, the fact is that these charges (which have been widely covered in the Indian media) are a matter of public record. Indeed, all the information contained in Mr Mehta's talk is either a matter of public record (eg. the killing of temple manager Sankararaman) or is clearly attributed by Mr Mehta as coming from the police charge sheet.

Mr Mehta also outlines the political context of this story. He points out that the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has a number of outstanding court cases for fraud and embezzlement against her and that, in his view, "putting a Brahmin priest in jail will not hurt [her] politically".

Mr Mehta ends his talk by stating that the verdict on this case will take years and that it is possible that the Kanchi seer will not be found guilty.

As is clearly stated in the introduction to the "View From" series, each of these talks is a personal essay from one of the world's leading journalists. Mr Mehta chose to write about a story which has been in the headlines in India for many weeks. He was very careful, however, to cite only information which is either a matter of public record or attributable to the police. He was also at pains to provide the social and political context to the charges.

I do hope that the above clarifications answer your complaints.

Yours sincerely

Maria Balinska
Editor World Current Affairs Radio & BBC News

times boards a plane. He even appears on television to discuss religion and social matters.

Trustworthy observers now feel that the prosecution has no case whatsoever against the Shankaracharyas. They say Sri Jayandra Saraswati was framed. Why would a well-known figure, who was described as the seventh most powerful man in India, take the risk of killing a former employee, and that in broad daylight in a temple before witnesses! They feel it just doesn't make sense.

Then who has foisted the case upon him and for what reasons? The political motive would be that he was becoming too powerful, not only in Tamil Nadu but in the whole of India. His anti-evangelical stand made him enemies as far away as Mr. George W. Bush's America. And the financial motive is too obvious for knowledgeable observers of the Tamil scene: By beheading the Shankara Matam, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister is hoping to seize the Institution's vast assets and use them for her own personal and political purposes. She is known for her dictatorial ways and her penchant for riches, as well as for her ruthlessness against any opposition and her paranoia. Commenting on her handling of the Shankaracharya case, Sri V. Venkataraman, former President of India, recently went so far as to publicly declare: "Jayalalitha has gone mad."

It should be added that both the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Ms. Jayalalitha, and the Tamil Nadu police superintendent in charge of the murder case, Mr. Premkumar, have a long history of unlawful activities. A former movie actress, Ms. Jayalalitha did a stint in prison herself some years ago, between two terms as chief minister, on corruption charges. On her arrest she incited her followers to riot, which caused the death of three school girls, burnt in a bus set on fire by the rioters. The charges against her in this case as well as other charges of corruption, assault and abuse of power are still pending in Tamil Nadu courts. There are also complaints rotting away in the same courts against the police superintendent, Mr. Premkumar (torture, abuse of power, manhandling of nuns, etc.) In recent years Human Rights Watch and several other bodies have pointed fingers at the Tamil Nadu police for torture and other atrocities.

An anguished Devotee responds to BBC's "cut & paste" reply

Dear Ms. Maria Balinska,

Thank you for your reply to my letter of protest and deep anguish at seeing BBC reducing itself to carrying slander - My regard for BBC's professionalism and competency to handle controversial topics fairly has come down tremendously!

I wish to strongly object to certain categorizations that you have used to justify the basis of the programme as well as Mr. Mehta.

a) All slander and innuendo that power yellow journals in India are NOT matters of public record that one can freely and without discrimination use in discussions that HURT law abiding citizens who have contributed in very significant ways to India and the world at large! b) Evidently from your statement : "... is clearly attributed by Mr Mehta as coming from the police charge sheet.", anyone can infer how shoddy the professional work is - for the exact reason that the chargesheet has not been given out till date to the accused (delayed for obvious reasons twice in the court - obviously perhaps from a persecutionary viewpoint - will the BBC care to investigate?!) c) Derogatory references to the 'Brahmin priest' speaks volumes on insensitiveness as well as sheer cussedness on part of the BBC 'professionals' in not bringing forth the context and the culture of the people involved - would you care to refer to the Pope from Vatican as a parish official ? The anglicised Indian media smacks of colonial hangovers while we live in an age of more sensible reportage - Will BBC seek to differ, and be more sensitive in its reportings or broadcasts? Many a globalized Indian has a better appreciation of the core contributions of Indian Culture worldwide and of such institutions like the Kanchi Mutt in carrying over such exalted traditions over the ages -- perceptions can be deceptive at how the Kanchi Mutt goes about its work -- the impact has been down right honest and tremendous! d) Invited 'personal essay from one of the world's leading journalists' should reflect the professionalism and not the arrogance of an articulate yellow journalist!

We refuse to acknowledge your such high description of Mr. Mehta - on several of topics of everyday contemporary interest and impact to the Indians in India and the world over, he has been riding the waves of controversy - and the accompanying increased attention. But when it comes to the depth of matter, he has failed miserably several times! And on many topics of contemporary interest!

Pathetic that he and BBC play with law abiding citizens emotions and convictions! Even more pathetic is BBC's defense of him in being 'very careful' to cite right information or to take 'pains to provide the social and political context to the charges' ! Obviously, he gleefully rubs salt into wounds amongst those sensible humans who hold high the Kanchi Mutt and its well-wishers - wounds created by a tyrannical state machinery whose chicanery is so well documented! So where is the carefulness or the pains to be fair? Kindly go through the Indian Supreme Court or the Andhra Pradesh High Courts' rulings on these matters to see how shall these statements are! If you desire, I would be glad to send you copies of the same! Why is the BBC not pursuing all those contradictions to the core with all its passion and grit? BBC owes us much much more than just an apology!

To start with do host a counter discussion - that exposes the hypocrisy that gets practised in India - the politician's insidious misuse of various powers and instruments of state power just to win electoral battles! Of pseudo secularism at its most blatant form. Of corruption amongst the powers that be and its complex hold on the ordinary citizens. Of judicial failures.... the list is just as big! Again I say, BBC owes us much much more than just an apology!

Thanks for replying to my complaint. I look forward to BBC's reformed actions...

Regards

The fact is that, in the last two decades, Tamil Nadu has become a rogue region. Assault and acid throwing on public officials (judges, political opponents, etc.) and private individuals have been rampant. In the present case against the Shankaracharyas, among the co-accused one is a notorious mafiosi criminal with ties with the DDK party; at least two others are petty criminals, whom the police can easily manipulate.

The Muslim and Christian clergy were among the first to protest the arrest of Sri Jayandra Saraswati. So were the Dalits. The average Hindus have once again shown themselves to be a peaceful and dignified people. One of the dearest icons of their faith has been dragged in the gutter, humiliated, drugged in jail to confess, mediatically crucified. And yet his people have not taken to the streets, have not rioted, have not burnt buses. Sri Jayandra Saraswati has told his followers: "I want everyone to hold their peace and be patient. Have faith that truth and dharma will prevail." Though they know from past experience that in Tamil Nadu the law courts have not always been impartial, to say the least, the Hindus are patiently waiting for "the law to follow its course" in this highly electrified case.

But at the same time there is great fear that if the Shankaracharyas are tried in Tamil Nadu, justice will not prevail. There are increasing demands that the case be shifted to another state. In India such trials can take ten years or more. Whatever the judicial outcome, the damage has already been done.

To add injury to insult, the Tamil Nadu government has blocked all the Matam's accounts and assets. The Matam and its various services are fast running out of funds even for day-to-day expenses. The Matam is a religious institution whose accounts are regularly verified by three independent auditing houses. Under the constitution of India, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has committed an illegal act in depriving the Matam of its operational means. The separation between the secular and the religious domain has been violated. But who will, in all this confusion, stand up for the constitution?

In this tsunami-devastated region, the

government of Tamil Nadu is further aggravating the lot of the poor by paralyzing the Shankara Matam – one of India's most prestigious NGOs - and preventing the normal operations of its social and charitable services.

It is in view of these facts that the remarks of the editor of Outlook Magazine struck me as particularly ugly and obscene.

B.B.C. 4 owes the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi and the people of India an apology. Wittingly or unwittingly, you have allowed yourself to be used as a vehicle of slanderous falsehood. You now have a moral obligation to undertake an impartial first-hand investigation of the entire affair and broadcast it at the earliest date.

I am not a Hindu; I happen to be a person from a Muslim background and another country. But there are well over one billion Hindus in India and across the globe. If you don't fulfill your more moral obligation, you can be sure the word will get around, and the majority of them will never trust or tune into B.B.C. 4 again.

Sincerely yours,

Farokh Merat
Retired professor
University of Paris VIII
France

P.S. If I can be of any assistance to you in any aspect of this matter, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wrote you a letter, dated 03.02. 2005, protesting your "View from India" report, broadcast on the 28th and 31st January 2005.

Allow me to add to the dossier the following developments which have occurred since my first letter:

- 1) The Human Rights Commission of India, a governmental body, has lodged complaints against the Kanchipuram Police both for the videotaping of Sri Jayandra Saraswati and the manner of arrest of Sri Vijayandra Saraswati. To justify the police action, the Investigating Officer summed up the matter before the Court thus: "The investigation is an area where the Police has got unfettered powers without interference even from the Judiciary, leave alone an organization like the Human Rights Commission!" (The exclamation mark is mine.)
- 2) The attorneys for the accused have repeatedly complained of lack of access to their clients.
- 3) One of the accused, Ravi Subramanian, is a building contractor who worked for Shankara Matham. When Sri Jayandra Saraswati was first arrested, Ravi Subramanian was designated as accused number two. A check of 50,000 rupees had been made out to him by the Matham for construction work. The Police claimed, wrongly, that this was money to be disbursed to the hired killers. While hiding, Ravi Subramanian called a lawyer friend, swore he was innocent and asked him for legal assistance. On surrendering to the Police he was immediately put in a separate jail in isolation. His lawyers were forbidden all contact with him. Two days later the Police said that Ravi Subramanian had turned approver and denounced both Shankaracharyas for the murder. He was immediately promoted, if one can use the word, from second place to the 26th in the list of the accused. The runner-up position was now given to the junior Pontiff, Sri Vijayandra Saraswati. For more than a month now, Ravi Subramanian has been kept in total isolation. To receive the charge sheet, in India all the accused must

appear before the judge at the same time. But Ravi did not attend Court with the others. He was taken there separately on a different day. The photographs taken by the press on this occasion show, according to those who know him, a ravaged Ravi Subramanian.

Recently Ravi Subramanian was taken to hospital for high fever, backache and other complaints. After half an hour he was whisked back to prison.

4) Two lawyers working on the case have been accused by the Police of attempting to bribe Ravi Subramanian to change his version. How they managed to have a tête-à-tête with him is a mystery, since he is in the hands and under constant surveillance of the Police. The Kanchipuram Bar Association has denounced the accusation and undertaken a three day strike in solidarity with their two colleagues.

5) The Kanchipuram Police have filed a case against the nationally noted columnist, Mr. S. Gurumurthy, on charges of attempting "to deviate the investigation in the Shankaraman murder case, by giving wrong information." Anyone arrested under this charge is susceptible to non-bailable imprisonment for seven years. This is obviously a move to intimidate not only Mr. Gurumurthy but the press as a whole.

With each passing day the events point increasingly to the innocence of Sri Jayandra Saraswati and the guilt of those who are trying to condemn a revered religious leader to death and disrepute.

Sri Jayandra Saraswati is the leader of Hindus not only in India but also in Nepal and several other countries. The international community, to deserve this appellation, cannot stand by and do nothing. Since you have allowed yourself to be ensnared into this affair, it is incumbent upon you to play a leading role in redressing this terrible injustice.

Sincerely yours,

Farokh Merat
Retired professor
University of Paris VIII
France

Formal Complaint of THE HINDU CONFERENCE OF CANADA to the Editor of OUTLOOK Magazine (INDIA) about Mr. Stephen Anand's reports

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the members and supporters of the Hindu Conference of Canada, I am writing to lodge a formal complaint against your magazine's distasteful and irresponsible coverage of the seer's arrest. The columns written by Mr. S. Anand, which were featured in your magazines November, December and January issues, were filled with uncorroborated statements and outrageous claims. Mr. Anand's rhetoric can verily be construed as hate propaganda aimed at inciting and fomenting hatred against Hindu minorities in Tamil Nadu for the following reasons:

* Mr. Anand is a contributor and supporter of Dalitstan.org, an internet based hate group. The group openly supports and promotes violence against Hindus (especially Brahmins) in Tamil Nadu and across India. In fact, the group's site has been blocked under the category of violence and hate speech by Surfwatch patrol, parental control software used by many households and schools in the United States and Canada.

* A survey of Mr. Anand's writings clearly indicates that his prime focus is on denigrating, debasing, and demeaning Hindu culture and tradition.

* Mr. Anand's dubious and unnamed sources appear to be mainly from the Tamil Nadu police and government, both of which are famous for their corruption and unscrupulous methods. It is rather curious that Mr. Anand has gone on a limb and made outrageous claims and allegations based on his so-called sources from the Tamilnadu police. This is in spite of the Supreme Court's judgment, which questioned the credibility of much of the evidence gathered by the Tamil Nadu police, and the recent NHRC notice to the TN government about police practices.

* The title and tone of Mr. Anand's writings clearly indicate his zeal for inflicting the maximum damage through his article on the Kanchi mutt, the acharyas and his followers, who come mainly from the minority Brahmin community.

Your decision to publish Mr. Anand's hateful rants clearly demonstrates a lack of editorial discretion, professionalism, and journalistic ethics. In fact, it is quite reasonable to go a step further and conclude that, by allowing Mr. Anand to use your magazine as a tool to spread his hateful propaganda, you have lent support to the ideology of intolerance and vengeance propounded by Mr. Anand and his ilk.

We hope your magazine's senior management will give due consideration to the issues raised above and exercise meaningful editorial discretion in the future; otherwise, you leave us with no alternative but to pursue Economic and Legal sanctions against your on-line journal, which is available to the Canadian public via the internet.

Sincerely,

Ron Banerjee
Director, Hindu Conference of Canada
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