

Hindus hit back at misinformation campaign of secularist press: notice served to *The Week*

“In Kangraymal village on the way to Jarsol, Raman Pawar’s wife, Soniben, said she was threatened by a group of outsiders in the last week of November. “We will take them [Christians] to Unai for a bath. Leave Christianity or else we will drive you away from the village,” they apparently told her. A bath at the hot spring is a symbolic gesture of reconversion to Hinduism.

“I asked them where they were when we needed medical attention and care,” said Soniben, maintaining that she was Christian by choice. Having received a couple of complaints, Father Anthony, SJ, who is in charge of Subir Mission, near Shabari Dham, said he would request police protection. He said he had not baptized any one in the last four years.”

- *The Week* dated, December 18, 2005.

Following is the legal notice slapped on *The Week* :

To

- (1) **Shri Mammen Mathew,**
- (2) **Shri Philip Mathew,**
- (3) **Shri T.R. Gopalkrishnan,**
- (4) **Shri Jacob Mathew,**
- (5) **Smt. Nandini Oza,**

-all at address:

Manorama Buildings, Panampilly Agar, Kochi – 682 036.

Sirs,

I, advocate, Thakorekrishna R. Shah, do hereby address this notice to you on behalf of my clients (1) Shabri Kumbh Samaroh Aayojan Samiti, address :: Jivan Vikas Society, Athawa Lines, Surat (2) Kailasji Sharma, address:: as above (3) Suresh Rao Dinkarji Kulkarni, address:: as above and (4) Kishorbhai Gavit.

- 1 That you No. 1 to 4 have been editing, and publishing a magazine “THE WEEK”, you No. 1 happens to be a Chief Editor, No.2 Managing Editor, No. 3 Editor In-charge and No.4 is the Publisher of the said Magazine. You No.5 Nandini Oza, appear to be a journalist contributing shady articles in the said magazine.**
- 2 My client No.1 is a “Social-Religious Organization”, No.2 & 3 are the President and Secretary of the said Organization and No. 4 is the Local Secretary In-charge.**
- 3 That the people belonging to depressed class are residing in village Subir and other surrounding villages of Dang Dist., State of Gujarat.**
- 4 That there is a religious place known as “SHABARI MATA STHAN” and the place of penance of her Guru Matang Rishi, the people of the area have faith and reverence towards the said religious place. The said place is situated on a hillock near Subir village. Being impressed by feeling of these vanvasi people Sant Morari Bapu agreed to hold Ram Katha at this venue.**

- 5 It is a fact that in Ramayan the great epic of Hindus there is a story that when Ram was proceeding to 14 years extradition in forest, he happened to visit this area and Mata Shabari offered him berries tasted by her. That King Nishad assisted Bhagavan Rama in crossing the river and this area is mentioned as “PAMPA SAROVAR” in Ramayan. Being influenced by this background in Ramayan, Morari Babu, during his discourses just spoke of an idea that this place is a place of heritage of reverence and penance and area where forest people live, a “Kumbh Mela” of forest people (vanvasi) should be held at this place.
- 6 Some of the people who were present during the discourses in Ramayana and the workers of the organization took up the challenge, decided to hold “Shabri Kumbh” of people residing in forest and consulted several important dignitaries and Hindu mahatmas and ultimately it has been decided that Shabarikumbh shall be held in the area on 11th, 12th and 13th of the ensuing February.
- 7 Your magazine known to be always taking sides of Christian Missionaries whose only work is to convert the illiterate, backward and poor people by misleading and misguiding them. Many NGO’s are instruments of the said missionaries; who are always prepared to oblige, of course on terms which would benefit them by millions of rupees. Many persons in corrupt media are part of them. Having come to know of this development, it appears that you people looked at the episode with tangent eyes. You have begun with lines of the title page as under:
- 8 “Special-R.S.S. targets the Minorities of Gujarat again 12” On page No. 12 of magazine THE WEEK dated December, 18th 2005. You No. 5 Nandini Oza came out with the article under special report “The Crucible of Hindutva the R.S.S. selects Dangs as its new Laboratory”.

Apart from the sarcasm, one sided false, frivolous materials in the article, all of you have conspired, written, edited, printed and published the following material as under :=

In Kangraymal village on the way to Jarsol, Raman Pawar’s wife, Soniben, said she was threatened by a group of outsiders in the last week of November. “We will take them [Christians] to Unai for a bath. Leave Christianity or else we will drive you away from the village,” they apparently told her. A bath at the hot spring is a symbolic gesture of re conversion to Hinduism.

“I asked them where they were when we needed medical attention and care,” said Soniben, maintaining that she was Christian by choice. Having received a couple of complaints, Father Anthony, SJ, who is in charge of Subir Mission, near Shabari Dham, said he would request police protection. He said he had not baptized any one in the last four years.

- 9 The said incident is totally false and concocted and is an offspring of their culpable designs. None of you cared to verify the facts of the matter rather knowing fully well that the same is false; you have written, edited, printed and published the same to malign our clients as well as workers, devotees and follower of the said institution. To give more projection, you have also published the photograph of my client Suresh Rao Kulkarni

- along with the sign board of the organization behind his figure. My clients emphatically deny the truth of the said news item and alleged that you people have deliberately concocted a false story to camouflage your dubious activities and identically conversion activities of Missionaries in the area, whose only effort being under the guise of service to take advantage of the innocent and ignorant people and clutch them into Christianity. Though the Missionaries have succeeded in their nefarious activity to some extent and a large number of them have thrown away the stars and cross of Christianity and have returned to their original fold.
- 10 You are hereby warned and called upon to come out with a statement in bold writing in the next issue of your magazine and bring to the notice of your readers and all of you in terms of an unconditional apology in writing to my clients as well as the workers and devotees of “SHABARI MATA” temple and the religious “SHABARI KUMBH MELA”.
 - 11 You may take note that the persons aggrieved have read your news item at different places in State of Gujarat and other States in India. Your statement is per se, false, frivolous and vexatious and is written, published with a view to malign my clients and workers and devotees through out. It is per se a defamatory libel and all of you are liable to be punished and sentenced for the offences U/S. 500, 501, 502 r.w. section 499 of the Indian Penal Code. My client will wait for your written apology in the next issue of your magazine. If you fail to publish apology as above my clients and others will start proceedings both civil and criminal against you in the courts at Ahwa, Valsad, Chikhali, Navsari, Vyara, Bardoli, Valod, Mandavi, Mangrol, Surat, Olpad, Bharuch, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bhuj, and other places in Gujarat and other State of India. By publishing this false news item you have also violated the solemn principle of journalism. Your act is motivated. My clients shall also file complaint before the Press Council of India to initiate proceedings against you and censure you for your acts and take other suitable action.
 - 12 My clients have not been able to collect the residential address of you Nandini Oza; however, she being one of the conspirators this notice is being given at the address of your magazine.

Dated: 27-12-2005

(T.R.SHAH)
Advocate