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TOI MUST APOLOGISE FOR FALSE NAJEEB STORY

1 message

Teesta Setalvad <teestateesta@gmail.com>

23 March 2017 at 19:26

To: Javed Anand <javedanand@gmail.com>, Irfan Khan <irfank2@gmail.com>

DUJ calls out TOI's fabricated story. It's not even a police handout – just completely made up!

From Delhi Union of Journalists Delhi [mailto:duj.delhi@gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2017 6:15 PM

To: undisclosed-recipients:

Subject: Press release -TOI MUST APOLOGISE FOR FALSE NAJEEB STORY

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Press Release

TOI MUST APOLOGISE FOR FALSE NAJEEB STORY

The Delhi Union of Journalists is shocked that a leading daily like the Times of India should have discredited itself by publishing a malicious and misleading report on the missing JNU student Najeeb. The DUJ demands that the TOI issue an immediate apology for maligning a boy who is 'missing and unable to defend his reputation.

The TOI report alleged that Najeeb had been surfing the Internet for information on the Islamic State and ways to join it. It claimed that he had watched many videos on the Islamic State and was “watching a video of the speech of an IS leader on the night of October 14, just before he had a scuffle with ABVP members...” The story by TOI reporter Rajshekhar Jha was published both on the front page and page three on March 21, 2017.

This kiteflying story was attributed to unnamed police sources and claimed the police had received “a report on the browsing history of Najeeb’s laptop from Google and YouTube”. The following day Deputy Police Commissioner Madhur Verma denied that any report had been received from Google and YouTube and said “investigation conducted so far has not revealed anything to suggest that Najeeb had accessed any site relating to IS”. Special Commissioner of Police and Delhi police spokesperson Dependra Pathak also rubbished the TOI story in his statement to Hindustan Times.

It is apparent that the story was meant to discredit Najeeb and find an alibi for the Delhi Police’s inability to trace the missing boy. The story went into great detail on reported Police moves to search for him.

Jha’s clearly motivated story also went into allegations about Najeeb’s medical history, claiming he had been on drugs for obsessive compulsive disorder, sleeplessness, depression, fits, panic attacks and agoraphobia. Najeeb’s family has previously denied that he was on such medication but the TOI chose to repeat all this in great detail.

The TOI published the false story on its front page with the heading “Najeeb saw IS videos, websites” on March 21, 2017 and another report on page three with a three-column bold headline “Najeeb searched for information on IS”. However, the retraction it was forced to publish after criticism on social media was carried as a single column item on page 5 with the neutral headline, “Police deny Najeeb report” on March 22, 2017. This was merely a verbatim report of a statement by DCP Verma.

The Delhi Union of Journalists demands an apology by the TOI for its irresponsible and false reports. It also demands that the story be removed from its website immediately.

Sd/-

Sd/-

S.K Pande

Sujata Madhok

President

General Secretary

Posted by: "Laxmi Murthy" <murthy.laxmi@gmail.com>

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