

From: DHANANJAY [REDACTED]

Subject: Complaint under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 against Ms. Santishree D. Pandit, Vice Chancellor Jawaharlal Nehru University, for promoting feelings of enmity, hatred, and ill-will against the Dalit Community through her statements in a publicly aired online podcast on 16.02.2026

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To: complaint@ncsc.gov.in

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To,

**The Chairperson**

National Commission for Scheduled Castes, 5th and 7th Floor, Lok Nayak Bhawan, Khan Market, New Delhi-110003.

**Subject: Complaint under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 against Ms. Santishree D. Pandit, Vice Chancellor Jawaharlal Nehru University, for promoting feelings of enmity, hatred, and ill-will against the Dalit Community through her statements in a publicly aired online podcast on 16.02.2026**

**Respected Sir/Madam,**

1. The Applicant herein is a PhD scholar, pursuing his degree from Jawaharlal Nehru University and is a person belonging to the Dalit community. The Applicant prefers the instant application, to bring to the notice of your good self, the discriminatory and casteist statement made by Santishree D. Pandit, Vice Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, against the Dalit Community, in a Podcast which was aired on 16.02.2026. The said statement *prima facie* promotes feeling of hatred and ill will against the people belonging to the Dalit and other marginalised communities, and thus squarely constituting an offence as provided under Section 3(1)(u) of Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

2. On 16.02.2026, Ms. Santishree D. Pandit, appeared on a podcast, which aired on the YouTube channel by the name and fashion of “The

Sunday Guardian”. The topic of the said podcast session was in regard to the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 aimed at addressing caste-based discrimination in higher educational institutions. It was while speaking at the said podcast session, Ms. Santishree D. Pandit made a statement whereby she accused Dalits of playing victim card. At 46:20 to 47:14 time of the podcast episode, Ms. Santishree D. Pandit says, “There is permanent victimhood, and you cannot progress by being permanently a victim or playing the victim card. This was done by...for blacks. The same thing was brought for Dalits here. And you know, the question is, you...by making somebody the devil, it is not easy to you know, progress. And it is a temporary type of a what to say, I would say it’s more like a drug. You know, temporarily trying to say this is the enemy you shout at it and then you feel good. But it is not real. It is manufacturing realities. So I think wokeism and this imaginary what to say world or imaginary community which you had Anderson do it, now you are creating imaginary worlds. Where I am the permanent victim whatever happens and you are the permanent oppressor. That doesn’t at all work.”

3. That a statement of such kind, being made by a public authority in charge of an important position and having significant influence over certain section of public, creates serious detrimental impact for the people belonging to the Dalit and marginalised community.

4. It would be pertinent to mention, such kind of a statement also undermines the principles of our Constitution and also goes against the very ethos of our Constitution. Furthermore, the said statement has

clearly given rise to the feeling of hatred and ill will against the students belonging from Dalit and other marginalised community.

5. To supplement the above statement, the Applicant would like to bring to the attention of the Ld. Commission, that pursuant to the said statement, there have been incidents of harassment on students belonging from the Dalit and marginalised communities. Furthermore, the general atmosphere against the students and people belonging from the Dalit and marginalised communities has become hostile.

6. It is submitted, that the Courts of our country have repeatedly emphasised, that Public Authorities should exercise caution in their speeches and public statement. Needless to mention, Ms. Santishree D. Pandit, has failed to adhere to such directives of the Hon'ble Court. Moreover, as the Vice Chancellor of an university, it was the duty of Ms. Santishree D.Pandit, to ensure a safe and peaceful environment for the students of her university. However, by making the said statement, she has clearly failed to discharge the said duties. It bears mention, that as a result of her statement, students are apprehending threat to their safety and security and are living under an atmosphere of mental agony.

7. At this point, it would also be worthwhile to mention, that the said statement also amountsto hate speech, as they humiliate, incite prejudice and social hostility against a historically marginalised community. The statement promotes feeling of enmity, hatred and ill-will on the basis of caste. Such speech insults the historical struggles faced by the said marginalised community, undermines social harmony

and perpetuates systemic discrimination, which the Constitution of India and special legislations such as the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act seek to eradicate.

8. Moreover, such a statement, which is humiliating of the Dalit community is also violative of the precedents laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and as such is a criminal offence, as held by the Hon'ble Supreme Court. In this regard reliance is placed upon the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter titled as ***Vishal Tiwari Vs. Union of India & Ors. [W.P. (Crl.) No.466 of 2025]***. Relevant portion of the said order is being given hereunder:-

*“While we are not entertaining the present writ petition, we make it clear that any attempt to spread communal hatred or indulge in hate speech must be dealt with an iron hand. Hate speech cannot be tolerated as it leads to loss of dignity and self-worth of the targeted group members, contributes to disharmony amongst groups, and erodes tolerance and open-mindedness, which is a must for a multi-cultural society committed to the idea of equality. Any attempt to cause alienation or humiliation of the targeted group is a criminal offence and must be dealt with accordingly.”*

9. The conduct of Ms. Santishree D. Pandit, being a person holding a responsible academic office, is criminal and reprehensible. Educational institutions ought to be sanctuaries of inclusivity, enlightenment, and constitutional morality. Instead, her statements have sown division and inflicted emotional distress upon students and members of the Dalit and

marginalised community. It also bears mention, that till date Vice Chancellor has not issued any statement of apology. This simply bolsters the fact, that the statement given by the Vice Chancellor was a well thought statement, which has been given to create discrimination and to promote feeling of hatred and ill will against the people belonging from Dalit and other marginalised community.

10. Please note that the statement promotes feeling of enmity, hatred and ill-will on the basis of caste and constitutes an offence under Section 196 and 197 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023.

11. Furthermore, Article 338 of the Constitution prescribes that it shall be the duty of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes to investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes under this Constitution, or under any other law for the time being in force, or under any order of the Government, and to evaluate the working of such safeguards; as also to inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Castes.

12. It is therefore necessary that this matter be looked into with utmost urgency and that immediate and appropriate action be taken

13. It is in the light of the said facts and circumstances, Petitioner prays before this Ld. Commission: -

i. To take cognizance of the instant complaint and direct the authorities to take appropriate action against the Vice Chancellor;

ii. To direct an investigation against the passing of the said statement by an independent committee;

iii. Direct the appropriate authorities to register a case under the relevant provisions of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, including Section 3(1)(u);

iv. Recommend stern disciplinary and legal action, including the immediate removal of the said Vice Chancellor from her position, so as to uphold justice and deter such conduct in future.

I trust that the Commission will act decisively to safeguard the dignity and rights of the Scheduled Castes community and reaffirm the rule of law.

I remain hopeful of your prompt and just intervention.

Yours faithfully,

**Dhananjay**

President, Jawaharlal Nehru

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