



National Commission for Women

Press Note

NCW writes to DGP Kerala to come to the rescue of Sister Lucy Kalappura

New Delhi, 20th August, 2019: The Commission has come across recent media reports claiming that a nun who supported a protest against Bishop Franco Mulakkal accused of rape was humiliated by a Catholic priest of Mananthavady diocese on social media platforms with a video footage and his message maligning her reputation. The Commission condemns this act and has served a notice to DGP Kerala urging his immediate intervention in this matter and arrest the people involved in this reported crime targeted against a helpless woman. The Commission is closely following the case and has demanded an action taken report from the DGP office as soon as possible.

Commenting on this issue, the Chairperson said, “The Commission is committed to the welfare of women and any act which intends to malign the reputation of the women or cause damage to her self esteem will be strongly dealt with. While we are waiting for the investigations to get over in the rape case, these acts are tactics to put the victim under pressure so that she steps back. We will adopt a zero tolerance attitude in such cases and request immediate action against the culprits. We will not accept people holding respectable positions misuse their authority for wrongful actions.”



Earlier the Commission constituted a committee to investigate the case headed by the Chairperson who met the rape victim, police officials investigating the case and the church authorities in person and assured the victim that the commission was by her side. The investigating committee had submitted its report to PMO for further action. The Committee issued a directive to the churches to constitute internal complaint committees in their institutions where nuns could register their complaints. The Commission suggested that such a mechanism was necessary for protecting women serving in churches from harassment. .

The Commission had also written to the Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the past, urging prompt action to ensure safety of two nuns who are witnesses in a rape case against Bishop Franco Mulakkal, and also initiated legal action against the accused. The Commission had summoned Kerala MLA PC George who had made a derogatory comment against the accused. The Commission appreciates the courage of the women who have spoken out and approached us for help.

Few days back, it was reported in various media reports that the other nuns who staged protests against the accused were harassed. Further on, one of the nuns who spearheaded the protests was expelled from the Franciscan Clarist Congregation and she and her colleagues were wrongfully confined the nuns of the Karakkamala convent in Wayanad. The Commission is of the view that



any act that infringes or tends to infringe the Constitutional Rights of women and the perpetrators of such violence need to be penalized as per law.
