



राष्ट्रीय अनुसूचित जनजाति आयोग  
**National Commission for Scheduled Tribes**  
(भारत के संविधान के अनुच्छेद 338क के अंतर्गत एक संवैधानिक निकाय)  
(A Constitutional body under Article 338A of the Constitution of India)

F. No. NCST/DEV-845/MH/2/2022-ESDW

Dated: 24.03.2023

To,

The Director,  
IIT Bombay,  
Powai, Mumbai 400 076,  
Maharashtra  
E-Mail: director@iitb.ac.in

**Sub:** Minutes/proceeding of the Sitting/Hearing taken by Shri Ananta Nayak, Hon'ble Member, NCST, New Delhi on the 22.02.2023 at 11:00 AM regarding representation dated 16/06/2022 received from Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle (APPSC), IIT Bombay regarding lack of mental health support for SC/ST students in IIT's.

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of Minutes/Proceeding of the Sitting/Hearing taken by Shri Ananta Nayak, Hon'ble Member, NCST, New Delhi on the 22.02.2023 at 11:00 AM on the above mentioned subject for information and necessary action.

2. You are directed to send the Action Taken Report (ATR) on the recommendations of the Commission **within 15 days** from the date of receiving of the Minutes/Proceeding.

Encl: as Above.

Yours faithfully,

  
(H.R. Mecna)  
Research Officer

Copy for information to: -

Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle,  
IIT Bombay, Maharashtra  
E-Mail: appsc.iitb@gmail.com

O/C  
4041  
24/3/23  
जारी किया  
ISSUED

# National Commission for Scheduled Tribes

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No. NCST/DEV-845/MH/2/2022-ESDW

**Minutes of the Sitting held under the Chairmanship of Shri Ananta Nayak, Hon'ble Member, NCST, on representation of Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle (APPSC), IIT Bombay regarding lack of quality mental health counselling facility in IIT, Bombay for SC/ST students and casteist social media post and remarks by the head counsellor Ms. Hima Anaredy of Student Welfare Centre (SWC) of IIT, Bombay.**

**Date of the Sitting:** 22.02.2023 at 11:00 a.m.

**List of Participants:** As per Annexure

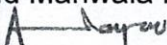
The present case relates to apartheid, lack of proper counselling for the SC/ST students of IIT, Bombay. The petitioner allege that IIT Bombay has a Students Welfare Centre (SWC). However, it has no SC/ST Counsellor, the head counsellor Ms Hima Anaredy is brazenly vocal about her casteist and anti-reservation views that make SC/ST students uncomfortable about approaching her and the alumni initiative for mental health services named "Bandhu" lacks caste based mental health services.

The petitioners through their representation to the Commission demanded termination of head counsellor Ms Hima Anaredy, recruitment of expert counsellors who are trained to handle caste-based issues, recruitment of professional counsellors with SC/ST/OBC background and organisation of compulsory caste sensitization programs and workshops for employees, faculties and students.

Considering the violation of rights of the tribal students as grave and gigantic in nature , the Commission issued Notice dated 01.11.2022 to the Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India and notice dated 30.01.2023 to the Director, IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai seeking reply from the concerned officials within 15 days.

A reply dated 01.02.2023 was received by the Commission from the Director, IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai stating that the notice dated 01.11.2022 addressed to the Ministry of Education was forwarded to Director, IIT Bombay, wherein it was stated that a number of steps are being taken to help all students. Mandatory sensitization course on caste related issues (especially SC/ST) has been planned by SC/ST student cell, manpower has been recruited and course content is under preparation.

The Bandhu self-help website, developed by SWC in collaboration with Tata Institute of Social Sciences does not deal with caste related issues. These issues are handled by SC/ST Cell. Relevant information will also be posted on Bandhu website. An interaction Session between SWC Counsellors and Mariwala Health Initiative (external agency) has

  
अनंत नायक/ANANTA NAYAK  
सदस्य/Member

already begun and is an ongoing process. Training of student mentors on affirmative counselling for marginalized communities including SC/ST Cell has been done by SC/ST Cell with support from Mariwala Health Initiative in July, 2022. The head Counsellor, Ms Hima Anareddy was asked to take down the casteist post on her social media page and warned against the posts in the future. It was submitted that she has been working in SC/ST cell since April 2022 on a joint survey on mental health.

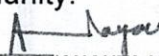
As a follow up to the letter of Ministry of Education dated 02.12.2022, it was submitted by IIT Bombay that the authorities are in the process of recruiting one SC and one ST Student Counsellor from the available roster.

The Commission found the reply highly unsatisfactory and hence, the Commission issued Summons to the Director, IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai to appear for a hearing before the Commission on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023.

During the course of hearing, the Commission asked the Petitioners who appeared in person and through video conferencing about the facts of the case as on date. They repeated and re-iterated their earlier submissions and submitted an additional document with supplementary information. They added that a representation was first sent to the Director, IIT Bombay on 31.01.2022. A survey was also conducted in May/June, 2022 by the petitioner to analyse the mental health status of SC/ST students. However, most SC/ST students refused to participate stating they have lost faith in the system, many students stated they were going through extreme stress due to caste based harassment and eight students stated that they felt suicidal. This information was also submitted to the authorities but no action was taken by them.

It was also submitted that there is no proper System for grievance redressal and information about the same is not available to students. There is a mentorship programme in IIT Bombay but discrimination is also rampant therein. The authorities are flouting the reservation norms and not recruiting SC/ST candidates in the faculty. It all culminated in the suicide of a first year SC student Mr Darshan Solanki on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

In response, the authorities submitted that police investigation is under process in the tragic death of Mr Darshan Solanki and the report is awaited. It was submitted that a psychometric test is conducted at the beginning of each year to assess the mental well-being of the students. It was also submitted that another online platform namely "Your Dost" is available for students to address their mental health issues 24X7. They denied flouting reservation norms and stated that their faculty and students have ample representation from the SC/ST community.

  
अनंत नायक/ANANTA NAYAK  
सदस्य/Member  
राष्ट्रीय अनुसूचित जनजाति आयोग  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES  
भारत सरकार/Govt. of India  
नई दिल्ली/New Delhi

The authorities agreed that prima facie it appears from the social media post and the conduct of the head counsellor Ms Hima Anaredy that she is anti-tribal. It was submitted that she continues to work in IIT Bombay however, she has been removed from SWC.

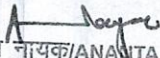
The commission takes a very serious view of the reply which has been found to be incorrect during the course of the sitting. It has been categorically accepted by the Director that the averment made in the reply is incorrect so far as it is concerned with the involvement and research work of Ms Hima Anaredy in the SC/ST Cell.

After hearing of the Case, the Commission recommended the followings: -

The Director, IIT Bombay, Powai, Mumbai

- i. To register an FIR against Ms Hima Anaredy under Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989
- ii. To ensure recruitment of expert counsellors with an ST background in Student Welfare Centre to encourage and repose the faith of ST students and to make mental healthcare facilities more approachable for them.
- iii. To ensure that a faculty counsellor with an ST background is available on the campus for the ST students
- iv. To appoint a Convener with an ST background in the SC/ST Cell in addition to the existing two conveners of SC and General background
- v. To provide a detailed report with statistics pertaining to the composition of faculties, students and other staff members
- vi. To provide a detailed report with statistics pertaining to the composition of the SWC and composition of complaints dealt with by SWC.
- vii. To sensitise the campus on the issue of caste-related harassment and conduct conferences and workshops in the first 3-6 months of the commencement of every academic year
- viii. To encourage the SC/ST/OBC students enrolled in Master's and Doctorate programmes to apply for teaching posts in the institute
- ix. To provide a detailed investigation report of the suicide case of the 1<sup>st</sup> year student Darshan Solanki

Action Taken Report (ATR) with compliance of the Recommendations must be submitted within a period of 15 days.

  
अनंत नायक/ANANTA NAYAK  
सदस्य/Member  
राष्ट्रीय अनुसूचित जनजाति आयोग  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCHEDULED TRIBES  
भारत सरकार/Govt. of India  
नई दिल्ली/New Delhi

**(ANNEXURE)**

**F. No. NCST/DEV-845/MH/2/2022-ESDW**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS: -**

<b>National Commission for Scheduled Tribes</b>		
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	<b>Shri Ananta Nayak</b>	<b>Hon'ble Member</b>
2.	Shri K. Touthang	Joint Secretary
3.	Shri H.R. Meena	Research Officer
4.	Shri Radhakanta Tripathy	Sr. Legal Advisor
5.	Miss Ayushi Jain	Young Professional (Legal)
<b>IIT Bombay, Mumbai, Government of Maharashtra</b>		
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Shri Subhasis Chaudhuri,	Director
2.	Shri G.K. Bhorkade	
<b>Petitioner</b>		
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Arundhati Dubey	Petitioner
2.	Rutwij Nakhwa	Petitioner