Dalits in Villoor living in fear, says report

Contributed by Correspondent
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MADURAI: Dalits in riot-torn Villoor village fear more attacks by caste Hindus once the police protection in the area was reduced, said a report from People’s Union for Human Rights (PUHR).

A fact-finding team comprising A Marx and Rajini from PUHR and K Sukumaran from People Rights’ Federation in Puducherry visited the village on May 28 and studied the aftermath of the riots.

According to them, the Dalits were paranoid about future attacks as anger was still simmering against them among caste Hindus. The report said there were possibilities of attacks on Dalits, especially on the family of Murugan.

Taking note of a significant change in police approach this time around, the report said the department took the right decision during the latest incident when compared to the police action of 2010. Also, top police officials camped in the village and gave out warnings that any form of untouchability would not be tolerated.

Also, only members of the community that instigated violence were arrested, unlike the usual practice of arresting those belonging to both the communities involved in riots. Key police officials hailing from other States and who did not belong to any local community were responsible for this change in approach, the report said. Despite police coming under villagers’ attack, Superintendent of Police (SP) Asra Garg remained unruffled and even in police firing there was no loss of life.

This was in contrast to similar incidents that occurred in the State earlier. The PUHR report also compared the situation with that at Irayur in Villupuram district some two years ago, where an SP shot dead two persons without any warning once the riots were over.

The fact-finding team said the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was enforced for the first time during the recent attacks, though untouchability was prevalent in Villoor for years together. The report also blamed the government for not implementing the Act strictly.

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http://expressbuzz.com/states/tamilnadu/dalits-in-villoor-living-in-fear-says-report/281834.html