

Munawar Faruqi Case Controversy

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A 30-year-old man, coming from a small town of Gujarat to feed his family and realising his passion and his talent in giving good one-liners and witty replies. A boy who lost his mother at a very young age and had to come to Bombay earn money. This was the early life of a stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqi. Over half a million people have subscribed to his youtube channel and he was creating his place as a standup comedian. The story looks fine till here but the real trouble began on the New Year's night when he was performing in Indore and a few people barged into the event and abused Munawar for hurting religious sentiments of Hindus and was accused and alleged for using vulgar remarks on Hindus and speaking indecently about the Hindu idols.

Just after a few minutes after the event began, a man named Eklavya Gaur son of a four-time MLA, Malini Gaur came on the stage and accused Munawar of something that he had not done. Only a few minutes later four people were arrested and also the organisers of the event for instigating religious outrages. He was also denied bail thrice. It was later said by a police officer that these people were arrested without even a preliminary investigation. This is unsaid but we can understand that all this was done under a political pressure where the leaders are offended so easily for going against the religious beliefs and do not understand the basic sense of humour.

Eklavya Gaur apart from being the son of a political leader is also a leader of Rakshak Sangathan which a Hindu organisation. Ever since BJP has come to power it is evident from many incidents that are happening in the country. The recent example being the Tandav series controversy which was available on Amazon Prime Video. After the release of the series, there were protests saying that the series had insulted and portrayed the Indian idols in a wrong way. The same happened with the farmer protests on the republic day where the journalists who covered the protests on that day were warned for covering it.

There are many standup comedians who face hatred from many BJP partisans for writing jokes on Hindus while they have equally written jokes on the other religions also that didn't matter to them.

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A woman who was present in the event on January first stated that there were no derogatory comments on Hindus and also the case was filed on Munawar not for saying that joke in public but because somebody overheard him practising his lines and there was a joke on Hindus that he had practised these lines but has never used them in any event. From here this could be understood that all the done was under political pressure, from the government.

Faruqi was not even allowed to speak to his family or close mates via phone, the jail officials stated that he can be given the permission to speak to anyone only after a 90-day observation of the inmate. He was illegally arrested by the policemen for the jokes that he never cracked. The police just had a piece of oral evidence that they overheard him rehearsing these jokes and there was no other evidence to prove the point that he was mocking ram and Shivaji since he had not even performed that in the cafe but has just practised his lines. This kind of arrest by the police officials and he being denied bail by the respective high court thrice and had to move to the Supreme court to seek justice for something that he had not done.

It was also told by Eklavya Singh that Munawar was a serial offender since he had already passed derogatory comments on various religions most importantly Hinduism many times and this is definitely not the first time he did this. It was also stated by him that he sent his men to listen to his show while he was performing and they told him that he was insulting the Indian idols and gods, so he had to barge in the event. Nobody talked about the rights that were infringed just because somebody overheard him practising his lines. Article 14 was not given any importance. This has become a country where there is hindu ideals domination. India is a democratic country and a pluralist nation where various ideas are accepted, but the second time rise of BJP to power has become a threat to democracy.

Munawar has always been a risk-taker while performing for standup comedy shows, some of his friends have stated that they didn't want to take political humour as their main concept because that can earn hate and sometimes controversies as well. Munwar always wanted to take risks and there are many such people who took such risks, some of them were safe from being in the limelight for the wrong things but some of them had to face these controversies.

Faruqi was arrested by taking into consideration a few sections from the Indian Penal Code. section 295A, which states that it is a non-bailable offence when a person intends to outrage religious feelings deliberately by insulting religion or religious beliefs and the maximum punishment for this offence is three years.

The other section which was applied was 298, which is also a non-bailable offence with punishment for one year here a person utters words deliberately to hurt religious feelings.

This case is an example to show that in a democracy, people are arrested just on the basis of a verbal/oral evidence and without even a preliminary investigation people can be arrested, due to political pressure. It would be totally agreeable if Munawar had said that joke or had hurt religious sentiments and feelings but in this case nothing of that sort had happened.

