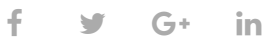


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Nido Taniam's last words to mom: 'You are the best mother'



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be safe?" wondered MLA Nido Pavitra and his wife Marina Nido, who lost their son Nido Taniam to racism in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar market last month.

Sixty-seven years after India gained freedom, such an act would make every parent from North East, whose children are studying or working outside the region, apprehensive about the safety of their dear ones, they reasoned with choked voice.

Life has almost come to a standstill for the couple who arrived in the state capital here on Friday after performing the last rites of their son at their native Tamen village in Lower Subansiri district.

The couple said, "Tanium, a product of famous Rama Krishna Mission School, Narrotam Nagar, Deomali was introvert and never quarrelsome. He was a 1st year student of Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar and was looking for his seriously ailing friend's address when he was abused. There was no reason for a young man to be killed brutally with Delhi Police personnel playing a dubious role."

"Our son would never come back again from his heavenly abode but his sacrifice should never go in vain. We will be going to Delhi along with a team of lawmakers led by Chief Minister Nabam Tuki soon to pursue the issue to its logical conclusion by enactment of a strong anti-racial law, installing his statue in the national capital as a symbol of anti-racism and initiating all possible measures to prevent recurrence of such incident in any part of India," they added.

They further said: "We are indebted to the civil society, who in different parts of the world including India shared our grief and anguish at the most trying time of our life. We extend our gratitude to the Lok Sabha, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde, AICC vice president Rahul Gandhi, Chief Minister Tuki, Union MoS (Minority Affairs) Ninong Ering, MP Takam Sanjoy, leaders of all hue and colour besides students and youths, NGOs and well-wishers, who globally stood behind us and gave a momentum to the issue so that no parent suffer such loss in future."

Nido Taniam's mother said: "Though the whole family is Christian but he refused. Wished to adopt Indian culture and wanted to be a Sanatani, being influenced by Swami Vivekananda's philosophy during his 12 years schooling in the RKM School."

"You are the best mother, don't be annoyed with me. Bye ... bye mom" - were his last words when "I spoke to him around 3.30 pm on January 29 last," his mother said with tears in her eyes.

"We spent lakhs for safety and education of our children, as higher educational institutions are not available in Arunachal and education is not free in Delhi. Why should our children from NE India be discriminated? Was it because of our Mongoloid feature? We never ill-treat anyone from rest of India working in Arunachal Pradesh including IAS, IPS officers, officials, traders whose number is above 50 percent. Their children are studying here too. We treat them with love and respect," she said while indicating towards a non-Arunachalee who has been in the state for over 30 years.

Blaming the Delhi Police for her son's death, she said: "Instead of taking him to hospital for treatment or leaving him at a safer place, two cops took Rs 10,000 and took him to the same market in a bike even without wearing helmets for clinching the deal for his signature and left him at the mercy of the traders to be lynched to death.

"What was his fault? I want justice. If India cannot provide education with security to our children should we send them to Africa, America or China?" she questioned.

Appealing to everyone, particularly mothers of North East to fight for justice for her son's death, she said the killers should be given exemplary punishment.

at school and college level so that the youth learn that NE is part of India, she said, adding "I shall not sit silent til justice is given to my son."

"I appeal to principals and teachers to make teaching about NE India mandatory in the school and college curriculum," she said.

Standing by her side, Pavitra, a devastated father, said "I've lost my son who has turned a universal symbol against racism. The global support has emboldened both of us to fight for enactment of a strong anti-racial law, installation of his statue in Delhi."

Elder brother Nido Karjum, a second year student in St. Dominic College, Shillong, and sister Nido Lulu, a second year student in Kamla Nehru Women's College, said, "Our brother was beaten worse than a dog in broad daylight. None came to his help. If the guy would have been from Delhi or if he would not have been a Mongoloid none would have dared to touch him."

"Why such discrimination? Why was he taunted as 'Chinki'? The entire NE is united in this issue and this momentum is opportune to end racism forever. If we lose this opportunity we would always be sacrificial lambs," they added.

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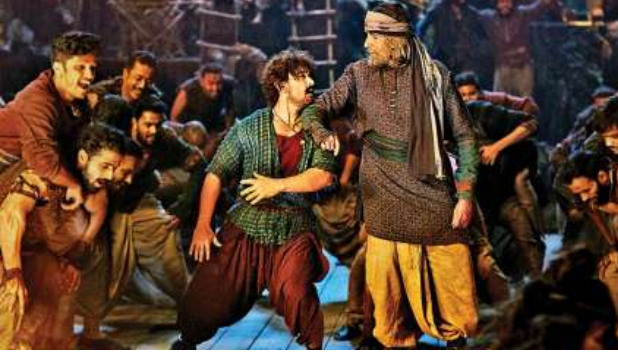
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