

Uttar Pradesh Soldier Assaulted at Bhuni Toll Plaza

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Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, An Indian Army soldier, Kapil Singh, was brutally assaulted by toll plaza staff at the Bhuni Toll Plaza in Meerut on August 17, prompting swift action by authorities and widespread outrage.

Singh, returning to his duty in Srinagar after completing leave, requested toll staff allow him to pass quickly, as he needed to catch a flight. The situation escalated into a violent

confrontation. Reports indicate that staff allegedly tied Singh to a pole and beat him with rods.

Kapil Singh's father, Krishan Pal, demanded strict action against the perpetrators, stating, "He had completed his leave and we were on our way to drop him at the Delhi Airport. When we reached the Bhuni Toll Plaza, he requested them to let him pass, as he had to catch his flight. They threw away his army card, tied him to a pole, and started beating him. Strict action should be taken."

Singh's brother, Pradeep, told ANI that 10-12 people were involved in the assault. "They beat my brother with rods. Six people have been arrested, and others seen in the video will also face arrest soon," he said.

The Uttar Pradesh Police have registered an FIR under sections covering attempt to murder, unlawful assembly, and robbery. So far, six toll plaza employees have been arrested. Police officials stated that further arrests are expected based on video evidence. SP Rural Meerut Rakesh Kumar Mishra said, "During this, an argument broke out, and the toll workers beat him up. One or two more individuals seen in the video will also be arrested soon."

Locals staged protests demanding strict action against the culprits. The administration responded by meeting several of their demands, including the immediate removal of the toll plaza staff involved, adding three additional names to the FIR, making a 10-kilometer stretch around the toll plaza toll-free, and publicly displaying a list of toll-free villages at the plaza.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) imposed a Rs 20 lakh penalty on the toll-collecting agency, M/s Dharam Singh, and initiated the process to terminate the agency's contract. The agency will also be debarred from future toll plaza bids. NHAI condemned the staff's behavior, emphasizing its commitment to safe and seamless travel on national highways.

The Indian Army's Central Command strongly condemned the incident and confirmed it would pursue the case to its logical conclusion. In a statement posted on X, the Army said, "The highest authorities of Uttar Pradesh Police have been approached to bring the guilty to book. Six arrests have been made, and departmental action has been requested to prevent recurrence. Indian Army remains committed to ensuring justice."

Authorities and the public continue to monitor developments, with assurances from law enforcement that justice will be served. The incident has sparked national attention and underscores the need for accountability and safety for personnel serving in India's armed forces.