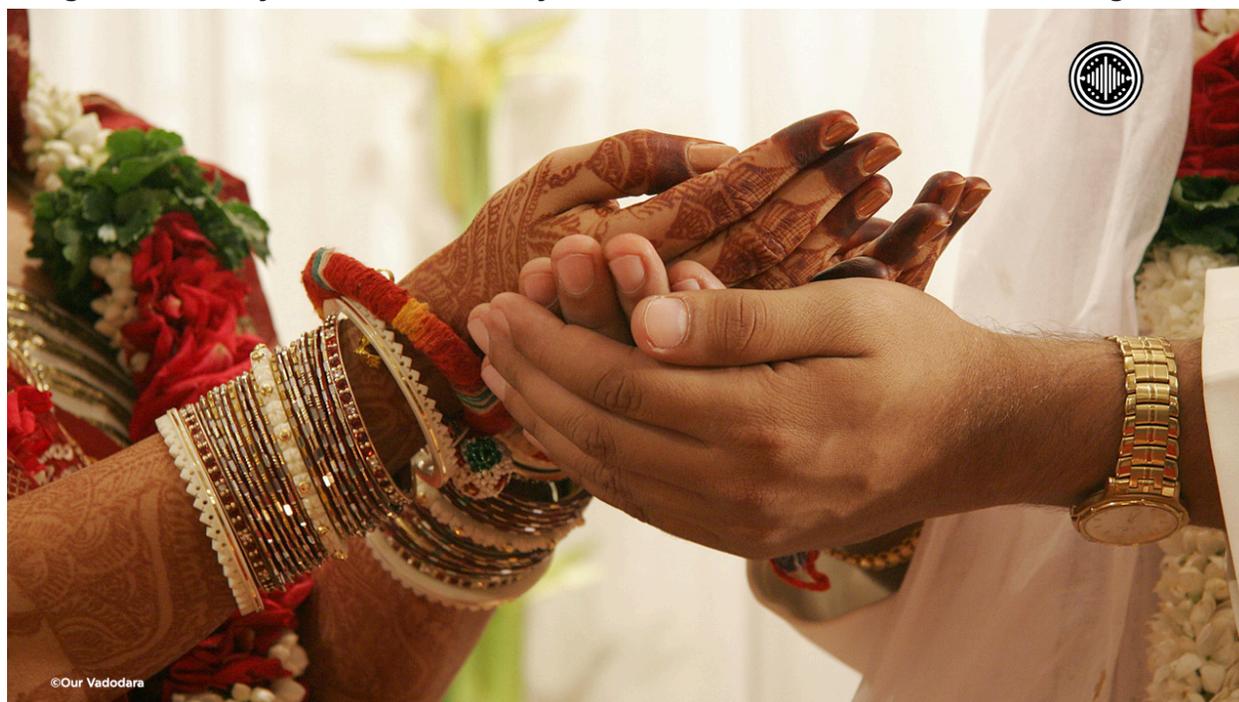


## Village Council Boycotts Muslim Family in Charkhi Dadri Over Inter-Faith Marriage



A village council (panchayat) in Charkhi Dadri district, Haryana, has reportedly imposed a social boycott on a Muslim family following their daughter's marriage to a Hindu man. The contentious decision, made public in mid-July 2025, has drawn attention to the persistent challenges faced by inter-faith couples in parts of rural India and the often extra-legal authority asserted by local bodies over personal matters.

The boycott, reportedly orchestrated by village elders, bars the Muslim family from engaging in social and economic interactions within the community. This includes denial of access to local services, social gatherings, and even basic community support, effectively isolating them within their village. While specific details of the panchayat's declaration remain limited, such boycotts typically aim to compel families to conform to perceived social norms, often in opposition to the individual liberties enshrined in India's constitution.

Inter-faith marriages in India are legally permissible under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, which allows individuals of different religious backgrounds to marry without requiring either party to convert. This secular law aims to protect the right of individuals to choose their partners, irrespective of caste or creed. However, despite legal provisions, many couples face immense pressure, harassment, and even threats from family, community, or religious groups who oppose such unions.

This incident in Charkhi Dadri highlights the ongoing tension between traditional community dictates and modern legal frameworks. While Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are constitutional bodies of local self-governance in India, their authority is primarily administrative,

focusing on economic development, social justice, and implementing government schemes. They are not legally empowered to issue social boycotts or infringe upon individual fundamental rights, including the right to marry freely. States like Maharashtra have enacted specific laws, such as the Maharashtra Protection of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2016, to prohibit such practices, with provisions for punishment including imprisonment and fines.

Critics argue that such social boycotts by unelected panchayats undermine the rule of law and the constitutional rights of citizens. The fear of ostracism and the practical difficulties imposed by a boycott can be devastating for affected families, forcing them to relocate or endure immense social pressure.

As news of the boycott spreads, it is expected to draw condemnation from civil rights organizations and legal experts, who will likely call for intervention by district authorities to ensure the family's safety and uphold their constitutional rights.