



What is a Hate Incident?

Hate incidents and hate crimes involve acts of violence, hostility, or discrimination directed at individuals because of their identity or perceived identity. These actions can cause significant harm to individuals and communities, perpetuating division and fear.

Definition of a Hate Incident

A hate incident is any action motivated by hostility, prejudice, or bias based on a person's:

- Disability
- Caste
- Race
- Religion
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation

In India, the **Constitution of India**, **Indian Penal Code (IPC)**, and other statutes provide protections against discrimination, hate speech, and hate-motivated crimes. For example, **Articles 14-17** ensure equality, prohibit discrimination, and abolish untouchability, while **Sections 153A, 153B, 295A, 298, and 505** of the IPC address hate speech, promoting enmity, and acts intended to outrage religious or communal sentiments.

When Does a Hate Incident Become a Hate Crime?

A hate incident becomes a hate crime when it involves a criminal offence under Indian law. For example, any act of violence, harassment, or vandalism carried out with a motive of hostility based on the above characteristics is classified as a hate crime.

Under Indian law:

- **The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989** provides specific protections to SC/ST communities against hate-motivated actions.
- **Section 295A IPC** penalizes deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings.

- **Sections 153A and 505 IPC** criminalize promoting enmity between groups and spreading misinformation to incite hatred.

Hate crimes often carry enhanced penalties to emphasize their severe social impact.

Examples of Hate Incidents

Hate incidents can take various forms, including:

- **Verbal Abuse:** Name-calling, offensive jokes, or slurs targeting identity.
- **Harassment:** Persistent or unwanted behavior intended to intimidate or humiliate.
- **Physical Attacks:** Hitting, punching, spitting, or other forms of violence.
- **Threats of Violence:** Written, verbal, or electronic threats.
- **Online Abuse:** Cyberbullying, hate speech, or discriminatory content on social media platforms.
- **Discriminatory Behavior:** Denial of services, refusal to rent property, or exclusion from public spaces based on identity.
- **Vandalism or Graffiti:** Damage to property, vehicles, or public spaces with offensive messages.

Examples of Hate Crimes

Hate crimes include but are not limited to:

- Assaults or physical violence.
- Criminal damage to property (e.g., arson or vandalism).
- Harassment and stalking.
- Murder motivated by identity-based hostility.
- Sexual assault with discriminatory intent.
- Hate speech and incitement of violence (Sections 153A, 295A, 505 IPC).
- Cybercrimes under the **IT Act, 2000** involving hate messages or targeted abuse.

Encouraging Reporting and Support

We strongly encourage you to report any hate incidents or crimes. Reporting helps institutions and authorities address these issues, provide necessary support, and prevent further harm. You may choose to report incidents anonymously. While anonymous reports are valuable for trend analysis and awareness, they may limit the ability to take direct corrective action.

Together, we can foster a society where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued, irrespective of their identity.