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ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಯ ಹೆಸರು : NAME OF THE NEWS PAPER: Times of India ದಿನಾಂಕ : DATE: 18/09/2019

# Chitradurga BJP MP can't enter village as he is a Dalit

TIMES NEWS NETWORK 18/09/19

**Bengaluru:** BJP MP from Chitradurga, A Narayanaswamy, was barred from visiting a village in his constituency as he is a Dalit, with villagers arguing the entry of an "untouchable" would bring misfortune upon them. The minister, accompanied by offi-

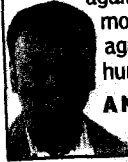
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cial, had gone to Pemmanahalli, about 150km from Bengaluru, on Monday to begin development work in the region.

Though stunned by the village's resistance, the MP said he would not lodge a police complaint. "FIRs are not answers to social evils. We need to educate them," he said.

It was on such a mission that Narayanaswamy went to Pemmanahalli in Pavagada, among the most backward taluks in Tumakuru district, on

**"FIRs are not the answer to social evils. We need to educate them and make them understand what they are practising is against the law and, more importantly, against humankind"**



A Narayanaswamy  
| CHITRADURGA MP

Monday evening. At the entrance of the Golla (Yadav) village, he was stopped and told that as a Madiga, an untouchable, he could not proceed further. Representatives of some NGOs, including Narayana Hrudayalaya Foundation, and others accompanying the MP were allowed to enter.

For decades, the village, comprising 150 Golla families, has been barring Dalits in the belief that their entry will bring harm to them. Ironically,

Narayanaswamy polled a majority of the Golla votes in the Lok Sabha elections in May.

Taken aback, the MP reasoned with the villagers, mostly priests of the community, then protested that discrimination against a caste would attract punishment. Villagers did not budge even when threatened with legal action and maintained that no Dalit has ever entered the village. Policemen and officials with the MP watched as the faceoff continued for about half an hour. Narayanaswamy left in a huff. A video of the conversation went viral and the state government ordered an inquiry.

"This blind belief exists where priests of the Yadav community are there," said Narayanaswamy. "I didn't expect they would do this to the local MP."

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## Embarrassed community extends invitation to leader

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In a damage-control exercise, members of Gollarahatti, a settlement of Gollas, on Tuesday extended an invitation to Narayanaswamy to visit the village.

Soon after the MP was turned away, embarrassed community leaders swung into action and called a meeting in Pemmanahalli.

Sri Krishna Yadavananda Swami of Chitradurga rushed to the village and urged villagers to do away with the practice. There was, however, no mention of Monday's incident or of giving up untouchability.

The MP said he would return to the village. "They are my voters, after all. I will do it takes to make



**AN APPEAL TO RESIDENTS:** A swami rushed to the village and urged residents to end the practice

their lives better," he said. "I am angry, but I have decided not to file a complaint. The villagers are divided on the issue and I don't want this divide to go deeper. There is a need for creating awareness among villagers and I will do that in coming days."