

## **After 'Hindu girl' remark, Union minster Hegde drags Congress leader's Muslim wife into Twitter spat**

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### **Union minster Hegde drags Congress leader's Muslim wife into Twitter spat**

**New Delhi:** Known for his controversial remarks, Union Minister for Skill Development Anant Kumar Hegde has fueled yet another controversy. The BJP leader today dragged the Muslim wife of a Congress leader into a Twitter spat over another oen of his controversial statements.

On Sunday, he declared at a public event that any hand that touches a Hindu girl "should not exist".

"We have to rethink the priorities of our society. We shouldn't think of caste. If a Hindu girl is touched by a hand, then that hand should not exist," said Hegde in Karnataka's Kodagu district.

In front of a large crowd on Sunday, the minister also said: "Taj Mahal was not built by Muslims. It's definitely not built by Muslims, the history speaks for it. Shah Jahan in his autobiography has said he bought this palace from King Jayasimha. It's a Shiv mandir built by King Paramatheertha, Tejo Mahalaya. Tejo Mahalaya became Taj Mahal. If we keep sleeping, most of our houses also will be named manzil. In future, Lord Ram will be called jahanpana and Sita will become bibi."

Karnataka Congress president Dinesh Gundu Rao condemned the comments by the minister as "deplorable". "Wht are ur achievements after becoming a Union Minister or as MP? Wht are ur contributions for Karnataka's development? All I can say for sure, it's deplorable tht such people have become ministers & have managed to get elected as MP's," Rao tweeted.

Anant Kumar Hegde replied with a vicious attack referring to Rao's wife Tabu Rao.

"I shall definitely answer this guy @dineshgrao's queries, before which could he please reveal himself as to who he is along with his achievements? I only know him as a guy who ran behind a Muslim lady," the BJP leader said on social media.

Gundu Rao tweeted back: "Sad to see @AnantkumarH stoop to such low levels as to bring in personal issues. Guess it's his lack of culture. Guess he hasn't learnt from our Hindu scriptures. Time hasn't run out, he can still try and become a more dignified human."

Congress leader's wife Tabu Gundu Rao slammed Anant Kumar Hegde's tweets. Talking to news agency ANI, Tabu said: "There's a line leaders need to draw. They should mind their language. I want to state that I am not a political person, I am a housewife. Why do you want to use me to polarise elections? At least you should redeem his chair."

Hegde is not new to such controversies. Last year, the five time BJP MP described Dalit protesters who waylaid his convoy en route to a job fair in Karnataka's Ballari as "dogs barking on the road". A few months later, he compared the opposition to "crows, monkeys, foxes and others" that had come together to fight the tiger that's Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Even the Janata Dal (United), a BJP ally, asked him to mind his language. But

December 2017, he triggered a furore by saying that those who call themselves secular and intellectual were lacking an identity of their own. "Those who, without knowing their parental blood, call themselves secular, they don't have an identity. They don't know their parentage, but they are intellectuals," the five-time BJP MP said. He also said that the BJP would remove the word secular from the Constitution but later apologised for his remark in Parliament.

Earlier this year at an event of the skill development ministry, Hegde repeated a claim that an Indian flew the first aircraft long before the Wright brothers did in the early 1900s. Hegde said an aircraft created by Shivakar Talpade flew in Mumbai in 1895.

Earlier this month, he termed the Kerala government's handling of the Sabarimala row as "daylight rape" of Hindus

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