



Asian Australians advocacy group demands Cricket Australia take immediate action against spectators inciting racial abuse

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11th January, 2021

Indian cricket team bowlers Mohammed Suraj and Jasprit Bumrah have been victims of racial abuse from spectators at the SCG this past weekend. This behaviour has elicited criticism from cricket fans both Indian and Australian as well as noted cricket personalities. This is not the first time this has happened, with some veteran cricketers sharing their experiences from the past as well.

However it has also led to commentary that legitimises the abuse as justifying it on the basis that morphing someone's surname to sound like a wine is not a racial slur or that the abuse was only reported because India was not playing well. Further reports suggest that NSW police did not find this behavior as racially motivated.

Asian Australian advocacy group, Asian Australian Alliance is demanding immediate action be taken to permanently ban the spectators from attending any cricket matches who were identified and removed by the police from the SCG as the racial abuse perpetrators as well as monetary fines to be imposed. We also demand that criminal charges be pressed against them as appropriate by NSW police.

Molina Asthana, head Victorian Convener for the Asian Australian Alliance talks about the importance of this immediate action,

We need to send the right messaging to the world that there is no place in Australia, and in particular the sporting sector in Australia, for any racist behaviour and that

Australia is a welcoming country for visitors, particularly from Asian backgrounds. As a sporting nation we need to demonstrate our commitment to protecting human rights and creating safe spaces for foreign athletes and teams.

The Asian Australian Alliance acknowledges that Cricket Australia has issued an apology to the Indian cricket team and to the bowlers affected, and that the ICC is currently investigating the incident. However, with both video and eye witness accounts of the racial abuse, the Asian Australian Alliance believes that the action demanded can be taken even before the ICC concludes its investigation in line with its zero tolerance policy towards discriminatory behaviour in all forms.

The Asian Australian Alliance is concerned about the insidious nature of racism and colourism in Australia that has seeped its way in the sporting arena as well. Stronger policies and rules from the government authorities and sporting bodies is required.

Erin Wen Ai Chew, Founder and National Convener for the Asian Australian Alliance expressed her disappointment in how quickly the racial abuse experiences by Suraj and Bumrah were shut down.

It is disappointing to see how quick they all are to diminish the racial abuse experiences of both Mohammed Suraj and Jasprit Bumrah, without thinking of their privilege as Australians who would never experience racism. To send a strong message that there is no room for racism in Australian cricket, Cricket Australia needs to act immediately.

For any comments on this Press Release please contact Molina Asthana on 0400785299 and/or email info@asianaustalianalliance.net .