

# Indian man in gay beauty pageant forced into hiding after homophobic threats

INDIA's entrant to an international pageant for gay men has been forced to withdraw and go into hiding after his family received threats.



By [Ashitha Nagesh](#) / Published 21st April 2015



HIDING: Thahir Mohammed Sayyed has been forced to withdraw from Mr Gay World [IG]

Thahir Mohammed Sayyed was all set to compete in Mr Gay World in South Africa from April 26.

But this weekend Thahir and his family had gone missing from their home in Kochi and Kottayam, Kerala, and all references to the competition had been deleted from his social media accounts.

The 28-year-old model's nomination caused outrage within the region's close-knit Muslim community.

“Talking about this will only worsen things.”

*Thahir Mohammed Sayyed*

Thahir's family were barred from praying at the local mosque and threatened with ostracism if he didn't withdraw from the competition and atone.

In a message to DNA magazine, he said: "I am withdrawing from the contest.

"I hope the organisers appreciate the difficulties I faced. I cannot take this pressure."

When asked if his family were safe, he said: "It would be unfair for me to drag them into any trouble.

"Talking about this will only worsen things."

Mr Gay World's director in Africa And Middle East Atty Coenie Kukkuk said he had fielded several enquiries about Thahir and his family's safety.

He added: "India has been very active in this competition – we really wanted him to share his story with all through MGW 2015.

"It's really sad that his family has been threatened. Sayyed's withdrawal is 100% understandable. We wish him strength and safety in this situation."

Homosexuality is still technically illegal in India, although the government has committed to changing the law.

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