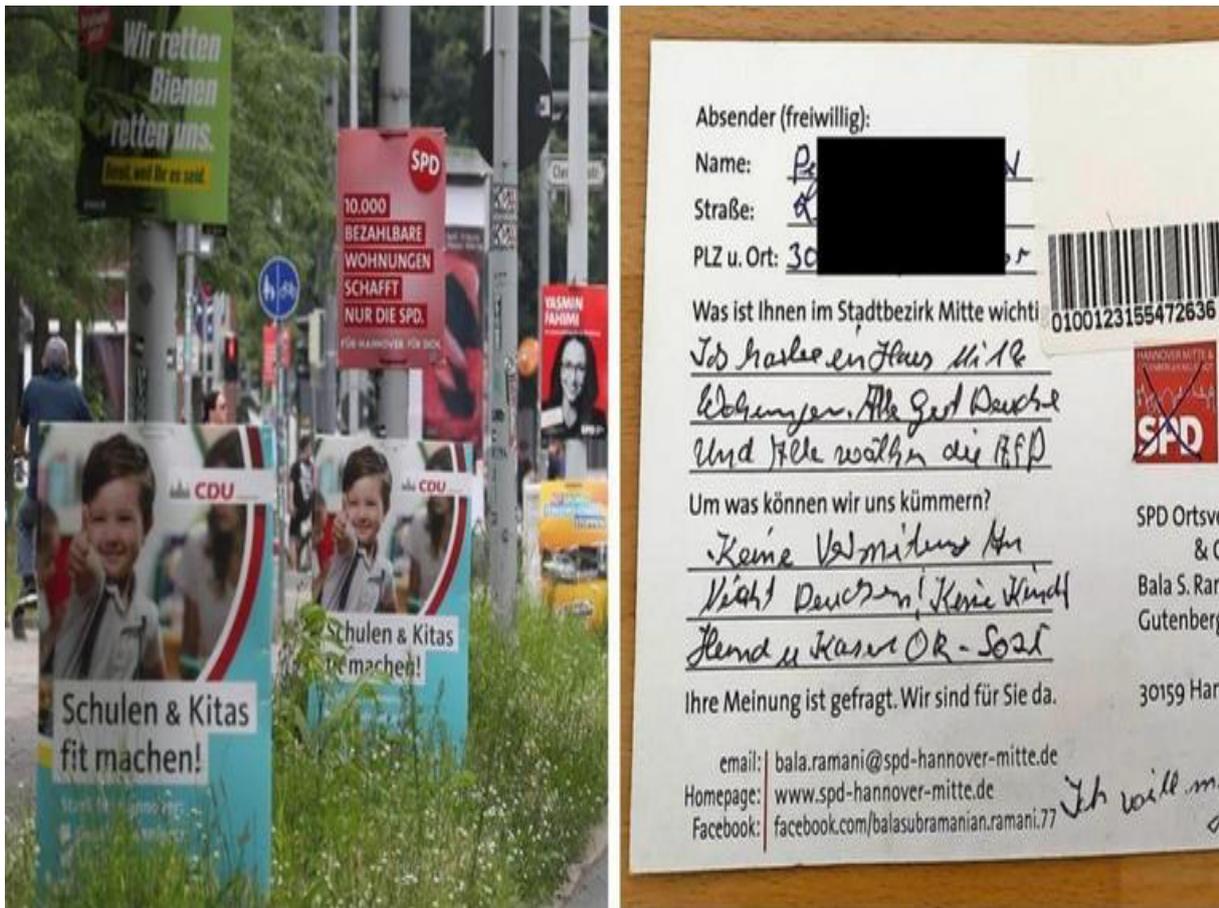


"I want my country back": Trouble with a racist postcard

Again and again the hatred flares up against those involved in local politics with foreign roots. A postcard with a clear message has now reached city council candidate Bala Ramani.



Hanover

The message is clear. The portraits of all foreign-looking candidates were crossed out with black pencil on a postcard that was used to give the inner-city SPD suggestions for its election campaign. The card was then sent back to the party. On the back the sender writes his demand for the election campaign: "I want my country back."

Not the first incident

The SPD chairman in Mitte, Bala Ramani, says he is not angry, but “just sad” about this crude input. It is not the first failure against people with a migrant background who show their face in local politics. It was only in May that the window pane of the SPD councilwoman Hülya Iri's office was shot at. Mayor Belit Onay also repeatedly reports of xenophobic letters and emails.



Bala Ramani is well aware of hostility and abuse - but for the first time they came by mail. The 43-year-old marine biologist is running for the council. Source: Nancy Heusel (archive)

The difference to most hostilities: In this case, the sender of the postcard reveals himself. A Peter S. from Calenberger Neustadt writes that he owns a house with twelve apartments whose tenants are "all good Germans" and voted for the AfD. When asked what the SPD could take care of, he replied "No letting to non-Germans" and "I want my country back."

Ramani has the German passport

The addressee is the SPD local association board member Ramani, who can be seen to be the Indian origin of his ancestors. He is running for local council elections on September 12th. The doctor of marine biology works at Leibniz University, organizes lectures for foreign students and takes care of international university contacts.

And he is German: He has had a German passport since 2013. But his face is crossed out on the map, as is that of Ali-Ramin Ahmadi, who is running for the district council, and Parisa Hussein-Nejad, who is standing for the regional assembly. Only the faces of Petra Köster and Florian Kusche are not crossed out. The names sound clearly German, the pictures look like Central European ancestors.

Hostility and abuse

"I'm not angry," says Ramani kindly. "I was brought up according to the ideals of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, so I only take note of the position of the sender and I am sad that something like this is happening in our society." Sometimes there are exhausting discussions that local politicians have to have. "But it's the first time for me by post."



"I want my country back": The text of the right-wing populist postcard. Source: private

Lower Saxony's Interior Minister Boris Pistorius (SPD) pointed out in June, when the state's constitution protection report was presented, that there had been more than 2000 "attacks of all kinds on officials and mandate holders" last year. Often they come from the right-wing extremist area - his own family was also recently affected.

AfD most often affected

According to nationwide statistics, however, AfD politicians are most often affected by attacks. According to this, 694 attacks were counted against them in 2020, followed by the Greens (206), the CDU (189), the SPD (169), Left (138), CSU (42) and FDP (35). The sender of the postcard in the Hanover case could not be reached by the HAZ. Ramani calls on the Internet to defend oneself against discrimination. "Nobody can take our values of democracy, tolerance and respect away from us, regardless of where they were born, what they look like, what religion they belong to or what way of life they have chosen."

From Conrad von Meding