

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office

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February 22, 2011

Hon. Justice Shri K.G. Balakrishnan

Chairperson

National Human Rights Commission of India

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Sir,

Sub: *HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - Gujarat: Threat to lives of whistleblowers in the Police Department - Reg*

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert - India!

HRD Alert - India is a Forum of Human Rights Defenders for Human Rights Defenders.

It endeavours to initiate actions on behalf of Human Rights Defenders under threat or with security concerns.

We are now writing to express our grave concern regarding the threat to the lives of three policemen of Gujarat following the revelations they made to the media on the role of politicians and police in the carnage of 2002.

Detailed Information

The struggle for justice in the western Indian state of Gujarat had reached a critical stage with victim survivors deposing in crucial mass crimes trials and with the historic criminal investigation into high levels perpetrators afoot. (Zakia Ahsan Jafri and Citizens for Justice and Peace SLP 1088/2008 in the Hon Supreme Court of India) March 3, 2011 is critical as it is the day of hearing after recent revelations in the media about the investigations by the Supreme Court Appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) have shown that the powerful have been found guilty of discriminatory governance.

(See Annexure A- Tehelka issue February 12 2011)

Subsequent events after these revelations in the media that incidentally expose the government sponsored theory that highly placed politicians and officials have been given “a clean chit”, are more than disturbing. Specifically we would like to refer to the ‘show cause’ notice served on a serving police officer **Mr. Rahul Sharma IPS** (Indian Police Service) the day after the revelations became public.

(Please see report in The Times of India annexed hereto as Annexure B)

This brave man in uniform is being punished not just for the fact that he made available to the Supreme Court initiated SIT the CD of phone call records that reveal, on analysis an unholy nexus between the powerful politicians, policeman and the accused but even in 2002 when the violence raged he saved lives and risked political wrath.

Now, another serving officer of the Gujarat Cadre IG (Inspector General) **Sanjeev Bhatt** is under grave threat due to his revelations accessed by the media that he was present at a meeting at which the chief minister issued unconstitutional and criminal reactions to his police force and administration to allow one section of the population to vent anger against another. Please see Annexure C that is the article containing these allegations.

These two serving officers along with a retired officer former Director General of Police RB Sreekumar are crucial whistleblowers and witnesses in the criminal investigation currently afoot under the Supreme Court supervision. A vindictive state government that has targeted victim survivors and human rights activists would not stop short at targeting them as well. The third officer RB Sreekumar was given police protection following interventions made to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

We urge that similar protection is also given to the two serving officers of the Gujarat Government as their lives are at risk

Appeal

We, therefore, urge you to immediately take necessary steps to:

- Provide protection to Rahul Sharma and Sanjeev Bhatt
- Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of the whistleblowers Rahul Sharma, Sanjeev Bhatt and R. B. Sreekumar
- Ensure that the real perpetrators of the Gujarat Carnage are brought to book to avoid a similar genocide

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

Henri Tiphagne

National Coordinator

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

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