

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office

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Shri A. K. Parashar

Deputy Registrar (Law)

Focal Point for HRDs

The National Human Rights Commission

New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - Maharashtra: Senior Journalist shot dead by unidentified gunmen - 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 killing of Mr. Jyotirmoy Dey a journalist working with Mid Day on Saturday the 11th of June 2011 by four unidentified men.

Incident

Jyotirmoy Dey covered the underworld for Mid Day and was admitted to Mumbai's Hiranandani hospital where he succumbed to the injuries. J Dey, a senior journalist and Investigations Editor was shot at on 11th of June, 2011 Saturday afternoon outside the Spectra Building near DMart at Powai, near his residence. He sustained five bullet wounds. Police say there are eight entry-exit wounds on his body. He was rushed to Powai's Hiranandani Hospital where he was declared dead on admission. Preliminary information from the police reveals that four unidentified men riding two motorcycles shot at him. Dey had been covering underworld and crime for a long time and he was a special investigations editor. Dey also wrote a book called 'Zero Dial' on the underworld. Dey covered the underworld in the turbulent 80s and 90s. We feel this might have been the motive for the killing by the gunmen.

People's Watch condemns the attack and the intolerance of the freedom of press, the only probable reason for this shooting. The killing of J. Dey also underlines the increasing threat investigative journalists are being subject to by powerful political and business interests indulging in illegal acts. Scores of incidents of journalists being beaten up or threatened by politicians and local mafia have been brought to the fore in recent weeks and months. On Wednesday, the 15th of June, 2011, the Police arrested 4 persons belonging to the Chotta Shakkeel gang thought to have been behind the murder but on Thursday, the 16th of June, 2011, they were let off for want of evidence. A Public Interest Litigation demanding a CBI probe has been filed. This is the demand of a large section of the Civil Society and the Journalist fraternity too.

Appeal

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

- Ensure that an impartial investigation is conducted and the perpetrators and conspirators of this heinous killing of the senior journalist are arrested soon.
- Make sure that statements of the witnesses to the incident are recorded and further the witnesses are provided security.
- Guarantee in all circumstances that human rights defenders are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals, and free of all restrictions.
- Ensure in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and with international and regional human rights instruments ratified by India.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

Henri Tiphagne

National Coordinator

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