

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office

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Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders,
Mrs. Margaret Sekaggya
c/o Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – Palais Wilson
United Nations Office at Geneva
CH 1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Email: urgent-action@ohchr.org

Dear Ma'am,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Jharkhand: Assault on human rights defender for questioning beating of a person by the police - 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 assault made on Mr. Pradeep Pandey of Gumla in the State of Jharkhand who was assaulted by 4 police constables for questioning the beating of a person belonging to a Scheduled Caste (SC).

Incident

Mr. Pradeep Pandey, a lawyer by profession, who is a consultant law officer for the District of Gumla in Jharkhand for a national program of People's Watch received news on the evening of the 27th of July, 2011 that a person belong to a Dalit (SC) Community who lived in the vicinity was being beaten up by the police. Upon getting this information, he went to the person's house immediately on a fact-finding mission and got to know that the Police had been checking the papers of his motorcycle and his license and although they were in order, they were demanding money from him and when he refused they started to beat him. When Mr. Pandey

questioned the Police Constables, they turned against him and the 4 constables (the name of one of them is Umesh Singh and according information received from Mr. Pandey they are from the 'Mobile Tiger' Force of Gumla District Police) started beating him with batons. As a result of the brutal assault made on Pandey he has sustained injuries on his abdomen and chest.

Mr. Pandey has submitted a complaint to the Superintendent of Police of Gumla on the 27th of July itself but no action has been taken so far. Meanwhile, acting on the copy of the complaint that Mr. Pandey made available to his bar association, they have called for a meeting of the bar association which will take place today the 28th of July, 2011.

This incident has been covered by the Gumla edition of all leading dailies - *Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, Prabhat Khabar, Hindustan* etc.

Appeal

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

- A departmental enquiry is initiated into the assault made by the Police Constables and appropriate action is taken against them
- Compensation is paid to the Dalit victim and to Mr. Pradeep Pandey for the medical expenses they have incurred following the assault on them
- Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Pradeep Pandey
- 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

Honorary Working Secretary

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India