

## *Human Rights Defenders Alert - India*

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Dear Sir,

***Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - India: Rajasthan police raids Ms. Kavita Srivastava's house -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 intimidation against Ms. Kavita Srivastava and her family in the name of raid conducted by the Chattisgarh police.

### **Incident**

According to the information received, the Chattisgarh police today (3.10.2011) raided human rights defender Ms. Kavita Srivastava's house between 6.30 and 7 am when she was not at home. They came with a search warrant and said that a *khatarnak naxalite* was being shielded in her house. Kavita's family was unable to gather the name and the police said that they had come looking for a woman named Sunit / Sumit Sodi. The Bajaj Nagar police station of Jaipur who very well knows her house had brought the Chattisgarh police there. The raid was led by the DYSP of her area Mr. Rajendra Singh Shekhwat and they also sent police outside the PUCL office. The Chattisgarh raid was led by Mr. Memon, who was in plain clothes and

whose rank was not known. He showed some Court papers and said that her house has to be searched.

They came with a truck load of Special Task Force police and kept saying that they have central intelligence inputs that the naxalite Sumit Sodi is there. When her sister asked about the reason for why so many police had come, they said "Naxal ka Mamla hai" which means "That person may be armed."

Kavita's family fully cooperated, till they tried to shove her 82 year old father who is on a pace maker. The police also stopped Kavita's sister and a European friend of hers who had left home after 6.30 am for atleast one hour close to the house. Though they found nothing they harassed two domestic workers of her house from Cooch Behar, Bengalis.

Kavita Srivastava has been targeted because they know that she supported the struggle for restoration of human rights violation in Chhattisgarh and the rest of India. She has worked through the PUCL and other organisations against the arbitrary detentions in the State in the name of Maoism. Actually this act was intended to threaten her to disrupt her legitimate human rights activities.

This is shocking that they have dared to do this kind of harassment to her and it is clear that even the Jaipur Police is involved in this act.

PUCL - Rajasthan President Mr. Prem Krishnaji, and Mr. Radha Kant Saxena, V.P of PUCL have gone to meet the police who had come from Chhattisgarh and they informed Kavita the warrant papers they brought with them had mentioned only her house address and "abhiyukt" meaning accused but there was no name being mentioned whom they had come to arrest.

### **Appeal**

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

1. Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Ms. Kavita Srivastava, her family members;

2. Put an end to any kind of acts of intimidation and harassment – including at the judicial level – against Ms. Kavita Srivastava and more generally against all human rights defenders in India;
3. Conform to the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1998, especially:
  - its Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”;
  - its Article 6(a), which provides that “everyone has the right, individually and in associations with others, to know, seek, obtain, receive and hold information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms”;
  - and its Article 12.2, which states that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;
4. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by India.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

*Henri Tiphagne*

Hon. Working Secretary

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India