

## *Human Rights Defenders Alert - India*

National Coordination Office

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December 2, 2011

Shri A. K. Parashar  
Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders  
National Human Rights Commission  
Faridkot House  
Copernicus Marg  
New Delhi-110001  
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Dear Sir,

**Sub: HRD Alert-India - Urgent Appeal for Action–India/Odisha, Vikram Nagar:  
Human Rights Defender and Dalit Activist Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna's wife  
kidnapped - 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 abduction of Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna's wife Mrs. Priyakala Yogeshwari and the constant threats to him.

### **Incident**

**Name of the Perpetrators:** Karuna Patel, Soukhal Patel and three other unidentified persons

**Place of incident:** Vikram Nagar, Jeypore Palace, Odisha

**Date and time of incident:** 1st December 2011 at 11 am.

### **About the human rights defender:**

Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna, is a Dalit Rights activist and a human rights defender from Odisha who has been involved in protecting the rights of the Dalit people for the

past 10 years. He had been receiving constant threats from the perpetrators mentioned afore, since 2004, for his human rights activities. Ultimately, his wife Ms. Priyakala Yogeshwari Suna was kidnapped.

According to the information received, on December 1, 2011 Saroj Kumar Suna's wife Mrs. Priyakala Yogeshwari had been abducted from Vikram Nagar at around 11.00 am in the morning in a Bolero Car (No.: OR 7E – 5700). He filed a complaint in the Paikmal Police Station, where FIR (Case No.124/Dec 2011) has been registered at around 2.45 pm. But the response of police is lethargic in this regard. The locals from the village have been supporting him in taking forward this issue.

### **Background of the Incident:**

As per the information received, Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna was actively engaged in defending the Dalit People's rights and has filed cases in 2004 under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, regarding atrocities that were going on against Dalits in his village, Sadhupali. The alleged perpetrators Soukhal Patel and his son Karuna Patel threatened Saroj Kumar Suna that if he failed to withdraw those cases he would have to face dire consequences. Saroj Kumar has received constant threats over the phone asking him to leave the village with his family. He made several complaints in the Paikmal Police Station and the cases are pending in the Court wherein two of his relatives were informants.

On 24th November 2011, Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna and his family shifted from his village Sadhupali to Vikram Nagar in Odisha due to the constant threats that he received. This case is yet another example of Police inaction and lethargic approach in dealing with such cases.

### **Appeal**

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

1. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna and his family members;
2. Order an immediate, thorough, effective, transparent and impartial investigation into the threats against Mr. Saroj Kumar Suna and the

subsequent abduction of his wife Mrs. Priyakala Yogeshwari Suna, the result of which must be made public, in order to identify all those responsible, bring them before a civil competent and impartial tribunal and apply to them the penal sanctions provided by the law;

3. Put an end to acts of harassment and threats against Mr. Saroj Kumar as well as against all Indian human rights defenders;
4. Ensure that the Police Department takes immediate action in this regard and the whereabouts of Mrs. Priyakala Yogeshwari are identified as well as the perpetrators are brought before justice.
5. See that a departmental enquiry is ordered into the negligence of the police personnel who have failed to take action on the complaints lodged by the human rights defender and that adequate action against erring officials is

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

**Henri Tiphagne**

Hon. National Working Secretary,  
Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

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