

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office

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July 3, 2012

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

Email: urgent-action@ohchr.org

Dear Sir,

***Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – India/Tamil Nadu:
Tiruvannamalai district - Social activist Mr. Rajmohan Chandra hacked to
death by an armed gang – 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 over the brutal murder of a social activist Mr. Raj Mohan allegedly because of filing various petitions and Public Interest Litigations against influential people.

Name of the Perpetrators: An armed gang of 7-8 people

Place of incident: Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu

Date and Time of incident: July 2, 2012 at around 6 a.m

About the activist:

Mr. K. Raj Mohan Chandra (53), a social activist, who waged legal battles against several police officers, politicians, businessmen and land mafia in many cases of alleged human rights violation, land grabbing etc. Mr. Chandra used RTI as an effective tool for bringing out such issues to light. He had rendered social services and welfare activities in his own capacity. It was claimed that he had received frequent death threats after he filed public interest litigations and

petitions against judicial magistrates, politicians and policemen accusing them of corruption. Raj Mohan's wife, Mini alias Eliyamma Joseph, is serving as a nurse in a private hospital.

Incident:

On July 2, 2012 (Monday), K Rajmohan Chandra (53) was returning home in Rajiv Gandhi Nagar near Simha Theertham on his bike after buying milk. An armed gang of seven to eight people waylaid him at Tiruvannamalai-Bangalore National Highway at around 6 am. They threw chilli powder on his face after which Chandra lost his balance and fell down. The gang members attacked him with sharp weapons, inflicting severe cuts on his head and limbs, and fled the spot. Mr. Chandra died on the spot.

The passer-by people noticed Rajmohan lying dead and immediately reported the Tiruvannamalai Town police about the incident. The Superintendent of Police R.V. Ramya Bharati and DSP Ravichandran visited the spot and conducted enquiry.

Rajmohan's wife Mini lodged a complaint suspecting the involvement of a councilor from the same locality based on which the Tiruvannamalai town police filed the First Information Report (FIR). The Police have detained five people on suspicion for interrogation. The councilor accused by the wife of the deceased activist has absconded.

The District crime branch deputy superintendent of police C Ravichandiran said four special teams have been formed to nab the assailants. Meanwhile, two people, D. Murugan (32) of Vada Andappattu and Chandrasekar (29) - a Sri Lankan Tamil staying in Pallipattu Sri Lankan refugee camp near Thenpallipattu, surrendered before Polur judicial magistrate in connection with the murder. The magistrate remanded the two persons in judicial custody and the Police are planning to take them into their custody for detailed interrogation.

Additional Information:

Rajmohan's wife, Mini in her police complaint said that she was chasing her pet dog in the street and saw that her husband was about to turn into the street

when Venkatesan, an AIADMK municipal councillor, (who has been booked in a case relating to attack on CPI (M) district secretary M. Veerabadran last month for countering his alleged land grabbing activities), Selvam, Veerasamy and Meenakshi and two others threw something on his face and slashed him cruelly. In her three-page complaint Mini gave an account of conflicts Mr. Chandra had with a police officer and Venkatesan.

Appeal

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

1. Conduct a prompt and impartial investigation into the case of brutal murder of Mr. Rajmohan to find out the possible connection with the various cases that he filed against politicians and influential people;
2. Ensure that the allegations made by the activist's wife are looked into and the perpetrators are brought to book under appropriate provisions of law;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological safety and integrity of all social activists who are at risk of life due to their genuine welfare activities;
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. National Working Secretary,

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

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