

# Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

National Coordination Office  
6, Vallabai Road, Chokkikulam, Madurai 625 002.  
Tamil Nadu, INDIA  
Tel: +91-9994368540 Email: [hrda.india@gmail.com](mailto:hrda.india@gmail.com)

**22 July 2014**

## **Shri A. K. Parashar**

Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Joint Registrar  
National Human Rights Commission  
Manav Adhikar Bhawan,  
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,  
New Delhi – 110 023  
Email: [hrd-nhrc@nic.in](mailto:hrd-nhrc@nic.in)

Dear Sir,

***Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Uttar Pradesh: Murderous assault on RTI Activist in Mau – 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 criminal assault made by goons of the Panchayat Head (Village Chief) with intent to kill Raj Kumar Singh, a Human Rights Defender, for using Right to Information Act (RTI) to expose corruption in the local administration.

### **Source of Information on the Incident:**

- The Coordinator of HRDA for the North of India
- RTI Foundation of India

**About the Human Rights Defenders under attack:**

Raj Kumar Singh has been using the Right to Information Act (RTI) for the last 3 years. He has filed around 50 RTI applications in the last 3 years to get information about development funds for village development from the Block Development Office, Director Planning Department and Chief Development Officer.

**The Perpetrators:**

Raj Kumar Singh has identified two persons in whose name the First Information Report (FIR) has been filed. There were three other unknown assailants

- 1- Amit Kumar Singh (He is local criminal, according to local source)
- 2- Tribhuwan Singh

**Date and time of Incident:**

7 July, 2014, 11.00 AM

**Place of Incident:**

Rahjania near Bagali Pizara village, under the jurisdiction of Sarai Lakhanti Police Station in Mau district in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh

**Incident**

According to the information received, on the 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2014 Raj Kumar Singh and his friend Vijay Shankar were going to the district headquarters from his village Bagali Pizara in an auto rickshaw. His village is situated at a distance of 6 KM from Mau town. When they reached a place called Rahjania, around 2 Km from their village, their auto was stopped by 5 people. The assailants dragged Raj Kumar Singh out of the auto and assaulted him brutally. It appears that it was a premeditated act aimed to put his life and liberty in danger. He was stabbed many times which caused serious body injuries. His legs were broken with a hammer. Raj Kumar Singh was admitted in district hospital for treatment. He sustained fracture in his leg because of an attack made by a knife. Raj Kumar Singh identified 2 assailants but could not recognize other 3 assailants. One of the identified assailants Mr. Amit Kumar Singh is a proclaimed criminal of the area.

**Background**

Raj Kumar Singh has filed at least 10 RTI queries against the present Village Panchayat Head who is a woman. Although she is the head, Panchayat affairs are

controlled by her husband and other family members who are said to possess strong political clout.

He has exposed discrepancies in the use of funds by the village Panchayat Head and other corrupt practices. On the basis of Raj Kumar Singh's queries the district administration has ordered to recover funds to the tune of Rs. 13 Lakh from the Panchayat Head. Raj Kumar Singh filed an FIR against the Panchayat Head in 2011 also. Since then attempts are being made to threaten him.

It is apparent that Raj Kumar Singh is being targeted for his activities related to unravelling illegal practices in the use of public funds.

Raj Kumar Singh is still facing threat to his life and is especially concerned about the safety of his family members. He has two adult sons.

**Appeal:**

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that the Superintendent of Police for Mau

- Orders an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned events and brings the perpetrators to book;
- Along with local district officials guarantees in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Raj Kumar Singh as he continues to be under risk of further attacks by the perpetrators and give this assurance to the NHRC of India in writing immediately and urgently;
- Along with local district officials puts an end to all acts of harassment against all human rights defenders in India to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities without any hindrances;
- Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1998, especially:
  - 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"

- Article 12.2, which provides 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”;

- More generally, 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 human rights instruments ratified by India is strictly adhered to in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henri Tiphagne', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Henri Tiphagne**

Honorary National Working Secretary