

Human Rights Defenders Alert - India

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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

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Delhi: Assault and illegal detention of “Stop Acid Attacks” campaigners - 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 arrest and illegal detention of the “Stop Acid Attacks” campaigners who were staging a peaceful protest in front of the Parliament in New Delhi on the 18th of December, 2014.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- A communication from the Coordinator of HRDA for the North of India
- Media Reports

About the Human Rights Defender

Stop Acid Attacks (SAA) is a campaign against acid violence. A survivor of an acid attack requires immediate medical, financial and psychological support on human grounds. But, the judicial procedures in India do not assure any such intervention or help to the survivor until a court announces so. It is this loophole in the procedure of justice that SAA works on by generating immediate medical and financial support for the

victims and providing them and their families the needed psychological and legal support. SAA works as a bridge between survivors and the society, as many victims tend to isolate after losing their faces, hibernating into their solitude and misery, due to the ignorance of the government and civil society. Since the country has never had any study to assess the situation of survivors who face the brutal aftermath of acid attacks, SAA aims at researching and tracking more acid attack cases to compile a data to assess the actual situation of victims. With a team of prominent activists, journalists, politicians, celebrities and responsible civil society members, SAA is trying to take the cruel reality of this crime to people. SAA uses visual, dramatics and literary means to strengthen their campaign and drive home the message with an impact. SAA is not an NGO.

The Perpetrators:

1. Mr. Dinesh Kumar, Station House Officer (SHO), Parliament Police Station
2. Inspector Tyagi, Parliament Police Station
3. Mr. Rajesh (rank not identified)

Place of incident:

Outside Parliament Building, New Delhi

Date and time of incident:

18th of December, 2014 around 11.00 AM

Incident:

According to sources, at least 40 members of the "Stop Acid Attacks" campaign were detained by the police when they were staging a peaceful protest outside a Parliament gate on the morning of the 18th of December 2014. The protesters were staging a peaceful demonstration outside Parliament when they were forcibly evicted by the police and taken to the Parliament Street police station. A few of the protesters alleged they were beaten up by the police while being removed from the spot and had to be admitted to hospital.

The police heckled, dragged and took the defenders to the Parliament Street police station where some of the male protesters were beaten up. Two of the acid attack survivors—Rupa and Laxmi—fainted during the incident and the police denied them any sort of medical aid.

Appeal

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

- Orders an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned events and brings the offending policemen to book for denying the defenders their right to freedom of association and assembly which is protected in international and regional human rights treaties and using force on them;
- Along with local district officials puts an end to all acts of harassment and threats against all human rights defenders in general to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities without any hindrances;
- Conform to the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations 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”;
 - 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”.
- 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

Honorary National Working Secretary