



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

16th January, 2016

To,

Shri Srinivasa Kamath

National Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Deputy Registrar

National Human Rights Commission

Manav Adhikar Bhawan,

Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,

New Delhi – 110 023

Email: hrd-nhrc@nic.in

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Assam: Threats and harassment to Mr.Pranab Hazarika, member of Manab Adhikar Sangram Samiti in Assam by personnel of Indian Army – Regarding

Dear Sir,

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 writing to express our grave concern over the continuous harassment and threats given to Mr. Pranab Hazarika, member of Manab Adhikar Sangram Saminti (MASS) and his family members by Indian Army.

Source of Information on the Incident:

Regional Coordinator of HRDA for North-East of India

Communication from member of Manab Adhikar Sangram Samiti

Status of the Human Rights Defenders:

Mr. Pranob Hazarika is a human rights activist and associated with Manab Adhikar Sangram Samiti (MASS), a renowned human rights organisation in Assam.

The Perpetrators:

Army personnel of Sonari Banphera base Army Camp

Date of Incident:

26th November 2016

Place of Incident:

Residence of HRD Mr. Pranab Hazarika, Baliyan Grant, PO Auguri Shyam, PS Sonari, District Charaideo, Assam

Details of the Incident:

According to the sources, on 26th November 2016, at around 11 AM, army personnel of Sonari Banphera Base Army Camp came to Mr. Pranab Hazarika's residence and cordoned off their house. At that time Mr. Pranab Hazrika was not present in the house and his wife, Ms. Lalita Hazarika and elder son Mr. Bhaskar Hazrika were only present. The army personnel ordered them to open the door by shouting. After Ms. Lalita Hazarika opened the door, they tried to pick up her elder son forcefully. After several requests made by Ms. Lalita Hazarika, the army personnel did not pick Mr. Bhaskar Hazrika and ordered Ms. Lalita Hazarika to produce her husband Mr. Pranab Hazarika at Sonari Banphera Base Army Camp next day in the morning. The army personnel went to Mr. Pranab Hazarika's younger brother, Mr. Rupeswar Hazarika's house on the same day at night in search of Mr. Pranab Hazarika and they harassed and physically assaulted Mr. Rupeswar Hazarika's. He was kicked on his stomach and beaten. Next day morning, again a group of army personnel from the same army camp came to Mr. Pranab Hazarika's house. They threatened Mr. Pranab Hazarika's wife Ms. Lalita Hazarika that if they get Mr. Pranab Hazarika they would break his legs and throw him. Since then Mr. Pranad Hazarika could not stay at his home due to the continuous harassment and threats till date.

A petition was submitted by Ms. Lalita Hazarika, to the Deputy Commissioner of Charaideo seeking to provide safety and security to their family from the army harassment.

Mr. Pranab Hazarika has been charged under Section 38 of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and a fabricated case has been registered numbering 219/16 in the Sonari PS for his alleged links with ULFA. Army is the complainant in the case. This

case has been registered against Mr. Pranab Hazarika for his human rights work and his association with MASS. It has to be further noted that his family members have been physically assaulted and harassed by army prior to the registration of case. Anticipatory bail petition has been filed in the Sibsagar District Sessions Court and will be heard on 20th January 2017.

Appeal:

HRDA most respectfully appeals that this Hon'ble Commission to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that:

Orders an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned events of the harassment and intimidation of the human rights defender and his family members;

Take immediate legal actions on the perpetrators, in this case the army personnel of Sonari Banphera Base Army Camp, for harassing HRD Mr. Pranab Hazarika and physically assaulting his family members and using all provisions of law to ensure that the human rights defenders and their families are not harassed or attacked in future by the army;

Order the appointment of an experienced lawyer practicing criminal law in this case to ensure that the HRD Mr. Pranab Hazarika is represented at all stages of this case and ensure that all legal remedies are available to the human rights defender. The appointed lawyer should report at periodic intervals to the NHRC on the progress in the case registered;

Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the activist and human rights defender Mr. Pranab Hazarika who still faces the risk of further reprisals from the perpetrators and give this assurance to the NHRC of India in writing immediately and urgently;

Ensure provision of compensation, an apology to activist and human rights defender Mr. Pranab Hazarika for the psychological suffering he underwent due to the threat, intimidation faced by him and his family members.

Looking forward for your action in this regard,

Thanking you

Henri Tiphagne

National Working Secretary