



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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June 07, 2017

To,

Shri Srinivasa Kammath

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 – Madhya Pradesh: Killing of six farmers by unprovoked police firing on them while they were protesting at Pipalya Mandi area in Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh - 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 now writing to express our grave concern regarding the excessive use of force by Madhya Pradesh Police in which six farmers who were protesting against the policies of the state government were killed in Mandsaur district of Madhya Pradesh.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- The Coordinator of HRDA for East of India,
- Information from Mr. Shiv Kumar Sharma @ Kakaji from Rastriya Kishan Mazdor Sangh and Mr. Harnam Singh Journalist Nai Duniya
- Media reports

Status of Human Rights Defender:

- a) Kanhaiyalal Patidar (s/o Bhurelal Patidar) of resident of Chilod Piplia,
- b) Bablu Patidar (s/o Jagdish Patidar) resident of Takrawad,
- c) Surendra Singh Patidar (s/o Omkar Singh) resident of Reecha Badri ,
- d) Prem Singh Patidar,
- e) Sathyanarayan
- f) Abhishek Patidar

All of them are members of Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Sangh (RKMS). RKMS is an informal platform of different unorganised labour and farmer unions. At different points of time, this platform has raised different issues of right violation of labourers and farmers in Madhya Pradesh. They are currently protesting for their demand to increase the minimum support prices of their agricultural produce.

The Perpetrators:

- a) S.K Singh, District Collector of Mandsaur
- b) M.B Ojha, Divisional Commissioner
- c) Abhishek Deewan, Superintendent of Police (City), Mandsaur
- d) OP Tripathi, Superintendent of Police, Mandsaur
- e) Police personnel in charge deployed in the area.

Date of Incident:

June 6, 2017

Place of Incident:

Near Pipalya Mandi in Mandsaur district

Incident detail:

According to sources, Since June 1, 2017, farmers from western districts of Madhya Pradesh were agitating under the banner of RKMS. They were demanding an increase in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) of their produce. There were also demands of loan waiver, in tune to the Uttar Pradesh state government's decision in April, 2017. The protests were peaceful and to gain attention of the government, farmers in some places poured milk, dumped vegetables on the road and continued in a peaceful manner across Madhya Pradesh.

Despite the protests intensifying across Madhya Pradesh, the state government did not respond to the concerns and demands of the farmers. On June 5, 2017, after there were reports that Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh had assured to increase the MSP, Madhya Pradesh Kisan Sena (MPKS) and Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) which are affiliated to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) withdrew from the protest. But other main farmer bodies like Bharatiya Kisan Union, Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Sangh and the Aam Kisan Union continued their agitation and they accused BKS for colluding with the government and betraying the farmers.

On June 06, 2017, in Pipalya Mandi area, the police opened fire on protesters at about 2 PM. The protestors accused the police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel for indiscriminate firing at them. Six protestor died due to bullet injury, five on the spot and another one died while being taken to the hospital in Indore. Many protesters have been injured seriously and are undergoing treatment in hospitals.

Appeal :

We therefore urge you to immediately:

- Order an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned unprovoked and indiscriminate police firing at Mandsaur.

- While enquiring into this incident of excessive use of force on peaceful protestors, resulting in death of innocent farmers, like your counterparts in Asia, hold a public hearing in Mandsaur and allow protestors to place their testimonies and statements before the NHRC;
- Departmental action and prosecution of perpetrators found responsible for ordering this unprovoked police firing;
- Issue a public statement condemning the recent crackdown on peaceful protests
- Form an independent committee to draft the guidelines for police and security forces to follow to facilitate peaceful protests and this to be on lines with the practical recommendations submitted by the former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and Association.

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 it.

Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary