



Human Rights Defenders Alert- India

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June 15, 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 – West Bengal - Attack on journalists in Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Cooch Bher, West Bengal – 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 endeavors 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 attack on group of journalists, being mercilessly beaten at Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Cooch Behar while they had been there to follow a news incident.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- The Coordinator of HRDA for the East of India
- Media Reports

The Perpetrators:

Student leaders associated with Trinamool Chhatra Parisad

The Human rights defender:

Mr. Subhendu Bhattacharya, Mr. Debasish Mukherjee, Mr. Darpan Pran Pratim Pal, Mr. Sashikesh Roy, Mr. Hirak Roy, Mr. Bipul Das, Mr. Ashok Dey – who are the local representatives of different media and vernacular publications from the State of West Bengal.

Date of Incident:

April 21, 2017.

Place of Incident:

In the campus of Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya, Pundibari, Cooch Behar, West Bengal.

Incident detail:

As per the source, a group of journalists had gone to Uttar Banga Krishi Viswavidyalaya on the morning of April 21, 2017, to check the ground reality on hearing that the students had gheraoed the Dean of the university Mr.Tapan Kumar Hath in his chamber overnight. Right from their entrance into the University campus, they were not allowed to click pictures and their cameras were snatched. They were not allowed to collect any information from the place. One of the journalist Mr. Subhendu Bhattacharya was brutally attacked along with other journalists. He received several injury marks on his chest and head. Other journalists who were assaulted during the scuffle incident were Mr.Debasish Mukherjee, Mr.Darpan Pran Pratim Pal, Mr.Sashikesh Roy, Mr.Hirak Roy, Mr.Bipul Das, Mr.Ashok Dey and few others. Six journalists were admitted to Cooch Behar's MJN hospital in critical condition.

Appeal :

Therefore, in the light of above mentioned facts and circumstances, HRDA most respectfully appeals that this Hon'ble Commission to urgently:

- Order an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above mentioned incident on the attack of the journalists;
- Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity and protection of the journalists ;
- Take immediate action on the perpetrators for intimidating journalists and using all provisions of law to ensure that they are not threatened, harassed or attacked in future;
- Put an end to all acts of attack and harassment of human rights defenders in the State of West Bengal to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities as defenders of human rights without any hindrances;
- More generally, ensures in all circumstances the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms 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 West Bengal.

Looking forward for action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

Henri Tiphagne

National Working Secretary