



## 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)

*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](mailto:hrd-nhrc@nic.in)

Dear Sir,

***Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action –Tamil Nadu: Intimidation, threat, harassment, illegal detention of journalist Mr. Mathan in Mylapore Police Station in Chennai, Tamil Nadu - Regarding***

**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 concerns regarding the intimidation, threat, harassment, illegal detention and false case registered on journalist Mr. Mathan Kumar who had gone to police station for helping his friend retrieve his impounded vehicle.

**Status of the Human Rights Defender**

Mr.Mathan Kumar is a Chennai-based journalist with the Times of India .

**Source of Information on the Incident:**

- Communication from Peoples Watch
- The Regional Coordinator for the South of HRDA India
- Media Reports

**Date of Incident:**

April 19, 2017

**Place of Incident:**

Mylapore, Chennai

**The Perpetrators:**

Mr. Alex, Sub-Inspector of Mylapore Police Station

**Incident details:**

According to sources, on April 19, 2017, Mr. Mathan Kumar had gone to Mylapore Police Station to help his friend Mr. Vignesh whose vehicle was impounded the previous night by the police.

The Sub inspector Mr. Alex, who was on duty, snatched Mr. Mathan Kumar's identity card without listening to his explanation for reasons he came to the police station. Mr. Alex read out the name and address from the ID card to another policeman urging him to register a false case against the journalist and his friend Vignesh. The officer Mr. Alex also pulled the journalist by his shirt collar and detained him till evening.

**Appeal:**

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that the Commissioner of Police, the District Collector and District Magistrate of **Chennai District** -

- Order an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective, independent and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned incident of intimidation, harassment, illegal detention on journalist Mr. Mathan Kumar;
- Take immediate action on the perpetrators in this case the Sub-Inspector Mr. Alex for the intimidation, threat, harassment, illegal detainment on journalist Mr. Mathan;
- Ensure provision of reparation, compensation, apology to the human rights defender for the intimidation and harassment and psychological suffering he underwent because of the harassment and intimidation;
- Put an end to all acts of harassment against all journalists and human rights defenders including Mr Mathan Kumar as well as others in the State of Tamil Nadu to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities as human rights defenders 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 Tamil Nadu.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



**(Henri Tiphagne)**  
**National Working Secretary**