



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

No.32, Besant Road, Chokkikulam, Madurai - 625 002, Tamil Nadu, India.
P: +91-452-2531874 & 2539520 Fax: +91-452- 2531874 Mobile: 99943-68540
E.mail: hrda.india@gmail.com Web: www.hrdaindia.org

August 17, 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

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India – Urgent Appeal for Action – Assam: Murder of human rights defender and student leader Mr. Lafiqul Islam Ahmed in Kokrajhar, Assam – 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 writing to express our grave concern over the murder of All Bodoland Minority Students' Union President Lafiqul Islam Ahmed at Titaguri Bazar of Kokrajhar, Assam on August 1, 2017 by two armed miscreants.

About the HRD:

Mr. Lafiqul Islam Ahmed was the president of All Bodoland Minority Students' Union and a well-known minority student leader in Assam. He was critical of the present state government for its anti-Muslim policies and interventions. He was vocal against the forceful eviction of Muslims from government land across the state of Assam, demanded compensation and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) induced by river erosion in Assam.

He tirelessly campaigned against corruption and fighting for child marriage, child labour, dowry, polygamy among Muslim community. According to sources, it is also suspected that his killing has links with the cow smuggling, where he was supposed to expose link of cow smugglers and a top police officer in Kokrajhar, Assam.

Source of Information on the Incident:

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

The Perpetrators:

Two unidentified armed miscreants.

Date of Incident:

August 1, 2017

Place of Incident:

Titaguri market, Kokrakhar in Assam.

Details of the incident:

On August 1, 2017, Mr. Lafiqul Islam Ahmed was in a tiles shop at Titaguri in Kokrajhar. At around 4.30 PM two armed miscreants wearing helmet shot at Lafiqul from a point blank range. He died on the spot. In this firing one staff named Mr. Subhangkar Chakravarty sustained two bullet injuries. Police recovered two empty cartridges, a pair of sunglasses and a wrist watch from the spot.

He was one of the leaders who organised state-wide protest and demonstration against the killing of Mr. Yaqub Ali in a police firing on 30th June 2017 in the Goalpara district of Assam. He planned to lead a protest march on August 2, 2017, which was a day after his killing, against the alleged harassment faced by Muslim residents in the name of D-Voter, where over 10,000 people were supposed to gather in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office in the adjoining Chirang district in Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD).

Appeal:

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps and:

- Independently enquire into the murder of human rights defender Mr. Lafiqul Islam Ahmed through the Investigation wing of National Human Rights Commission;
- Based on the independent enquiry, using the powers granted by Protection of Human Rights Act 1993, intervene in the court through an experienced criminal lawyer;
- Ensure compensation and security of the family of Mr. Lafiqul Islam Ahmed who continue to face the risk of attack;
- Puts an end to all acts of denial, attack and harassment against all acts of denial of speech and expression of all and the human rights defenders in the state of Assam and ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities as defenders of human rights without any hindrances ;

- Ensure peace and communal harmony in the region, as the region has witnessed several ethnic violence in the past, and;
- Take steps to 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:
 - 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;
 - Article 12.2, which provides 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”;

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