



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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Ref No:- HRDA/South/TN/2/6/2018

June 19, 2018

To

Mr. Srinivasa Kammath,
Focal Point-Human Rights Defenders,
National Human Rights Commission,
Manav Adhikar Bhawan Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,
New Delhi-110023,
E-mail –ID: hrd-nhrc@nic.in

Dear Sir,

Subject: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - Tamil Nadu: Planned attack on Tamil nationalist leader Mr. P Maniarasan in Thanjavur - Regarding

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert - India!

HRDAAlert - 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.

We are writing to express our grave concern regarding the planned attack on the Tamil Nationalist leader Mr.P Maniarasan on June 10, 2018, by unknown assailants. The police have booked a case for robbery under Section 394 of IPC, even though this is an alleged case of a planned attack on the leader.

Source of information on the incident:

Media Reports
Communication with HRDs in Tamil Nadu

The Human Rights Defender:

Mr. P Maniarasan aged 71 is the president of a people's movement called Tamil Desiya Periyakkam, organiser of the Cauvery Water Rights Retrieval Committee and a dedicated Human Rights Defender, who has been involved in a number of democratic protests in Tamil Nadu for the last four decades.

Perpetrator:

Unidentified assailants
Tamil Nadu Police

Date of Incident:

June 10, 2018

Place of Incident:

Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu

Details of the Incident:

On the night of June 10, 2018, Mr. P Maniarasan along with Mr. Srinivasan, another of his movement member, was riding on a two wheeler towards the Thanjavur Railway Station to board a train to Chennai. The two assailants had been following Mr. P Maniarasan on a bike for two kilometres and when they reached the godown near Vallam, the assailants rammed into Mr. P Maniarasan's bike. He suffered injuries on both his knees and was taken to a nearby hospital.

In the FIR no 301/2018, the police have booked a case at the Thanjavur Medical College Police station under sec. 394 IPC as a case of robbery. In a specific complaint lodged by him with the Thanjavur Medical College Police Station, he has clearly mentioned that the assailants' intention was not robbery but to hurt him. However, despite the assailant's intentions mentioned in the FIR, police registered his FIR under section 394 IPC too. Mr. P Maniarasan was admitted in Vinothagan Private Hospital, Thanjavur on the night of the attack and was discharged on June 14, 2018. It is pertinent to note that the Chief Minister Mr. Edappadi K. Palanisami said in the State Assembly on June 11, 2018, that three special police teams have been constituted to conduct an enquiry on the attack on Maniarasan. He projected that the incident was a case of robbery.¹ The police teams are probing the footages from CCTV cameras from the scene occurrence.

Background:

This attack should be viewed against the backdrop of the continuous state repression on democratic forces and Tamil nationalist leaders, who organised peaceful protests

¹ <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/special-teams-to-probe-attack-on-maniarasan/article24140338.ece>

in various parts of Tamil Nadu against the anti-people policies of the central and state governments in the recent past. There have been a lot of peaceful demonstrations and democratic protests across Tamil Nadu on a number of livelihood rights and environmental issues such as anti – Koodankulam Nuclear Plant Protests², anti – Sterlite Protests³, anti – Methane extraction, anti – GAIL Pipe Line Protests⁴ the Cauvery Water rights retrieval Protests⁵ and lastly the protests against the eight lane highway from Salem to Chennai.

Number of activists and Tamil leaders have been slapped with sedition charges and arrested under the infamous Goondas Act or under the National Security Act. (*Thamizhaga Vazh, Two Naam Thamizhar Katchi Cadres, five Makkal Adhikaram Cadres* have been already arrested under the NSA and the Goondas Act. Similarly film Director, Mr. Ameer has been booked for his views expressed in a Television debate recently).

Appeal

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

- Order an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above - mentioned incident of a planned attack on the HRD, Mr.P Maniarasan;
- Take immediate action on the perpetrators, in this case they are unknown, who should be searched for with a nationwide alert issue and investigation done transparently and considering all angles and register the case under proper sections as per the allegations made in the complaint by Mr. P Maniarasan;
- Guarantee in all circumstances at the cost of the state, the physical and psychological integrity of the members of Tamil Desiya Periyakkam including

² <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jun/06/lonely-struggle-india-anti-nuclear-protesters-tamil-nadu-kudankulam-idinthakarai>

³ <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/anti-sterlite-protests-the-story-till-now/article23966926.ece>

⁴ <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/anti-gail-protest-turns-violent/article19963459.ece>

⁵ <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/protests-continue-over-cauvery-issue-in-tn/article23466684.ece>

Mr.P Maniarasan who are HRDs still under risk of further attacks from the perpetrators;

- Put an end to all acts of attack and harassment of human rights defenders in the State of Tamil Nadu to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities as defenders of human rights without any hindrances; and,
- 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henri Tiphagne', with a horizontal line underneath it.

(Henri Tiphagne)

Honorary National Working Secretary