



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

Ref No: HRDA/South/TN/06/09/2019

September 10, 2019

To,

Mr. Khaleel Ahmed

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 – Cancelling admission of a student HRD Mr. Kiruba Mohan for allegedly being involved in raising social issues in University of Madras - 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 cancellation of admission of student human rights defender Mr. Kiruba Mohan by the authorities of University of Madras.

Status of Human Rights Defender:

Mr. Kiruba Mohan is the former Member of Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle at University of Madras where he had studied Post Graduation in Media. He had been active in raising voices against lack of basic amenities in the university campus and had also organised and took part in protests within the campus on various social issues.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- Coordinator for HRDA in Tamil Nadu
- Communication with the HRD Mr. Kiruba Mohan

Perpetrators:

Mr. P. Duraisamy, Vice-Chancellor of University of Madras.

Details of the Incident:

Mr. Kiruba Mohan had enrolled in M.A. (Buddhism) course at the Department of Philosophy at University of Madras in July 2019. He was given a provisional admission dated 31.07.2019 by the Head of Philosophy Department and he had submitted all the original certificates confirming his admission for the course. Mr. Kiruba Mohan started attending the classes since then. Suddenly on 21 August, 2019 Prof. Venkatachalapathy had called on Mr. Kiruba Mohan and told him that there have been a lot of pressure from the Governor's office and the Vice-Chancellor's office to cancel his admission and further told that he had replied to them that the candidate's certificates are proper and hence there is no reason for cancelling the admission. Prof. Venkatachalapathy further told him that since he is a part of Ambedkar-Periyar Study Circle, there is a pressure to cancel his admission.

Suddenly on August 29, 2019, Prof. Venkatachalapathy called on Mr. Kiruba Mohan and informed him that there had been intensive pressure to cancel his admission, and hence his admission has been cancelled and asked him to collect the letter for the same and his original certificates. When Mr. Kiruba Mohan asked for the reason for cancelling his admission, it was stated that the Vice-Chancellor had asked to cancel his admission as he did not submit the eligibility certificate. He also further told the Head of Department that during admission he himself told that since the previous degree was from University of Madras itself, there is no necessity to submit eligibility certificate.

According to the rules and practise at University of Madras, eligibility certificates are needed only for students who have completed their degree in universities other than University of Madras.

Further it is pertinent to note that Mr. Kiruba Mohan has been vocal in various social issue inside the campus of University of Madras. He had organised a protest against controversial statements of Mr. Tarun Vijay, Member of Parliament regarding people of Tamil Nadu and the statement of Mr. L. Ganesan, leader of Bharatiya Janatha Party. He had also raised various issues regarding lack of infrastructure within the Madras University Campus such as non-availability of sanitary pads, drinking water, etc. He has also been vocal during the incident of attack on Head of Department of

Vaishnavite Studies by members of Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarthi Parishad, student-wing of Bharatiya Janatha Party.

Hence it is suspected that the real reason for cancelling the admission of Mr. Kiruba Mohan is this activism inside the campus, which is a genuine human rights work. It is also reported that two other students who have enrolled in M.A. Buddhism course have not submitted their eligibility certificates and still continue their course, whereas Mr. Kiruba Mohan is singled out and has been denied his admission. The Vice-Chancellor of University of Madras Mr. P. Duraisamy, had told in a statement to the media that *“He had completely violated the admission guidelines. Last year and the year before, he created a lot of protests. The candidate had graduated from Anna University in engineering and then done a PG in journalism. He has not met the conditions of the admission guidelines,”*. Hence this statement of the Vice Chancellor proves that the Mr. Kiruba Mohan’s student activism is the reason behind cancellation of his admission.

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 cancellation of admission of Mr. Kiruba Mohan at University of Madras;
- Ensure that the admission of Mr. Kiruba Mohan is restored and he does not face any other reprisal from university authorities.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary