



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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November 1, 2017

To,

Mrs. T. Meenakumari
Chairperson, TAMIL NADU STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
143, P.S. Kumarasamy Raja Salai,
Greenways Road,
Chennai-600 028
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Sub: HRD Alert - India – Urgent Appeal for Action – Tamil Nadu – Harassment and ill treatment to human rights defender Mr. Pandian by police personnel at Vilupuram – Regarding

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert - India!

Dear Ma'am,

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 concern regarding harassment and ill-treatment of human rights defender Mr. Pandian by police personnel at Villuppuram, Tamil Nadu.

Source of Information on the Incident:

Communication from Mr. Pandian

About the HRD:

Mr. Pandian is an advocate and also a human rights activist. He is the Executive Director of Social Awareness Society for Youths (SASY) which is a registered voluntary organization committed for advancing the human rights based in Tindivanam, Tamil Nadu.

Place of the incident:

Thiyagathurukam bus stand, Villupuram

Date of Incident:

October 31, 2017

Perpetrators:

Two police personnel – a sub-Inspector and a Constable (who can be identified by Mr. Pandian)

Details of the incident:

On 31.10.2017 Mr. Pandian was returning from Coimbatore after a programme of along with two other persons - Sr. Alphonse and Mr. Devanayagam by a car and reached Thiyagathurukam at around 3.15 AM. Mr. Devanayagam resides in Thiyagathurukam village and hence they reached the bus stand in Thiyagathurukam where they were waiting in the bus stand for his son to pick him.

While they were waiting near the bus stand, one Sub Inspector and Constable came by bike and the constable who was sitting in the bike called Mr. Pandian disrespectfully. (Their names could not be identified as they were wearing rain coats) When he went to them and they asked him 'why are you standing here and where you are coming from?' for which he replied that he came here to drop Mr. Devanayagam and that he resides in Tindivanam. Then the constable immediately asked what he is doing here from Tindivanam, and he told him again that he only came to drop a person after a meeting in Coimbatore and waiting for his son to take him home.

Then the Sub Inspector of Police asked Mr. Pandian to show his identity card and he gave his advocate ID card for verification. They saw his residential address as in Madurai and immediately the Sub Inspector raised his tone aggressively and asked him what he is doing from Madurai in Tindivanam. Mr. Pandian then explained them saying that Madurai is his home town but he is working in Tindivanam and his office is also in Tindivanam.

The police personnel used filthy and abusive language and addressed him using "vada, poda" even after they verified his advocate ID card and said, "Advocate Enna Pudungiya". Mr. Pandian asked them to stop calling him "vada, poda- I am calling you sir but you are repeatedly calling me vada, poda".

The policemen replied saying that they will do as they want he should not teach them. Mr. Pandian insisted that they stop calling him 'vada, poda' and give him respect. They also arrogantly told him that he can give a complaint against them to senior officers even to Superintendent of Police and that they don't bother about it. They even said that "This is my jurisdiction and here I am the Officer and I won't listen to anyone. You can go anywhere and lodge a complaint that cannot even touch me and I can face it."

Meanwhile, the Sub-Inspector asked his constable to check whether Mr. Pandian was drunk for which, he said "Sir, you are harassing me without any reason" and the Sub Inspector abused him by using filthy language. Then the Sub Inspector asked Mr. Pandian to leave the place immediately if not he will be taken to police station and they left.

Appeal:

- Order for an immediate enquiry into this incident of harassment of a human rights defender

- Take serious actions against the Sub Inspector and Constable who had harassed Mr. Pandian

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,
Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary

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