



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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September 16, 2021

To,
Mr. C S Mawri,
Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Assistant 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 – Karnataka: WHRD's death in suspicious circumstances in Mysore after complaining of being raped by a policeman from Karnataka police.

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 regarding the death of WHRD and social activist Ms. Roopa P in Mysore, Karnataka, who complained of rape by a sub inspector P. Lokesh and was found dead in suspicious circumstances. We urge the Hon'ble Commission to refrain from mentioning WHRD's name in any public communications and postings.

Source of Information:

- Family of the WHRD
- Media Reports

Date of Incident:

August 20, 2021

Place of Incident:

Gayatripuram- Mysore, Karnataka

The Perpetrators:

Sub Inspector Lokesh P. Hunsoor police station, Mysore
Police Personnel of Karnataka police

About the Human Rights Defender:

Ms. Roopa P was a WHRD based in Mysore working for the upliftment of vulnerable people in the community. Since 2014, she has been working as a volunteer in various human rights organisations and worked on issues concerning rights of Dalits, children and women.

Details of the Incident:

In 2014, Ms. Roopa went to the Hunsoor police station in Mysore for conducting an enquiry into the case on rape of a girl child and was introduced to Sub Inspector P Lokesh. Later, when she went to enquire about another case of lockup death of Ratnapuri Devaraj, she met SI Lokesh again. Later, she met SI Lokesh at Kappadi Jathra and also when she went to attend her father's ancestral agricultural property case pending in the civil court. SI Lokesh met her at the court and convinced her that he will settle the disputes of her ancestral agricultural land.

On March 16, 2021, SI Lokesh called the WHRD at about 11 AM to his Bettada pura police quarters to discuss the ancestral land dispute and forcibly dragged Ms. Roopa to a room and raped her. After this incident, SI Lokesh used to visit the complainant frequently at her mother's house and gave assurance that he will marry her.

In early July 2021, when Ms. Roopa forced SI Lokesh to marry her, the second wife of SI Lokesh, Ms. Sumalatha called her on phone and threatened her to not interfere with SI Lokesh. Ms. Roopa was further threatened by Lokesh's first wife Ms. Nethravathi and her brother Mr. Sanjeeva.

On July 16, 2021, Ms. Roopa filed a complaint at the Mysuru Women's Police station, Mysore Rural sub-division, Mysore District. The complaint filed by her alleged that SI Lokesh raped and used her physically and sexually and further made her to believe that he would marry her, but he cheated her and she was threatened with murder by his wife and family members.

An FIR was registered under section 376 (punishment for rape), 417 (punishment for cheating), 506 (punishment for criminal intimidation), r/w34 IPC (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) against SI Lokesh, Ms. Sumalatha, Ms. Nethravathi, Mr. Sanjeeva.

On July 17, 2021, July 19, 2021 and July 21, 2021, Ms. Roopa received 3 notices from the police with respect to mapping of places where the incident happens i.e., Bettadapura police quarters and also to cooperate for the investigation and to hand over her mobile. Ms. Roopa handed over her mobile phone to the police for cooperating with the investigation.

On July 28, 2021, Ms. Roopa gave a sworn statement before the Hon'ble Periyapatna Court under Cr.P.C. Section 164, that as she had an abortion, she was not able to rush to police station to submit the document and other witnesses.

On August 12, 2021, Ms. Roopa was admitted in the Mysore government hospital for being weak and mentally stressed. She was fine when she was admitted and ate her food in the evening. However at midnight she was shifted to the ICU and proclaimed critical. Suspiciously, policemen from the local police station visited hospital every day keeping an eye on her. On August 20, 2021, doctors reported that, Ms. Roopa died due to acute anaemia and the family members requested no post mortem.

The Circle Police Inspector of Mysore, when asked about not performing post-mortem replied that the police have not received the death memo from the hospital. The SI Lokesh is absconding.

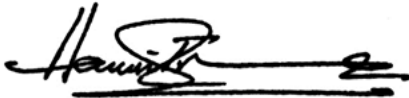
We believe that WHRD Ms. Roopa has died in extremely suspicious circumstances after filing a complaint of rape against the policeman. We also believe that negligence has been shown by the Mysore police in investigation her death.

Appeal:

We urge the Hon'ble Commission to immediately intervene in this case and –

- Direct the Director General of Police of Karnataka for an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective, and impartial investigation into the suspicious death of WHRD Ms. Roopa P, her complaint against the SI P Lokesh for rape and to submit the report within two weeks to the NHRC.
- Depending on the findings of the report, direct the Director General of Police of Karnataka to take urgent action against SI Lokesh P and other policemen responsible for negligence and suspicious death of WHRD Ms. Roopa P.
- Direct the police to provide security to the family of Ms. Roopa who may face threat from SI P Lokesh and his family who are absconding.
- Direct the Chief Secretary of Karnataka to take necessary steps for providing congenial atmosphere to human rights defenders and Activists for smooth working in the state of Karnataka.

Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary