



HRDA/UA/South/PY/03/11/2023

17 November 2023

To,  
Mr. Indrajeet Kumar,  
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](mailto:hrd-nhrc@nic.in)

Dear Sir,

**Sub: HRD Alert – Urgent Appeal for Action – Puducherry – Inaction by the Puducherry Police on physical assault and attempt to murder a Dalit Human Rights Defender**

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert!

HRD Alert - India is a forum of 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 concern regarding the attack on Dalit Human Rights Defender Mr. S. Kalidas for his activism and police negligence in providing protection to the HRD, registration of the FIR and failure to incorporate the provision of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

**About the Human Rights Defender:**

Mr. S. Kalidas has been working for the human rights of Dalits and Adivasis in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The HRD works with welfare organisations like Social Awareness Society for Youth (SASY) to develop the Dalit community.

**Source of Information:**

- Communication with HRDA-South Co-ordinator
- Communication with the HRD

**Perpetrators:**

Police officials of Laspeth Police Station, Puducherry.

**Date of Incident:**

October 14, 2023

**Place of Incident:**

Karuvadikuppam, 53, Mettu Street, Puducherry.

**Background:**

About a year ago, HRD helped a Dalit woman, Munjuladevi, who had been sexually harassed by a person named Sakthivel (23), who belonged to a Vanniyar Community from Puthu Pallikozhi Street in Karuvandikuppam.

The HRD accompanied the Dalit woman to the Laspeth police station and helped her to lodge a complaint. The complaint was later retracted at the police station as the village elders and Sakthivel's relatives assured them that Sakthivel would not behave like this in the future.

However, since the filing of the complaint, Sakthivel has repeatedly threatened the HRD for supporting the Dalit woman by making threatening phone calls.

**Details of the Incident:**

On October 14, 2023, Sakthivel called the HRD over the phone and threatened him. The HRD immediately informed Laspeth police sub-inspector Anwar Pasha and narrated the incident. But no action was taken in this regard by the police officials.

On the same day, at about 09.50 PM, Munjuladevi's mother, Ms. Varalakshmi, contacted the HRD, stating that someone entered the house and started searching for her daughter. The HRD reached her home at Karuvadikuppam, 53, Mettu Street, Puducherry, at about 10.30 PM.

At around 11.00 PM, six men led by Sakthivel entered Munjuladevi's house and knocked on the door with knives. After breaking the door, they entered the house and brutally attacked HRD and Varalakshmi. They beat him using their fists and stomped on his body. Sakthivel and an unidentified person attacked the HRD using a knife.

He received 5 injuries, a cut on his head, ear, left hand middle finger and index finger and right hand middle finger and ring finger was cut off. On the right side of the ear and the head, he sustained cuts with the knife. Varalakshmi received a head injury when she was attacked with a knife. Seeing the pool of blood, the assailants fled from the crime scene.

At around 12.10 A.M on October 15, 2023 then, HRD was taken to Laspeta police station by Dalit woman's mother to register an FIR and seek protection of the police. Aggrieved by the inaction of the police, they left the police station for Puducherry Government Hospital. Because of the non-availability of doctors, he was shifted to BIMS private Hospital, Puducherry and later shifted to JIPMER Hospital in Puducherry. On October 15, 2023, at about 07.00 AM, the HRD was shifted to Puducherry government hospital and was treated in a critical condition in the special ward. He was discharged from the hospital on October 27, 2023. After that, he repeatedly approached the Laspeta Police regarding the status of the investigation and filed representation seeking amendment of FIR as per provisions of the SC / ST (PoA) Act but no SC/ST Act was filed on the perpetrators. Sakthivel and six juvenile youth (names not disclosed by the police) were arrested by the police.

We are deeply concerned by the attack on a Dalit HRD and the negligence of the Laspeta police. We believe that this was a pre-meditated attack on a Dalit Human Rights Defender who has been working consistently in the region to and tried to support a Dalit victim. We also believe that the local police acted with deliberate apathy towards assault on a Dalit HRD and refused to give him a copy of the FIR. Section 154 (2) of Criminal procedure Code, say that a copy of FIR must be provided to the informant free of cost.

Most importantly, we believe that an FIR was not filed under provisions of the SC / ST (PoA) Act despite the attack being on a Dalit HRD and the victim's repeated request to the police.

Every person has the right to life and liberty enshrined under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution 1950, Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, and Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966. The right to life includes the right of fair investigation and Speedy trial.

The inaction of the Laspeta police in the investigation and Negligence in the registration of the FIR as per provisions of the SC / ST (PoA) Act despite repeated requests, failure on the part of the police to provide a copy of the FIR to the victim and uploading it in online amounts to a violation of the right of a fair investigation. The failure of police to provide protection despite repeated requests amounts to a violation of the right to life.

**Appeal:**

We urge the Hon'ble Commission to take cognisance of the above case and urgently:

- Direct the Direct General of Police (DGP) of Puducherry to submit a detailed report on the wilful negligence and inaction by policemen of Lapset police station by not registering an FIR when the HRD first went to the police station on October 14.
- Direct the Direct General of Police (DGP) of Puducherry to produce within 48 hours copies of all relevant documents pertaining to FIR no 139 of 2023, police station Laspet, Puducherry.
- Direct for an FIR against police personnel of Lapset PS under Section 4 of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act for their wilful negligence and inaction to register an FIR.
- Direct payment of interim compensation, in addition to the compensation allowed under the SC/ST (PoA) Act, to S. Kalidas given that the brutal attacks on him and his family are a result of his human rights work. We urge that this case is treated as a case of reprisal on human rights defender.
- Direct the Director General of the Police of Puducherry to ensure physical and psychological safety of HRD S Kalidas and his family and to protect them from further harassment.

We hope to hear from you soon,

Yours Sincerely,

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

(Henri Tiphagne)

National Working Secretary