



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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May 14, 2017

To

Shri Srinivasa Kammath

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

Sub: HRD Alert - India – Urgent Appeal for Action – Manipur: Threats and intimidation by Manipur armed police to Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram, Founder of Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network and her elderly parents – Regarding

Dear Sir,

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 the threats and intimidations to Human Right Defender Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram, Founder of Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network and her elderly parents by Manipur Police.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- The Coordinator of HRDA for the North East of India and media reports.
- Communication with Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram

About the HRD:

Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram is a humanitarian activist and a writer. She co-founded India's first civil society organization which is working on conventional disarmament issues, namely the Control Arms Foundation of India. And in 2007, in order to help thousands of women who are affected by gun violence in her home-state Manipur, Ms Nepram launched the Manipuri Women Gun Survivor Network. Ms Nepram is also leading the work in India on the issue of anti-personnel landmines, cluster bombs and of international Arms Trade Treaty. She is an active member of International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Cluster Munitions Coalition.

The Perpetrators:

Manipur Police

Date of Incident:

May 12, 2017

Place of Incident:

Family residence of Binlakshmi Nepram, Imphal, Manipur

The detail of the incident

Around 1:30 PM on May 12, 2017, heavily armed officers of Manipur police, entered Ms. Nepram's family home in Imphal. At that time Ms. Nepram was away from home but her elderly parents, father who is 87 year old and mother who is 84 year old, were asked about her in a very intimidating way. According to Ms. Nepram, she is being targeted for helping the family of Irom Roger to reopen the case of road rage incident where Irom Roger was allegedly killed by present Chief Minister's son N Ajay Singh through bullet.

A Supreme Court Lawyer, Mr. Utsav Singh Bains is the legal counsel in Irom Roger's case and was visiting Imphal on March 17 and 18, 2017, for the same. On March 22, 2017, he received a phone call from a person claiming to be a cadre of PLA (banned insurgent group-People's Liberation Army), threatening him and asking him to drop the case. Mr. Bains lodged an FIR with the Superintendent of Police (CID) Imphal on March 22, 2017, for the death threats received from PLA cadre. No local lawyers from Manipur High Court were willing to intervene in the case fearing for their lives. On May

10, 2017, the petition was filed in the Manipur High Court by Mr. Bains on behalf of Irom Roger's mother Ms. Chitra.

A day after filing the petition in the Manipur High Court, armed police officers went to Ms. Nepram house, in an attempt to intimidate her as she is involved in the case. Ms. Nepram filed a complaint about the intimidations and threats with the Prime Minister's office and the Ministry of Home Affairs. But now police is trying to distort the facts by saying the intimidations as exaggerated rumours instead of taking actions on it.

With regard to the FIR lodged by Mr. Bains, despite his repeated attempts to contact the investigating officer (IO) to record his statement in the Manipur High Court, the IO failed to record his statement. Finally Mr. Bains submitted his written statement to the DGP Manipur over e-mail.

Appeal:

HRDA most respectfully appeals that this Hon'ble Commission to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that:

- Orders an immediate, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned events of the intimidation of HRD Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram and her family members;
- Take immediate legal actions on the perpetrators, in this case the Manipur Police for intimidating HRD Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram and her family members and using all provisions of law to ensure that the human rights defenders and their families are not harassed or attacked in future by the Manipur police;
- Everyone involved in the petition, especially lawyer Mr. Utsav Singh Bains and Ms. Chitra mother of Irom Roger, should be provided immediate protection and ensure that they are not threatened or intimidated during the course of laws.
- Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the activist and HRD Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram who still faces the risk of further reprisals from the perpetrators and give this assurance to the NHRC of India in writing immediately and urgently and;
- Ensure provision of compensation, an apology to activist and HRD Ms. Binalakshmi Nepram for the psychological suffering she underwent due to the threat, intimidation faced by her and her family members.

Yours sincerely,
Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary

Justice (Retd.) H L Dattu

Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission

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