



# HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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HRDA/UA/South/KAR/02/03/2025

29 March 2025

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: Urgent Appeal for action in case of detention of 11 HRDs at Sadashiv Nagar Police Station, Bengaluru, Karnataka for holding a peaceful press meeting.**

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert!

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 concern regarding detention of 11 HRDs who were holding a press meeting outside the Global Investors Meet, 2025 at Bengaluru on 13.02.2025.

**About the Human Rights Defenders:**

The HRDs are members of civil society organisations like People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), All India Students Association (AISA), All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) and Fridays For Future, Karnataka.

**Source of Information:**

- In Communication with the HRDs
- In Communication with the other HRDs in the region

**Perpetrators:**

Police officials of Sadashiv Nagar Police Station, Bengaluru, Karnataka.

**Date of Incident:**

February 13, 2025

**Place of Incident:**

Bangalore Palace, Bengaluru

**Background:**

From February 12, 2025 to February 14, 2025, the Karnataka Government Hosted a “Global Investors Meet” with the theme “Reimagining Growth”, aimed at highlighting the state’s strategic advantages in fostering innovation, industrial development and global partnerships. On February 13, 2025, the GIM 2025 meet organised a event titled *Sky to Soil: How Indian-Israeli Cooperation in Drones, Agri-Tech, and Clean Energy Is Driving Sustainable Innovation*.

**Details of the Incident:**

On February 13, 2025, at 12 PM, 11 HRDs from People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), All India Students Association (AISA), All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) and Fridays For Future, Karnataka organised a press meet outside the Global Investors Meet, Bengaluru Palace. They raised concern on deepening ties with Israel amid Israel military actions in Gaza and the West Bank. The activists alleged that such collaborations amounted to legitimising Israel’s actions in Gaza. They also condemned Indian government for engaging in research collaborations on drones, which they described as "*the backbone of Israeli military operations*." They released a statement pointing out India’s stance on Palestine reiterated by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in November 2024 and appealed for India to impose an arms embargo on Israel and join the ICJ case filed by South Africa against Israel for alleged genocide.

At 12.05 PM, the police officials from Sadashiv Nagar Police Station, Bengaluru interrupted the press meet and detained Ms. Aishwarya from PUCL, Karnataka and 10 other activists from All India Students Association (AISA), All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) and Fridays For Future, Karnataka. The police detained the HRDs at Sadashiv Nagar Police Station and released them at 6 PM after collecting their personal information including Aadhar details, place of residence, contact numbers and details of family members.

HRDA believes that the detention of activists for holding a peaceful press conference amounts to violation of multiple Constitutional rights that include freedom of speech and expression (Article 19(1)(a) and right to life and liberty (Article 21) without any fear of intimidation and harassment.

The Right to exercise freedom of Speech and Expression is enshrined under Article 19(a) of the Indian Constitution. The Right to freedom of opinion and expression encompasses three different aspects:

- 1) The right to hold opinions without interference,
- 2) The right to access to information and
- 3) The right to impart information and ideas of all kind

The Declaration on Human Rights Defenders 1999 seeks to protect the monitoring and advocacy functions of defenders by recognizing their right to obtain and disseminate information relevant to the enjoyment of human rights. According to Article 11 United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders 1999 *“Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to the lawful exercise their freedom of association and assembly”*.

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders 1999 states the following: Article 12 (2) and (3) *“The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure, or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration. In this connection, everyone is entitled, individually and in association with others, to be protected effectively under national law in reacting against or opposing, through peaceful means, activities, and acts, including those by omission attributable to States that result in violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as acts of violence perpetrated by groups or individuals that affect the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”*

**Appeal:**

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

- Direct the Director General of Investigation of the NHRC to initiate a transparent, independent inquiry regarding the detention of the activists and submit the report to NHRC within two weeks.
- Direct the Director General of the Police of Karnataka to ensure the safety of HRDs and to protect them from further harassment by the police.

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