



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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February 16, 2018

To

Mr. 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

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – Physical attack of human rights defender and RTI activist Mr. Kuldeep Singh Khaira in Ludhiana, Punjab- Regarding

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 physical attack of human rights defender and RTI activist Mr. Kuldeep Singh Kaira in Ludhiana, Punjab

Status of Human Rights Defender:

Mr. Kuldeep Singh Kaira is a RTI Activist based in Ludhiana, Punjab. He has been active in raising issues of unauthorised building constructions.

Source of Information on the Incident:

Communication from Mr. Surendra Bhanot, President of RTI Federation

Perpetrators:

Baljinder Singh Kahlon and Sukhvir Singh alias Sony Randhawa, the proprietors of M/S R K Builders

Details of the Incident

In Ishar Nagar area of Ludhiana city, some private builders were constructing flats without obtaining approval from the municipal corporation. On January 16, 2018, Mr. Kuldeep Singh Khaira, filed the complaints before different authorities against municipal officials for permitting the unapproved construction and issue was widely published in different English newspapers. Following which through letter no. 444/ATP-C dated 19.01.2018, the Commissioner of Police, Ludhiana was requested by municipal corporation to lodge FIR against the proprietors of M/S RK Builders for unauthorised construction. Perturbed over this action, on January 20, 2018, two persons who were associated with M/S RK Builders threatened Mr. Khaira to be silent and not follow his complaint otherwise he would have to face dire consequences. Mr. Khaira ignored this threat as the complainant took it lightly. On January 22, 2018, the municipal corporation stopped the construction on the spot and the news was covered in the media including television news channels. On the same day after the actions of municipal corporation and the coverage by media, Mr. Khaira was attacked by three persons who had covered their faces in Ludhiana, Punjab. At around 7.15 PM on January 22, 2018, when Mr. Khaira was in his office these three persons barged in and started attacking him. When the public came out for help these persons fled from the spot. The entire incident has been captured on a CCTV camera. A complaint has been registered with the police on the incident of attack on Mr. Khaira but the perpetrators are still roaming free.

Appeal:

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps and:

- Order an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned incident of physical assault on HRD Mr. Kuldeep Singh Khaira.
- Order for immediate action taken report from the Punjab police department in this case.

- Ensure that adequate protection is given to the HRD as he is facing the risk of further attack by the perpetrators who have not been apprehended by the police.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary

Copies to:

Mr. Justice (Retd.) Iqbal Ahmed Ansari

Chairperson, Punjab State Human Rights Commission,
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