



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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February 14, 2022

To,
Mr. Srivinas Kamath,
Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Joint 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- Uttar Pradesh: Brutal lathi charge and illegal detention of students and aspirants for Railway Recruitment Board examination.

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 brutal lathi charge and illegal arrests of student aspirants sitting for the Railway Recruitment Board examination in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. The students were in their hostels when the policemen suddenly broke inside their rooms and brutally assaulted them.

Source of Information:

- Communication with the HRDA North Regional Consultant
- Communication with local HRDs
- Media Reports

Date and Time of Incident:

January 25, 2022

Place of Incident:

Baghada, Allahabad

The Perpetrators:

- Police personnel of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh
- Administration of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

Background of Incident:

On January 14, 2022, the Railway Recruitment Board released the result of Non-Technical Popular Category (NTPC). The students alleged that the board notification stated that 20 percent of candidates will be selected in the CBT first examination, however, the board selected only five percent. There was dissatisfaction among the students and students in Bihar to Uttar Pradesh were protesting.

Details of the Incident:

On January 25, 2022, around 1 pm, a students' meeting was called at the Prayagraj railway junction where aspirants in large numbers assembled and then moved to the railway tracks.

The protesting students later sat on a dharna before the Kanpur Intercity train and started raising slogans. Forces of many police stations along with the Government Railway Police (GRP) and Railway Protection Force (RPF) reached the spot. The forces immediately commenced a lathi charge on protesting students.

At 04:30 pm, the police started a search operation in the areas living near Salori, Chhota Baghada, Annibesant police post. To find the protestors, the policemen entered the students' lodge and broke the doors of their rooms.

According to media reports, aspirants were doing group study when at least 20 policemen barged into their hostel and started breaking doors, glass, and chairs and even tore their books. Before they could understand what was happening, the policemen started beating them and when they resisted, the police assaulted them. They kept telling the police that they were not part of any protest, but police did not stop. Many students were injured, some were bleeding and they sought medical help, but their requests were not heeded.

Videos about police assault of students became viral on social media. Around 90 students were arrested in the police action; 200 students were injured, with 30 seriously injured. The police registered an FIR against 6 named and 1000 unknown people and arrested two people. Six policemen were later suspended for using unnecessary force during the incident.

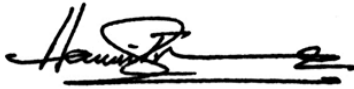
The forcible breaking of doors of students' hotel and the brutal assault on students is completely arbitrary, illegal action by the police and is a serious violation of constitutionally guaranteed personal liberty by the Constitution and Indian laws. Article 19 (1) (b) of the Constitution guarantees the right to peacefully assemble and Article 21 of the Constitution ensures to all its citizen right to life – a life to live without fear, intimidation, harassment or mental torture. The actions of the UP police violate the DK Basu guidelines of arrest, Indian penal code and the India Constitution.

Appeal:

We would like to express our grave concern about the abuse of power by district administration and police Personnel in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. We urge the Hon'ble Commission to urgently:

- Initiate an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective, and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned incident of brutal assault on students and illegal arrests by the police and submit the report to the NHRC within four weeks.
- Assess if the police complied by the standard operating procedure in the management of assemblies.
- Recommend legal and disciplinary actions on policemen for misusing their power and compensation to the injured students.

Yours sincerely,

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

Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary