



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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Ref No: HRDA/South/TN/10/09/2020

September 23, 2020

To

Mr. C.S. Mawri,
Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Assistant 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- Tamil Nadu: Fabricated case against HRD and Advocate Mr. R Rajendran under SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and physical assault.

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 physical assault on human rights defender and lawyer Mr. R Rajendran as well as fabricated charges against him for using casteist slurs and slapping another lawyer.

Source of Information:

- Communication with the HRDs in the region
- Communication with our Regional Coordinator in the South
- Communication with HRDA State Coordinator for Tamil Nadu

Date of Incident:

July 30, 2020

August 19, 2020

Place of Incident:

Karur, Tamil Nadu

The Perpetrators:

- Police Personnel of Thanthonimalai police station, Karur

About the Human Rights Defenders:

Mr. R Rajendran (67) (popularly known as Tamil Rajendran) is a Human Rights defender and advocate from Karur district- Tamil Nadu, who has been actively involved in speaking up against issues related to human rights violations and linguistic rights. He has taken up many cases defending the HRDs in his region.

Details of the Incident:

On May 24, 2020, a journalist named Mr. Kannan from Velicham TV reported to the Police that the Tamil Nadu Minister of Transport Mr. MR Vijayabhaskar is attending a marriage celebration at Karur. The journalist anticipated that Mr. Vijayabhaskar will pull in local crowd and increase the spread of the COVID-19. This information reached the supporters of the minister and they attacked Mr. Kannan's house and vandalised it. Advocate R Rajendran took up the case and provided Mr. Kannan with legal support.

In the meantime, Mr R Rajendran contacted an advocate, Mr. Raja, to discuss a matter concerning the later overcharging fees and invited him to his office to discuss the said matter on July 30, 2020. Adv. Raja following the meeting alleged that Mr. Rajendran humiliated him by calling him casteist slurs and slapping him and filed a case against Mr. Rajendran under IPC Sections 294(b), 323, 506(1) and the Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribes (Prevention of atrocities) Amendment Act 2015 Sections 3(1) (r), 3(1) (s), 3 (2) (v), at the Thanthonimalai police station in Karur. Mr. Rajendran is out on bail.

It is to be noted that Mr. Raja and Tamil Nadu Minister of Transport Mr. MR Vijayabhaskar are said to be closely associated and hence false legal actions against Mr. Rajendran.

On August 19, 2020, around 06:30 pm, Mr. Raja and a group of six people attacked Mr. Rajendran at his office, physically assaulted him and broke the fingers on the right hand. Mr. Rajendran was admitted and treated at a private hospital and later filed a police complaint Thanthonimalai police station against Mr. Raja. However, Police has refrained from taking any action against Mr. Raja despite serious offences.

We believe that Mr. Rajendran is a victim of political vendetta and fake charges because of his work as an HRD and for legally aiding a journalist. Further the physical assault on him and the police inaction is highly condemnable.

Appeal:

We urge the Hon'ble Commission to immediately intervene in this matter of fake charges and political vendetta against an HRD and urge to immediately take necessary steps and:

- Direct the Director General of Police of Tamil Nadu to initiate an immediate, fair and transparent inquiry in the false charges against Mr. R Rajendran under the SC/ST PoA Act and the physical assault on him.
- Depending on the result of the inquiry, direct the Director General of Police of Tamil Nadu to take immediate and strict action against the police officers who have misused their powers by falsely booking Mr. R Rajendran under the SC/ST PoA Act and for inaction in the case of physical assault on him.

Yours sincerely,



(Henri Tiphagne)

National Working Secretary