



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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HRDA/NHRC-SM/South/TN/02/03/2025

26 March 2025

To
Justice V. Ramasubramanian,
Chairperson,
National Human Rights Commission,
Manav Adhikar Bhawan,
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,
New Delhi –110 023
Email: chainhrc@nic.in

Respected sir,

Subject: Requesting to take up suo moto cognizance on the violation of the dignity, safety and security of a whistle-blower/youtuber and journalist in Tamil Nadu.

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 the degrading and demanding act committed against a Human Rights defender and journalist, Mr. Savukku Shankar in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

About the Human Rights Defender:

Savukku Shankar is a controversial Tamil journalist, YouTuber, and former government employee known for his outspoken views on politics, corruption, and social issues in Tamil Nadu. He gained popularity for his sharp critiques of politicians, bureaucrats, and law enforcement agencies. Savukku Shankar has played a significant role in exposing corruption and malpractice in Tamil Nadu, particularly within the police, judiciary, and political circles. As a whistleblower, he has revealed cases of bureaucratic corruption, police misconduct, illegal sand mining, and judicial irregularities, often putting himself at risk. His fearless reporting has brought attention to government scams, election funding irregularities, and corporate-political nexus issues. Despite facing legal troubles, including imprisonment for contempt of court, he

continues to be a vocal critic of corruption and an advocate for transparency in governance.

Source of Information:

- Media Reports
- Communication received from other journalists

Perpetrators: Group of people dressed as sanitary workers

Date of Incident: March, 24, 2025

Place of Incident: HRD's Resident at Kilpauk, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Background:

The HRD recently exposed an alleged scam involving the distribution of vehicles equipped with jet-rodding machines intended for Dalit entrepreneurs under a government scheme. This initiative, sponsored by both central and state governments, aimed to support individuals below the poverty line, particularly marginalized scavengers, by providing them with resources to improve their livelihoods. However, Shankar's attempts revealed that approximately 130 beneficiaries of this scheme were actually above the poverty line, suggesting misallocation and potential corruption in the implementation process. The HRD implicated a senior Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) leader, alleging their involvement in facilitating corruption and receiving kickbacks related to this scheme. He detailed these findings in a video posted on his YouTube channel, aiming to shed light on the discrepancies and advocate for the rightful allocation of resources to the intended beneficiaries.

Details of the Incident:

On 24.03.2025 around 9.45 am, a mob of around 20 people dressed as sanitary workers marched towards his house. They had shouted at the door and when his mother who was alone inside the house, had not opened it, they broke the door, entered the house, and poured sewage mixed with human excreta all over the house-the hall, bedroom, and even the kitchen. The attack is suspected to be the consequence of Savukku Shankar exposing the alleged scam in the procurement of vehicles for sanitary work under the state and central government schemes. The attackers have recorded a video of the attack. The attackers have also threatened to set fire to the house the next time, as said by his mother, Ms. Kamala who was alone at the house when the attack happened. She also claims that as she tried to call her son Savukku Shankar over her phone, the attackers snatched it away, and made a video call to Savukku Shankar showing his house being attacked. Savukku Shankar claims that his recent video was on exposing the corruption and not on degrading the

sanitary workers as the attackers claim. The [CCTV footages](#) of the incident is said to have been submitted. The incident has been reported widely in the media and a link is shared here for your kind reference – [‘Savukku’ Shankar’s home ransacked; mother files complaint](#)

This attack is an egregious infringement of the right to life, liberty, dignity and the right to freedom of speech and expression of an individual guaranteed under Articles 19 & 21 of the constitution. Very importantly, him being a whistleblower exposing the scam within the government, trying to defend the rights of the manual scavengers makes him a human rights defender and thus, makes it a clear case for the NHRC’s mandate to intervene.

Hence, I urgently appeal to you to exercise Section 12 (a) of the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2019, and take *suo moto* cognizance of this incident and initiate an independent inquiry through NHRC’s investigation wing. We hope and expect that the NHRC will intervene in this case impartially and in a time bound manner.

Thanking you

Yours Sincerely,

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

(Henri Tiphagne)

National Working Secretary

Human Rights Defenders’ Alert – India (HRDA)