

10 July 2018

### **India: Attempted shooting of the daughter of human rights defenders Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita**

On 4 July 2019, a group of unidentified men travelling in a four-wheel drive fired shots at **Urikhimbam Thoibi**, the daughter of human rights defenders **Urikhimbam Nobokishore** and **Mangsatabam Sobita**. The assailants had trailed Urikhimbam Thoibi on her way to her grandfather's home before shooting at her in Imphal, Manipur.

Urikhimbam Nobokishore is a human rights defender and secretary of the United NGOs Mission Manipur (UNM-M), a network of NGOs working on issues related to indigenous peoples' rights.

Mangsatabam Sobita is a prominent women human rights defender and the secretary of Women Action for Development (WAD), an Imphal-based NGO that advocates for women's rights.

On 4 July 2019, at around 6.30pm, Urikhimbam Thoibi was driving to her grandfather's home with her sister-in-law and a child when a four-wheel drive packed with six to seven unidentified men started trailing their vehicle closely and honking at them continuously. The men in the four-wheel drive then proceeded to verbally abuse Urikhimbam Thoibi and her friends before overtaking them.

The men continued to follow and harass Urikhimbam Thoibi and her companions from the opposite side of the road, all the way until they arrived at her grandfather's home. Upon their arrival, Urikhimbam Thoibi and her companions stepped out of their car and shouted back at the men in the four-wheel drive. Following this, the driver of the four-wheel drive started to open fire on Urikhimbam Thoibi and her companions before speeding away toward Canchipur. Urikhimbam Thoibi and her companions were physically unharmed during the incident as they managed to seek shelter inside the house.

Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita believe that the attempted shooting of their daughter is in retaliation for the human rights defenders' work in defence of indigenous rights in Manipur, as this is not the first attack against them. On 4 October 2018, both defenders were targeted by unidentified armed persons. The police had refused to file a complaint lodged by the human rights defenders regarding the incident until recently.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the attempt on the life of Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita's daughter as it is believed that it is solely motivated by their peaceful and legitimate activities in defence of human rights.

#### **Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in India to:**

1. Strongly condemn the attack against and intimidation of the daughter of Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita, which appear to be motivated by their legitimate human rights work;
2. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attack against and intimidation of the daughter of Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
3. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Urikhimbam Nobokishore and Mangsatabam Sobita and their family members, in

consultation with them;

4. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Manipur and India are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.

Front Line Defenders respectfully reminds you that the United Nations Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, adopted by consensus by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1998, recognises the legitimacy of the activities of human rights defenders, their right to freedom of association and to carry out their activities without fear of reprisals. We would particularly draw attention to Article 9: *“3. 5. The State shall conduct a prompt and impartial investigation or ensure that an inquiry takes place whenever there is reasonable ground to believe that a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms has occurred in any territory under its jurisdiction”*, and to Article 12 (2): *“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.”*

Please inform us of any actions that may be taken with regard to the above case.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Anderson

Executive Director

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