

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVISTS HELD UNDER ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION

G Thirumurugan Gandhi, D Arun Kumar, M Tyson, and Ilamaran were arrested on 21 May 2017 for attempting to stage a peaceful memorial for Tamils killed in the final stages of the civil war in Sri Lanka. Currently detained under a Tamil Nadu administrative detention law, they are at risk of being held without charge or trial for 12 months.

G Thirumurugan Gandhi, D Arun Kumar, M Tyson, and Ilamaran were arrested in Chennai, capital of Tamil Nadu State in South India, on 21 May 2017 after they attempted to stage a memorial on a beach in memory of Tamils killed in the final stages of the civil war in Sri Lanka. They were subsequently remanded in judicial custody on suspicion of offences including 'rioting' and 'criminal intimidation'.

On 29 May 2017, the Chennai police said that the men were being detained under an administrative detention law called the Tamil Nadu Prevention Of Dangerous Activities Of Bootleggers, Cyber Law Offenders, Drug Offenders, Forest Offenders, Immoral Traffic Offenders, Sand Offenders, Sexual Offenders, Slum Grabbers and Video Pirates Act - popularly referred to as the Tamil Nadu Goondas Act. The Act is a 'preventive detention' law that allows authorities to detain an individual by executive order, denying them fair trial safeguards, to 'prevent him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order'. According to G Thirumurugan's advocate, the police have not yet made available the executive order under which the men were detained.

At the same press conference on 29 May 2017, the police said that the activists did not have permission to hold a protest on the beach, and they had been detained for indulging in 'criminal activities' and 'disturbing public peace'. The police also told journalists that the four arrested men had several criminal cases registered against them.

G Thirumurugan's advocate claims that the men are being targeted for holding demonstrations against state policies. According to government data, the Tamil Nadu police detained more than 1250 people in 2015 under preventive detention laws.

Please write immediately in English or Tamil or your own language calling on authorities to:

- Release G Thirumurugan Gandhi, D Arun Kumar, M Tyson, and Ilamaran from administrative detention or charge them with recognizable criminal offenses, and guarantee them a fair trial which meets international standards;
- Drop all charges against the men relating to peaceful demonstrations they had organized or participated in;
- End the use of administrative detention under the Tamil Nadu Goondas Act or any other legislation, and repeal all laws that facilitate the use of administrative detention;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 JULY 2017 TO:

Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Edappadi K Palaniswami
Chief Minister's Office Secretariat,
Chennai 600009, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: cmsec@tn.gov.in or
cmcell@tn.gov.in
Fax: +91 44 25670930
Salutation: Dear Chief Minister

Deputy Registrar (Law) and Nodal
Officer, Focal Point for Human Rights
Defenders, National Human Rights
Commission.
Shri Srinivasa Kammath
Manav Adhikar Bhawan, Block-C,
GPO Complex, INA
New Delhi, India
Fax: +91 11 24651329
Email: dr1.nhrc@nic.in
Salutation: Dear Sir

And copies to
Commissioner of Police, Greater
Chennai
A.K Viswanathan
Commissioner of Police,
Greater Chennai police, no. 132,
Commissioner office building,
EVK Sampath road, Vepery,
Chennai 600007
Email: cop@vsnl.net

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR YASHVARDHAN KUMAR SINHA, Office of the High Commissioner for India, India House Aldwych WC2B 4NA, 020 7836 8484, Fax 020 7836 4331, info.london@hcilondon.in, www.hcilondon.in, salutation: Your Excellency **Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.**

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In relation to the other charges pending against G Thirumurugan Gandhi, D Arun Kumar, M Tyson, and Ilamaram, the men were brought before a different magistrate on 31 May 2017 for a peaceful protest regarding an inter-state water sharing dispute they had conducted in September 2016. In addition, on 1 June 2017, they were brought before a third magistrate in relation to a protest in November 2016 on the central government's decision to ban certain high-denomination currency notes. The activists have all been remanded in judicial custody until 14 June 2017.

The continuing use of administrative detention laws in India to lock up persons without charge or trial violates the rights of both suspects and victims of human rights abuses. In 2015, Tamil Nadu state made the most arrests under these administrative detention laws. National Crime Records Bureau data show that as many as 1,268 suspects, including 21 women, were detained under the law in 2015. Human rights activists in the state have accused the government of using the act to silence those who are critical about the state.

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