



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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HRDA/UA/SOUTH/TN/01/02/2026

21.02.2026

To,

1. Hon'ble Justice Mr. V. Ramasubramanian (Retd),
The Chairperson,
National Human Rights Commission,
Manav Adhikar Bhawan,
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,
New Delhi –110 023
Email: chairnhrc@nic.in
2. Mr. Indrajeet Kumar,
National Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Deputy 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 - Urgent Appeal for Action - Regarding Illegal Arrest, Detention and Human Rights Violations Against Human Rights Defender Advocate Eesan Murugasamy on 13-14 January 2026 in Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu – Reg.

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 (HRDs) under threat or with security concerns.

We are writing to express our grave concern regarding the illegal arrest, overnight detention without information to his family, and systematic human rights violations against HRD & Advocate Eesan Murugasamy by Kudimangalam Police Station personnel acting in collusion with private broiler production companies on 13-14 January 2026 in Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu.

About the Human Rights Defender

Advocate Eesan Murugasamy is the founder of the Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association and a prominent labour rights defender, an HRD actively engaged in protecting

the rights of farmers across Tamil Nadu. He resides at No. 3/414, Kalinathampalaiyam, Pollikkalipalaiyam (P.O.), Tirupur - 641665, with his wife, Advocate Mrs. Iniya.

For the past two months, Advocate Eesan Murugasamy has been coordinating and leading broiler farm farmers across Tamil Nadu in their legitimate struggle for fair wages and better contractual terms. Under his leadership, farmer representatives and broiler farm administrators have been conducting peaceful protests, meetings, and organising a production shutdown strike from January 1, 2026, to demand wage increases for broiler production farmers. His advocacy resulted in the Tamil Nadu Government arranging tripartite negotiations scheduled for 21.01.2026 at the Animal Husbandry Department Director's office following a protest on 07.01.2026.

Source of Information

- Direct communication with the HRD's wife, Advocate Mrs. Iniya.
- Communication with Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association members.
- Communication with other HRDs in the region.

Perpetrators

1. Inspector Saravanan, Kudimangalam Police Station.
2. Deputy Superintendent Namashivayam, Udumalaipettai Police.
3. Police personnel from Kudimangalam, Udumalaipettai, Sulthanpettai, Negamam Police Stations.
4. Officials from private broiler companies: Santhi Feeds and Suguna.

Date of Incident

Arrested on 13.01.2026 at approximately 10:30 PM.

Place of Incident

Kudimangalam Police Station Avinashipalayam Division, Tirupur District, Tamil Nadu.

Background

For the past two months, broiler farm contract farmers across Tamil Nadu have been engaged in a legitimate struggle for fair wages and better contractual terms. Under the leadership of HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy defending labour rights, the Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association has been coordinating farmers' peaceful protests and advocacy efforts, making continuous announcements and conducting meetings across the state.

The farmers initiated a production shutdown strike from 01.01.2026 demanding wage increases. In response to their peaceful protests, a demonstration was held on 07.01.2026 in front of the Chennai Animal Husbandry Department Director's office. Following this, the Tamil Nadu Government announced tripartite negotiations to be held on 21.01.2026.

However, private broiler production companies, including Santhi Feeds and Suguna, responded to the farmers' legitimate strike by systematically threatening farmers. They obtained signatures from checks and blank bond papers from farmers, and threatened them that this might lead to legal complications and losses if farmers refused to accept broiler chick deliveries. The companies forcibly unloaded broiler chicks at farmers' locations despite ongoing strike actions.

On 12.01.2026, when farmers united near Udumalaipettai to peacefully turn back broiler chick vehicles and feed vehicles, police intervened and arranged negotiations in the presence of the Udumalaipettai Revenue Divisional Officer. An agreement was reached that until the government-arranged tripartite negotiations on 21.01.2026 were completed, broiler companies should not force farmers to accept chick deliveries. Despite this agreement, the companies continued to forcibly unload chicks overnight.

In retaliation, the broiler production companies filed false complaints against farmers and association administrators on 12.01.2026 and 13.01.2026 at multiple police stations, including Udumalaipettai, Kudimangalam, Sulthanpettai, and Negamam. Using their financial resources and official influence, they ensured that cases were registered under non-bailable sections, despite the farmers' protests being peaceful and justified.

Details of the Incident

It is within this context that Advocate Eesan Murugaswamy, founder of the Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Society, has been coordinating broiler chicken farmers from across Tamil Nadu and leading protests in a peaceful manner.

On 13.01.2026, at approximately 10:30 PM, a police team led by the inspector from Gudimangalam Police Station in Tiruppur District arrested Advocate Eesan. A case was registered against Advocate Eesan Murugaswamy under FIR No. 10/2026 at Gudimangalam Police Station on 12.01.2026 under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 sections 191(2), 126(2), 296(b), 351(3) and under section 5 of the TN Public Property (Prvnt. of Damage & Loss) Act, 1992 based on a false complaint filed by the private company Santhi Feeds. He was named as the first accused despite not being present at the alleged incident location.

On 11.01.2026, the date of the alleged incident, Advocate Eesan Murugaswamy was attending a "Kal Conference" event in Melmalaiyanur, Villupuram, far from the incident location. On 12.01.2026, he presided over the Thai Pongal celebration on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association at Amaithi Poonga School, a children's school in Kaniyambadi village, Vellore District. In the early morning of 13.01.2026, he returned home after traveling to other districts to participate in various Association events.

In the morning of 13.01.2026, upon learning that association administrators and farmers were being arrested based on false complaints, Advocate Eesan Murugaswamy left home to visit Sulthanpet Police Station. On 13.01.2026, he attended a peaceful protest at Senjeri Malai Hall in front of Sulthanpet Police Station to condemn the wrongful arrests of farmers. Police arrested all participants, who were released after 8:00 PM.

After 9:30 PM on 13.01.2026, he attended an advisory meeting for Kallimandayam broiler farm farmers. After completing the consultation, Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association President R. Shanmugasundaram and Advocate Eesan Murugaswamy departed by car heading home after 10:00 PM. En route, both were arrested, and their mobile phones were switched off by the arresting team.

Throughout the night of 13-14.01.2026, Advocate Mrs. Iniya, the HRD's wife, searched for her husband, wandered about, and inquired at police departments in multiple areas but could not locate him. No police personnel provided any information about his whereabouts or arrest status.

Advocate Eesan Murugasamy was kept in illegal custody throughout the night of 13-14.01.2026 with his phone switched off. The police acted like kidnappers, stopping him on the road without proper procedure and detaining him without informing his family or legal counsel.

On 14.01.2026 at approximately 7:30 AM, Police Inspector Saravanan from Kudimangalam Police Station finally contacted Advocate Mrs. Iniya, informing her only that they were producing her husband before the Madathukulam Joint Magistrate. He refused to answer any other questions and disconnected the call. He claimed to have informed the driver but not the family. When Advocate Mrs. Iniya contacted Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Namashivayam at Udumalaipettai Police, he refused to provide any information.

Despite continuous efforts by family members and association administrators to locate him, information about which prison he was remanded to was deliberately withheld. Only after

8:00 PM on 14.01.2026 did the family receive information that he had been detained in Vellore Central Prison.

Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association President R. Shanmugasundaram, who was traveling with Advocate Eesan Murugasamy, was also separately kept in illegal custody throughout the night with his phone switched off, demonstrating a systematic pattern of illegal detention violating human rights.

Legal and Constitutional Violations

The illegal arrest and detention of HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy constitutes serious violations of fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India and international human rights standards.

Violation of Article 21 - Right to Life and Personal Liberty

Article 21 of the Constitution of India guarantees that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. The illegal overnight detention without informing family members, the kidnapping-like arrest procedure, and the deliberate withholding of information about remand location constitute grave violations of this fundamental right.

In **D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal (1997)**, the Supreme Court laid down mandatory guidelines for arrest and detention to prevent custodial violence and human rights violations. These include requirements to inform family members immediately about arrest, maintain proper arrest documentation, and ensure the detainee's fundamental rights are protected. The police authorities flagrantly violated these guidelines.

Violation of Article 19(1)(a) - Freedom of Speech and Expression

HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy, a labour rights defender was exercising his constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression by peacefully advocating for farmers' rights and coordinating legitimate strike actions. The false case registration and subsequent arrest constitute an attempt to suppress his legitimate exercise of this fundamental right.

Violation of Article 22 - Protection Against Arrest and Detention

Article 22 mandates that every person who is arrested shall be informed of the grounds of arrest and shall not be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner. The overnight detention without information to the family and the denial of basic procedural safeguards constitute violations of this protection.

The systematic registration of false cases, coordinated arrest of farmers and association leaders, and the collusion between police and private broiler companies represent a dangerous pattern of state machinery being misused to serve private corporate interests at the expense of citizens' fundamental rights.

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (1999) provides comprehensive protection for individuals engaged in defending human rights. Article 12(2) states: *"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."*

The arbitrary arrest, illegal detention, and systematic harassment of HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy, a labour rights defender, represent clear violations of these international standards that India is committed to upholding.

This represents a calculated campaign to criminalize legitimate farmers' rights advocacy and suppress peaceful dissent through abuse of state machinery serving private corporate interests.

Appeal

We urge the Hon'ble Commission to take cognizance of the above case and urgently:

- Direct the Director General of Investigation of the NHRC to initiate a transparent, independent inquiry into the illegal arrest, overnight detention, and human rights violations against HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy, and submit a comprehensive report to the NHRC.
- Direct the appropriate authorities to conduct an independent review of FIR No. 10/2026 and all related cases registered at Kudimangalam, Udumalaipettai, Sulthanpettai, Negamam and other police stations against farmers and association members, examining the allegations of false complaint registration and misuse of state machinery.
- Direct the State of Tamil Nadu to ensure the protection of HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy, his family members, Tamil Nadu Farmers Protection Association members, and all farmers involved in the legitimate strike.

- Direct appropriate disciplinary and legal action against police personnel who violated arrest and detention procedures, engaged in illegal overnight custody, withheld information from family members, and colluded with private companies in violation of their duties.
- Direct to award substantial compensation to HRD Advocate Eesan Murugasamy and his family for the illegal arrest, overnight detention, mental trauma, and violation of fundamental rights.
- Direct the State of Tamil Nadu to ensure that the government-planned tripartite negotiations proceed without interference and that farmers' representatives can participate without fear of arrest or harassment.
- Direct the State authorities to ensure compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, including the State's duty to protect individuals from human rights abuses by business enterprises, especially in cases involving wage exploitation.
- Issue binding guidelines suggesting systemic reforms to prohibit law enforcement agencies from intervening in labour protests solely to safeguard corporate profits, where such protests arise from legitimate grievances such as relating to non-payment of fair wages.

We hope to hear from you soon.

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)