

Well-known Indian Journalist Gauri Lankesh Assassinated - Statements by citizen's groups. "She worked hard to counter the growth of Hindutva politics"

Thursday 7 September 2017, by [AIFRE](#), [ANHAD](#), [Forum-Asia](#), [HRD Alert-India](#), [IWF](#), [NAPM](#), [NTUI](#) (Date first published: 7 September 2017).

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1. Statement by NAPM

Those who fear the Power of the Pen took to the Gun. Again !

NAPM strongly condemns the targeted political assassination of senior journalist, editor and activist Gauri Lankesh

Demands time-bound high-level judicial inquiry into the crime and conspiracy

Govt. inaction in the political murders of Govind Pansare, Narendra Dabholkar, and Prof. M M Kalburgi responsible for murder of another independent critic and fearless voice against communal fascist forces.

Murder of constitutional rights, fearless critical voices:

Irreparable loss to the nation and initiatives of communal harmony

New Delhi | September 06, 2017: National Alliance of People's Movements is deeply shocked and shattered at the cowardly and cold-blooded murder of well-known journalist, editor and fearless firebrand activist, Gauri Lankesh who, time and again, locked horns with divisive, communal and casteist forces, in particular the right-wing Hindutva brigade. We have enough reason to believe that her political assassination is a direct consequence of her publicly expressed progressive positions as well as the lack of conviction of the murderers responsible for the calculated political killings of M M Kalburgi, Govind Pansare and Narendra Dabholkar, even after months and years! It is precisely this

tacit and active support by the current regime in India that is further emboldening the right wing Hindutva forces to commit more brazen crimes, against progressive and people's voices.

Gauri was widely known and loved across Karnataka and the country for her relentless writings, talks and campaigns in solidarity with the oppressed – be it dalits, adivasis, women, students, minorities etc. As one of the fiercest contemporary critics of divisive politics, she worked hard to counter the growth of Hindutva politics that created an atmosphere of fear and intolerance. Alongside, she also continued to write on and engage with various social and developmental issues and constantly raised her voice against injustices. She extended and expanded by many bounds the legacy of her father P. Lankesh, an eminent journalist and a well known writer and literary critique.

Gauri openly and publicly questioned and challenged politicians, bureaucrats, judiciary, chauvinists and stood by the oppressed. Her last post on social media on the inhuman denial of refuge to the persecuted Rohingyas by Indian Govt. speaks of her concern and compassion for the oppressed humanity. We salute the conviction and courageous life of Gauri and commit to joins hands with all progressive forces across the country to bring justice to her, her values and intensify our struggle against the silencing of democratic and dissenting voices.

The spate of killings, threats, ban on food and personal choices, books, movies, artistic works and fast spreading atmosphere of hatred against rational, scientific and constitutional temper with tacit support from popular governments to keep their vote banks intact is shameful in a modern democracy. We are constantly being pushed in the dark ages, where rational and critical thinking is being silenced, mythologies are being promoted as science and scientific knowledge and temperament is derided. It is with this tendency to wipe out a secular and socialist outlook in the country that text books are being 're-written' and new dominant Hindutva narrative is being promoted all in the name of cultural and national pride.

It is nothing but an absolute failure of Indian Government that rationalists and human rights defenders are being murdered, one after the other, by fascist forces with complete impunity. As reported by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 27 Indian Journalists were murdered due to their fearless independent writings between 1992 and July 2016, but the state governments failed to secure a conviction in even one of them ! This is a complete shame for India where journalists, rationalists, fearless and critical voices are important for a positive and progressive change in society. In her own words, Gauri Lankesh said "Along with that, my criticism of Hindutva politics and the caste system ... makes my critics brand me as a Hindu hater. But I consider it my constitutional duty to continue - in my own little way - the struggle of Basavanna and [social reformer] Dr [Bhimrao Ramji] Ambedkar towards establishing an egalitarian society." There is ample evidence, therefore, suggesting that this is a political assassination since Gauri's views have not found favour with the Hindutva hardliners and goondas !

NAPM unequivocally condemns the heinous gunning down of Gauri Lankesh and deeply mourns the irreplaceable loss of an outspoken human rights activist and a voice of conscience, communal harmony and sanity. We demand the following:

Govt. of Karnataka must immediately institute an independent, high level and time bound judicial inquiry, with a Special Investigation Team to nab all those guilty of committing and conspiring this grave crime. The unlawful and terror-infusing role of groups such as the Hindu Jagarana Vedike, VHP, Bajrang dal, Srirama Sene, Sanathana Samsthe and all other affiliates of RSS must also be inquired into by this Judicial Commission and strictest action must be taken, as per law.

Taking cognizance of the common pattern in the murders of Dhabolkar, Pansare, Kalaburagi and Gauri Lankesh and assassinations carried out by a organised terror group/s which evidently holds an

ideology opposed to secular, democratic and constitutional forces, Govt. of India must constitute a Joint Parliamentary Committee to take stock of such groups and their political benefactors, responsible for such actions and serious erosion of constitutional values, freedoms, rights and spaces and recommend action against all those conspiring to tear the secular fabric of India as well as assassinate voice of reason and constitutional justice.

The murderers of M M Kalburgi, Govind Pansare and Narendra Dabholkar must also be identified and convicted at the earliest.

Even as we are aroused by the outpour of outrage across the country, we call upon media fraternity, people's organizations and all progressive and concerned citizens to stand up and fight this cowardly act and rise up to the defence of rights, freedom and the constitutional values which are under attack today from right wing fascist forces in a consistent manner. We hope all like-minded persons and groups would to keep the spirit of Gauri Lankesh alive by questioning injustices even when it is committed by the powerful people in power.

Medha Patkar, Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) and National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)

Aruna Roy, Nikhil Dey and Shankar Singh - Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and National Campaign for People's Right to Information and NAPM

P.Chennaiah, Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union-APVVU and National Centre For Labour and NAPM-AP

Ramakrishnam Raju, United Forum for RTI and NAPM, AP

Meera Sanghamitra, NAPM Telangana-AP,

Prafulla Samantara, - Lok Shakti Abhiyan & NAPM, Odisha;

Lingraj Azad - Samajwadi Jan Parishad - Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti, NAPM, Odisha;

Binayak Sen and Kavita Srivastava, People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)

Sandeep Pandey, Socialist Party and NAPM, Uttar Pradesh

Maj Gen S.G.Vombatkere (Retd), Mysuru, NAPM, Karnataka

Gabriele Dietrich, Penn Urimay Iyakkam, Madurai and NAPM, TN;

Geetha Ramakrishnan, Unorganised Sector Workers Federation, NAPM, TN;

Arul Doss, NAPM Tamil Nadu

Arundhati Dhuru, Nandlal Master, Manesh Gupta - NAPM, UP;

Richa Singh, Sangatin Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan, NAPM-UP

Vilayodi Venugopal, CR Neelakandan and Prof. Kusumam NAPM, Kerala

Vimal Bhai - Matu Jan Sangathan, NAPM-Uttarakhand & Jabar Singh, NAPM, Uttarakhand;

Sister Celia - Domestic Workers Union & NAPM, Karnataka;

Anand Mazgaonkar, Krishnakant - Paryavaran Suraksh Samiti, NAPM Gujarat;

Kamayani Swami, Ashish Ranjan - Jan Jagran Shakti Sangathan & NAPM Bihar;

Mahendra Yadav - Kosi Navnirman Manch, NAPM Bihar;

Sister Dorothy, NAPM Bihar

Dayamani Barla, Adivasi-Moolnivasi Astivtva Raksha Samiti, NAPM Jharkhand

Dr. Sunilam and Adv. Aradhna Bhargava - Kisan Sangharsh Samiti NAPM Madhya Pradesh

Bhupender Singh Rawat - Jan Sangharsh Vahini, NAPM, Delhi

Rajendra Ravi, Nanu Prasad, Madhuresh Kumar, Amit Kumar, Himnshi Singh, Uma Kapari, Zaved Mazumder, NAPM, Delhi

Faisal Khan, Khudai Khidmatgar, NAPM Haryana

J S Walia, NAPM Haryana;

Kailash Meena, NAPM Rajasthan;

Samar Bagchi, Amitava Mitra, NAPM West Bengal;

Suniti SR, Suhas Kolhekar, Prasad Bagwe - NAPM, Maharashtra;

Gautam Bandopadhyay, NAPM, Chhatisgarh
Anjali Bharadwaj, National Campaign for People's Right to Information and NAPM
Kaladas Dahariya, RELAA, Chhatisgarh
Bilal Khan, Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan, Mumbai,
For details contact : 9818905316 | email : napmindia[at]gmail.com

2. A statement from the All India Forum for the Right to Education

6 Sept 2017

Murder of Democracy

All India Forum for Right To Education (AIFRTE) is shocked and deeply saddened by the cold-blooded murder of senior journalist and activist Gauri Lankesh at her Bangalore residence.

Gauri Lankesh was shot dead in her home in northern Bengaluru on the night of 5th September. Unidentified men fired at least five shots at her before escaping by motorbike.

Gauri Lankesh was a fierce journalist and the most vocal critic of communal forces in Karnataka and in India. She was committed till her last breath in her struggle against communalism and supported progressive forces in maintaining communal harmony in Karnataka. She was one the founding members of Karnataka Komu Souharda Vedike (KKSV), an organisation dedicated to maintaining communal harmony in Karnataka. She worked vociferously to bring together people with similar ideology on a common platform in the fight against the class, caste and religious fundamentalist forces.

She was closely associated with All India Forum for Right To Education (AIFRTE) and has always been supportive of student struggles against fascism, privatisation of education, communalisation and caste and gender based discrimination. She had supported immensely and also participated in the All India Convention of Student Struggles (AICSS) conducted on 5-6 August 2017 in Bangalore.

Known for her fearless and outspoken attitude, Gauri Lankesh was the editor of Gauri Lankesh Patrike, a kannada fortnightly newspaper and has authored several books. She was a staunch critic of right wing Hindutva politics and wrote extensively about it. The newspaper exposed corrupt politicians and called out the communal agenda and bigotry of hindutva brigade on several occasions. It provided space for progressive voices in the rapidly diminishing democratic space in media.

This is the second murder in Karnataka and fourth in India where a public intellectual has been killed in broad daylight. The cold blooded murder bears similarity with the killings of Narendra Dhabolkar, Govind pansare and Dr. M.M. Kalburgi. There seems to be a pattern and a network operating behind these murders. The earlier murders remain unsolved.

In view of the seriousness of the crime, AIFRTE along with all other progressive-democratic voices demands that,

1. A judicially monitored probe for the murder of Gauri Lankesh is conducted.
2. This shall be declared as an act of terror.
3. Joint parliamentary committee must be formed to recommend action against the groups operating behind the assassinations of rationalists and thinkers.

You can kill a person but you cannot kill the ideas! We all are Gauri Lankesh!!!

AIFRTE Presidium

3. Statement by Network of Women in Media, India

In solidarity with Gauri Lankesh

To the spirit of Gauri Lankesh, you inspire us forever. To journalists everywhere, this is a note of solidarity. We the Network of Women in the Media, India solemnly swear to uphold the values of journalism. This does not and should not need to be prefaced with good. Or courageous. Or brave. We must simply power on in the face of the greatest adversity, threats and political opposition to do what our job mandates. To be free and fair and stand together solidly behind each other to be able to rise against the tidal wave of intolerance and often criminal intimidation that surrounds us and tries to prevent us everywhere. We want to declare to ourselves and to everyone that is watching with and without malice - we will not be prevented, silenced, outdone or shut down.

We at NWMI also take this opportunity to say we continue to back, fight for and voice each others' concerns legally, politically, journalistically. We urge everyone to not share insensitive pictures of Gauri's body post her killing. We would also like to bring to the notice of the Press Club of India, the Editors' Guild and Twitter of the online lynch mob that has surrounded the murder of Gauri Lankesh. In particular the twitter handle of @JagratiShukla29 and others like her that have been baying for Gauri's blood need to be disbanded immediately.

In continued determination, steadfastness and support of each other and the universe of journalism we inhabit.

The Network of Women in Media, India

September 05, 2017

4. Statement from Indian Writers' Forum

They Cannot Silence Us All: Statement from the Indian Writers' Forum

"Once more, a voice of dissent, a voice of reason, has been silenced with guns."

September 6, 2017

Yesterday, September 5th, journalist and activist Gauri Lankesh was assassinated in her home in Bangalore. Once more, a voice of dissent, a voice of reason, has been silenced with guns. This is a chilling continuation of the series of murders of rationalists, writers, scholars and activists, from Narendra Dabholkar and Govind Pansare to MM Kalburgi. None of the murderers has been punished, though much points to the extended right wing family. Instead, the punishment of critical voices continues, as do attacks against Muslims, dalits, Adivasis and women - Indian citizens all.

Gauri Lankesh performed her duties as a journalist and a citizen with uncompromising honesty. She was guided by democratic, secular values, that insist on an India in which speaking up against division and hatred is every citizen's right.

The Indian Writers' Forum condemns the brutal murder of Gauri Lankesh. The Forum condemns the continued unmaking of India in which writers, artists, scholars, rationalists – and indeed any citizen who exercises her right to speak freely – is no longer safe. We pledge to continue Gauri's fight against the haters of free speech and a plural India. We will continue to speak on her behalf and ours. They cannot silence us all.

For the Indian Writers Forum

Githa Hariharan
K. Satchidanandan
Ashok Vajpeyi
Ganesh Devy
Nayantara Sahgal
Keki Daruwalla
Kiran Nagarkar
Shashi Deshpande
Romila Thapar
Anuradha Kapur
Indira Jaising
Shyam B. Menon
Chandrakant Patil
Adil Jussawalla
and others

5. Statement by ANHAD

Arrest the killers of Gauri Lankesh

New Delhi, 5th Sept. 2017: ANHAD is deeply anguished at the assassination of Gauri Lankesh, noted journalist and intrepid activist. We condemn in the strongest terms possible this act of cowardice by her killers who wish to spread fear and suppress dissent. ANHAD will not let this shock dampen our intent to fight the forces that she took on.

It is well-known that Gauri Lankesh had consistently opposed right-wing forces, despite the threats and court cases she had to face. As the editor of 'Lankesh Patrike', a Kannada weekly, she had continued to raise her voice against communalism and casteism.

As a leading voice against majoritarian and undemocratic politics and one that fearlessly stood for the freedom of expression in India, her passing away is a severe shock for those dedicated to a secular and just India. Her death is yet another reminder of how grim the situation is and the urgent need for peaceful resistance.

We demand immediate arrest of those behind the assassination.

In solidarity,

Amrita Nandy, Ovais Sultan Khan

ANHAD (Act Now for Harmony and Democracy)
C5, Basement, Nizamuddin West, Delhi – 110013
Tel: 011-41670722

6. Statement by New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI)

BJP Government silent as vigilantes murder Gauri Lankesh: 6 September 2017

The New Trade Union Initiative strongly condemns the cold blooded premeditated murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh. The voices of dissent of Narendra Dabholkar, Govind Pansare, M M Kalburgi and now Gauri Lankesh have all been silenced.

Lankesh, editor of Lankesh Patrike, a Kannada weekly, last week, wrote on the Gorakhpur deaths criticising the UP government, against the deportation of the Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, slammed demonetisation. In 2003, she opposed the Sangh Parivar's attempts to appropriate the Sufi dargah of Hazrat Dada Hayat Khalandar in the Chikkamagaluru district, Karnataka, as a Hindu temple. She most recently vocally supported the demand of the Lingayat community declaring themselves as non-hindus. In 2008, following an article in her paper against several BJP leaders, including an MP, a defamation suit was filed against her, which she eventually lost. She has also been a vocal advocate for freedom of the press and freedom of speech. She has stood up for the rights of historically discriminated castes and communities and against the discrimination of religious minorities.

For the last three years the BJP government at the centre has sought to tell citizens what they must eat, what they must wear, who they must marry and what they can say. It has allowed vigilantes to set and enforce what they think the law should be. Leading voices of the BJP, the RSS and its organisations have turned on citizens with whom they disagree, through both silence and intense statements of hate, against citizens exercising their personal liberty as provided in our constitution. Nearly 24 hours after the killing of Gauri Lankesh apart from tweets asking for investigation into the murder not one member of the BJP government at the centre has spoken up to condemn this dastardly act of cowardice.

Most drastically this is an attack on views within society that are based on rationality and rooted in the scientific temper and especially on constitutional provisions for social justice and equality. From the assassination of M. M. Kulbargi to the cold blooded murder of Akhlaque Saifi in Dadri to now Gauri Lankesh these acts represent the attack on plurality of our society and the effort to push us towards a unidimensional society rooted in the BJP's majoritarian ideology of Hindutva. The scaffolding of Hindutva represents a fundamental attack on political, social and economic rights in our society.

The NTUI demands:

- (1) A time bound investigation into the killing of Gauri Lankesh and punishment of the guilty;
- (2) A status report, within thirty days on the investigations into the killings of Narendra Dabholkar, Govind Pansare and M M Kalburgi; and
- (3) The Union Government, including the Prime Minister, unequivocally and unambiguously condemn the killing of Gauri Lankesh and set how government plan to respond to hate crimes.

Hate Crimes and the attack on democratic rights, especially the freedom of speech and the right to dissent, affects every section of society. The NTUI joins with all voices that have come together in the immediate aftermath of the killing of Gauri Lankesh to fight against the right wing onslaught to

defend our democratic rights.

Gautam Mody

General Secretary

7. HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - Karnataka

Senior Journalist and human rights defender Ms. Gauri Lankesh shot dead at her residence in Bengaluru

Shri Srinivasa Kammath

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[at]nic.in

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action - Karnataka : Senior Journalist and human rights defender Ms. Gauri Lankesh shot dead at her residence in Bengaluru - Regarding

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 now writing to express our grave concern regarding the killing of senior journalist, social activist and writer Gauri Lankesh who was shot dead point blank by unknown assailants.

Source of Information on the Incident:

- Reports from Media
- The Regional Coordinator of HRDA for South of India

Status of the Human Rights Defender:

Ms. Gauri Lankesh ran the weekly Gauri 'Lankesh Patrike,' a Kannada tabloid, and was seen as a fearless, independent and outspoken journalist. Gauri was the elder daughter of P Lankesh - a man who brought in a new brand of Kannada Journalism. She followed in his footsteps, speaking her mind and running her own Kannada paper with views that were never careful or circumspect.

She was part of a group that worked for communal harmony. Her views were considered Leftist and anti-Hindutva. She was a fearless and independent journalist who gave voice to many causes and always stood up for justice.

She ran the weekly Gauri 'Lankesh Patrike,' a Kannada tabloid. Like her father, who was a noted Kannada writer, Gauri Lankesh faced opposition and criticism of her journalism. Gauri was known

for her fearless and outspoken attitude, besides owning some other publications. The tabloid did not take any advertisements and is run by a group of 50 people. In her works, she had often voiced her opinions against the communal politics as well as the caste system. She was also a staunch critic of right-wing and Hindutva politics as was evident from her works published in different media outlets.

Ms. Lankesh who had been a strong advocate of freedom of press, in an interaction with The Wire had said that 'she was concerned about the state of freedom of expression in the country'. She had also raised apprehensions about how people are targeted because of their ideology.

In her social media posts, hours before she was killed, Ms. Lankesh had in twitter raised the issue of fake news and propaganda and said, "Why do i feel that some of 'us' are fighting between ourselves? we all know our "biggest enemy". can we all please concentrate on that? Ok some of us commit mistakes like sharing fake posts. let us warn each other then and not try to expose each other. peace... comrades."

In November 2016, Gauri had been found guilty of defamation in a case involving a Member of Parliament and Bharatiya Janata Party Mr. Prahlad Joshi and had been sentenced to six months in jail. She was out on bail.

The Perpetrators:

Three Unknown assistants

Date of Incident:

Tuesday, 5th September 2017

Incident detail:

Senior Journalist, activist and writer Gaur Lankesh, 55, was shot dead by unidentified men outside her residence Ideal Homes in Rajarajeshwari Nagar in Bengaluru on the night of September 2017.

Preliminary reports say that there were three men on a motor bike who opened at least seven rounds of fire on Gauri when she was unlocking her main door after parking her car at around 8 PM. Three bullets had pierced Gauri's head, neck, and chest, four bullets were sprayed on the walls due to which she died instantly confirmed the police.

According to neighbours, Gauri was returning from her office as she usually would drive back home late night. At around 8 PM today, they heard gun shots and rushed out. For a few minutes, they could not understand what had happened, then realized that Gauri had been shot at and saw her lying in a pool of blood near the door.

This brutal murder is a reminiscent of the murders of rationalist M.M. Kalburgi's in Dharwad, Karnataka in 2015, Narendra Dabholkar in Pune in 2013 and social Activist Govind Pansare in Kolhapur. All three were shot at close range.

HRDA is apprehending that this death of Gauri Lankesh would also be facing similar fate as that of Kalburgi, Dabolkar's and Pansare's where the killers are not apprehended and are still at large.

We want to highlight to the Commission the status of earlier complaints sent on the killings of other rational voices like Kalburgi, Dabolkar and Pansare by HRDA.

1.) Mr. M M Kalburgi

Date of incident: 30 August 2015

Present status: Response from concerned authority awaited

Case number: 1019/10/10/2015

2.) Mr. Govind Pansare

Date of incident: 16 February 2015

Present status: Case closed stating that one arrest was made in the case and Writ Petition is pending in Bombay High Court

Case Number: 602/13/14/2015

3.) Mr. Narendra Dabholkar

Date of incident: 20 August 2013

Present Status: Case is close stating "The law will take its own course"

Case number: 2393/13/23/2013

Hence, we urge the Commission to urgently intervene into the incident by conducting an independent investigation into the incident of Ms. Gauri Lankesh and also expand the scope of the investigation taking into account of the same modus-operandi in the past killings of Kalburgi, Dabholkar and Pansare used also in the killing of Ms. Gauri Lankesh.

Appeal:

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps to ensure that the Commissioner of Police and the Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate of Bangalore City -

- Order an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation into the above-mentioned incident of brutal murder of Gauri Lankesh.
- Take immediate action on the perpetrators, in this case they are unknown, who should be searched for with a nationwide alert issued and investigation done transparently and from all angles.
- Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the family members of Gauri Lankesh of further reprisals from the perpetrators, using all provisions of law, to ensure that the witnesses are not harassed in future.
- Ensure provision of reparation, compensation, apology to the family of the defender for the psychological sufferings they are undergoing because of the death of Gauri Lankesh.
- Put an end to all acts of attack and harassment and killing against all human rights defenders like Gauri Lankesh in the country and to ensure that in all circumstances they carry out their activities as defenders of human rights without any hindrances.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,

S/d-

(Henri Tiphagne)

National Working Secretary

8. Statement by Forum-Asia

India: Ensure justice for Gauri Lankesh and protect space for dissent as a democratic value

6 September 2017 5:56 pm

(Kathmandu/Bangkok: 6 September, 2017) – The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) condemns the assassination of Gauri Lankesh, a senior journalist, writer and human rights defender, in Bangalore on 5 September 2017. Lankesh, aged 55, was the editor of the weekly Kannada tabloid ‘Gauri Lankesh Patrike’. She was known for her stance against politics of hate, corruption and was an uncompromising voice for freedom, human rights and justice.

Media reports indicate that she was fatally shot from close range in the head and chest outside her residence by assailants on motorcycles. Her body was later moved to Victoria Hospital in Bangalore for postmortem.[1]

As an editor of the tabloid, she occasionally faced opposition for her secular views and criticism of right wing politics. In November 2016, she was found guilty of defamation in a case involving a ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) parliamentarian and was sentenced to six months in jail. She was later released on bail.

Lankesh firmly stood against communal and undemocratic politics and was a fearless voice for freedom of expression in India. Recently, she was also involved in the reintegration effort of many Naxalites into mainstream with the co-operation of the Karnataka government.[2]

‘The killing of Gauri Lankesh is another example of silencing the voices for freedom, human rights and democratic values’ said John Samuel, Executive Director of FORUM-ASIA. ‘The proponents of politics of hate and exclusion are posing great challenge for democracy and human rights in India. We call up on the government to immediately arrest the perpetrators and ensure a democratic space for the freedom of expression and secure environment for journalists’, he added.

Gauri Lankesh is the fourth writer-activist killed in recent years, following Dr. Naredra Dabolkar, Govind Pansare and Dr. MM Kalburgi, noted writers and civic leaders, who were killed in similar attacks for their critique of politics of hatred nurtured under the ideology of Hindutva in India.[3]

FORUM-ASIA is concerned that these attacks indicate a planned effort to stifle freedom of expression and undermine the promises of democratic principles and practices of the largest electoral democracy in the world. It urges the Government of India and the State government of Karnataka to ensure an immediate, thorough, effective and impartial investigation into the murder of Gauri Lankesh. It also calls upon the National Human Rights Commission to intervene in these attacks systematically directed at human rights defenders and, by implication, at the constitutional guarantees of fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of expression.

FORUM-ASIA also urges the Government of India to undertake all measures necessary to stop further killing of journalists, writers and civic activists, and abide by its human rights commitments under national and international laws, which include unhindered space for dissent and freedom of expression.

For a PDF version of this statement, click [here](#).

[1]

<http://www.ndtv.com/bangalore-news/senior-journalist-gauri-lankesh-shot-dead-at-her-residence-in-b>

[engaluru-1746480](#)

[2] <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-41169817>

[3] <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/gauri-lankesh-s-killing-brings-focus-back-on-murders-of-right-wing-critics-kalburgi-pansare-dabholkar/story-XgzqWPjEJFyqhGlcVQUMaN.html>

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Protests are planned in various cities:

Protests on September 6:

BANGALORE - 8:45 am, Naik Bhavan

DELHI, CHENNAI - 11 am, Press Club

MUMBAI - 6 pm, Amphitheater, Carter Road

HYDERABAD - 4 pm, Sunderayya Vignana Kendram

MANGALORE - 4 pm, Town Hall, Gandhi Statue

DHARWAD - 10 am, Prof Kalburghi's house

PUNE - 4 pm, opp SP College, Sadashiv Peth, Tilak Road

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See Related news report(s):

Gauri Lankesh: Indian journalist shot dead in Bangalore

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-41169817>

The BJP's head of information technology just issued a warning to every journalist in the country

<https://scroll.in/article/822940/the-bjps-head-of-information-technology-just-issued-a-warning-to-every-journalist-in-the-country>

P.S.

* <http://www.sacw.net/article13459.html>