

JFA demands action against scribe-assailants



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Guwahati: Journalists' Forum Assam (JFA) expressed concerns over incidents of attacks on scribes across the country and urged the concerned authorities to investigate the motives behind those assaults and punish the culprits accordingly.

The last incident has been reported from Bihar, where Pradeep Mandal was shot at by two culprits at Sarsopahi Bazar locality of Madhubani district on 28 July. Pradeep (36 years old), who used to contribute for Hindi daily Dainik Jagaran, received severe injuries and was rushed to Darbhanga Medical College and Hospital for treatments. The young scribe has reported against the local liquor mafia, as Bihar is a liquor-free State, and thus invited enmity from those goons. The police have already identified the criminals as Sushil Shah and Ashok Kamat who targeted Pradeep on the fateful day.

Earlier three incidents of journo-murders were reported from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh since 1 January this year, however all three cases need specific investigations if the victims were targeted because of their journalistic exercises.

A magazine editor from Bhiwandi locality of Maharashtra was found killed on 17 March. Nityanand Pandey (44), who edited India Unbound, was understandably conspired to kill by his lady receptionist-cum-assistant to take revenge of repeated sexual harassments on her by Pandey. The police have already arrested the lady along with another individual suspecting their role in the murder.

Later one more journalist from Maharashtra was killed by unidentified persons on 4 June. Anand Narayan (38), who was slaughtered by two criminals in his Mumbai residence, died on way to the hospital. The police have arrested both the criminals with whom Narayan lately started a business after leaving his job in a news channel few years back.

The third incident was reported from Shahgarh locality of Madhya Pradesh, where a freelance journalist found dead with 90% burn injuries on 19 June. Chakresh Jain (40) reportedly had confrontations with a government officer (Aman Chowdhary) and they pursued a legal dispute for some years. On the fateful day Jain arrived at Chowdhary's residence and faced the burning, where the host too sustained 30 % injuries.

India lost six journalists (Navin Nischal, Vijay Singh, Sandeep Sharma, Syed Shujaat Bukhari, Achyuta N Sahu and Chandan Tiwari) to assailants last year. However 2017 was the deadliest year as 12 scribes (Hari Prakash, Brajesh Kumar Singh, Shyam Sharma, Kamlesh Jain, Surender Singh Rana, Gauri Lankesh, Shantanu Bhowmik, KJ Singh, Rajesh Mishra, Sudip Datta Bhaumik, Naveen Gupta and Rajesh Sheoran) were either murdered or died in suspicious situations.

“We wish a fast recovery to Pradeep, who is undergoing treatments at the hospital,” said a statement issued by JFA president Rupam Barua and secretary Nava Thakuria adding that committed journalists often invite enmities from the law-breaking entities while pursuing the profession and hence they should be offered due security and acknowledgements by the society in general.

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