

**STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY**  
**WITH**  
**MS AGNES KHARSHIING AND MS AMITA SANGMA,**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FROM MEGHALAYA**

**1 December 2018, Guwahati**

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We, the participants of the Workshop on Housing and Land Rights in Northeast India, organized by Housing and Land Rights Network, Delhi and the Centre for Research and Advocacy, Manipur would like to express our deep condemnation of the attack on Ms. Agnes Kharshiing, President of Civil Society Women's Organization, and Ms. Amita Sangma on 8 November 2018 at East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya.

Ms. Agnes Kharshiing was attacked by a group of people at Tuber Shohshrieh, East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya on 8 November 2018, while documenting the illegal mining and transportation of coal in the area. The attack has left Ms. Agnes with serious injuries on her head and body. She is under treatment at the NEIGRIMS Hospital in Shillong.

Ms. Kharshiing has been proactive in denouncing illegal mining of coal and limestone in Jaintia Hills and other parts of Meghalaya. This illegal mining continues in clear violation of the National Green Tribunal judgment and other environment laws. There are serious concerns that the attack on Ms. Kharshiing and Ms. Sangma was carried out by the coal mafia operating in Meghalaya, which is opposed to the ban on illegal coal mining and corruption in the state. The Government of Meghalaya should immediately stop illegal mining of coal and limestone in the state.

We express our deep concern over the increased targeting of human rights defenders across India's northeast region, which includes direct attacks against community leaders in Meghalaya.

We would like to urge the Government of Meghalaya as well as the Central Bureau of Investigation to conduct an independent and impartial investigation, and arrest those involved in the attack of Ms. Agnes Kharshiing and her companion Ms. Amita Sangma.

We also request United Nations Special Procedures and other human rights mechanisms to intervene in order to help secure justice for Ms. Kharshiing and Ms Sangma.

We hope that the Government of India will take action against those targeting human rights defenders across the country, as per its international legal commitments as well as its recent voluntary pledges to fulfill its human rights obligations at the UN Human Rights Council.

**Statement Endorsed by the following Organizations:**

1. Action Committee on Teesta
2. Affected Citizens of Teesta
3. All Rabha Students Union, Assam
4. Arunachal Pradesh Women Welfare Society
5. Athupopo, Arunachal Pradesh
6. Borok Peoples' Human Rights Organization
7. Centre for Research and Advocacy, Manipur
8. Civil Society Women's Organization, Meghalaya
9. Ekta Parishad Assam
10. Housing and Land Rights Network, India
11. Karbi Human Rights Watch, Assam
12. Karbi Students Association
13. Mapithel Dam Downstream Affected Peoples
14. Mapithel Dam Village Level Affected Committee
15. North East Areas Development Society
16. Peoples' Movement for Subansiri Valley, Assam
17. Save Mon Federation, Arunachal Pradesh
18. Save Sikkim