



RTI Activist Murdered in Himachal, Kin Demand CBI Probe

THE QUINT

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Snapshot



Days after the alleged murder of RTI activist Kedar Singh Jindan in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmour district, his family has demanded a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the matter. Under pressure, the slain activist's wife and daughters have shifted to Shimla, **The Quint** has learned.

WHAT WE KNOW



Kedar Singh Jindan was allegedly murdered on Friday, 7 September, while he was on his way back home. The RTI activist was first attacked and then run over by a Scorpio, the [Himachal Watcher](#) reported.

Initially thought of as an accident, the police later registered a murder case against SUV owner and up-Pradhan of Bakras gram panchayat, Jai Prakash, and Gopal Singh under Section 302 of the IPC, ANI reported.

Both the accused were arrested on Saturday, 8 September, after outrage mounted over the inaction of the police for the same. Social activists and locals protested on Saturday, demanding security for Jindan's wife and family.



Photo of the Scorpio that ran over Kedar Singh Jindan.

(Photo Courtesy: Ashish Kumar District Secretary, Dalit Shoshan Mukti Manch, Sirmaur)

Several people from different organisations took out a protest march in Nahan under the banner of Dalit Shoshan Mukti Manch. A memorandum was also submitted to additional deputy commissioner Aditya Negi to demand action, [The Times of India](#) reported.

Ashish Kumar, the district secretary of the Dalit Shoshan Mukti Manch of Sirmaur, told **The Quint** that the protests died down after the police arrested the Panchayat people.

WHAT THE FAMILY AND THE EYE-WITNESSES ARE SAYING



The eyewitness and family members have alleged that those accused in the murder are influential people, and therefore they feel unsafe in the region.

Many from his family did not attend the cremation out of fear, Ashish Kumar told **The Quint**. The protesters further alleged that there were five people who were involved in the murder, *The Wire* reported.

Hem Lata, wife of the slain RTI activist told ANI:

My husband was the only bread earner and now there is nobody in the family to take care. He had already asked for security as he was threatened for life and police did not take any action. He was attacked by these people earlier also.



She told *The Statesman* that culprits should be hanged to death. Fearing threat to her life and lives of her family members she has also demanded police security.

Sita Ram Bansal, state president of Welfare Association of Schedule Caste and Tribe Employees, told ANI that there had been a attempt to take his life earlier as well and despite asking for protection, the police failed to provide him support.





People crowd at the funeral of slain RTI activist.

(Photo Courtesy: Ashish Kumar, District Secretary, Dalit Shoshan Mukti Manch, Sirmaur)

The deceased was fighting social issues in the society and he had already demanded security, but police failed to provide it and he was murdered. The witness in the case is also a daily wage government employee and has demanded his posting at a safe place as his life could also be a threat. The Association has also demanded to refer the case to the CBI and has also asked for a job for his wife.

Sita Ram Bansal



Member of CPM state secretariat, CPM Rakesh Singh, said it was the inability of the government to provide security to the weak and the Dalits that led to the murder of the RTI Activist.

THE BACKDROP

In June, at a press conference in Shimla, Jindal had claimed that 6 families related to panchayat people got government jobs using fake BPL certificates.

He had alleged that by forging records using his position in the panchayat, Jai Prakash had managed to get government jobs for his family members in government jobs, *Himachal Watcher* reported.

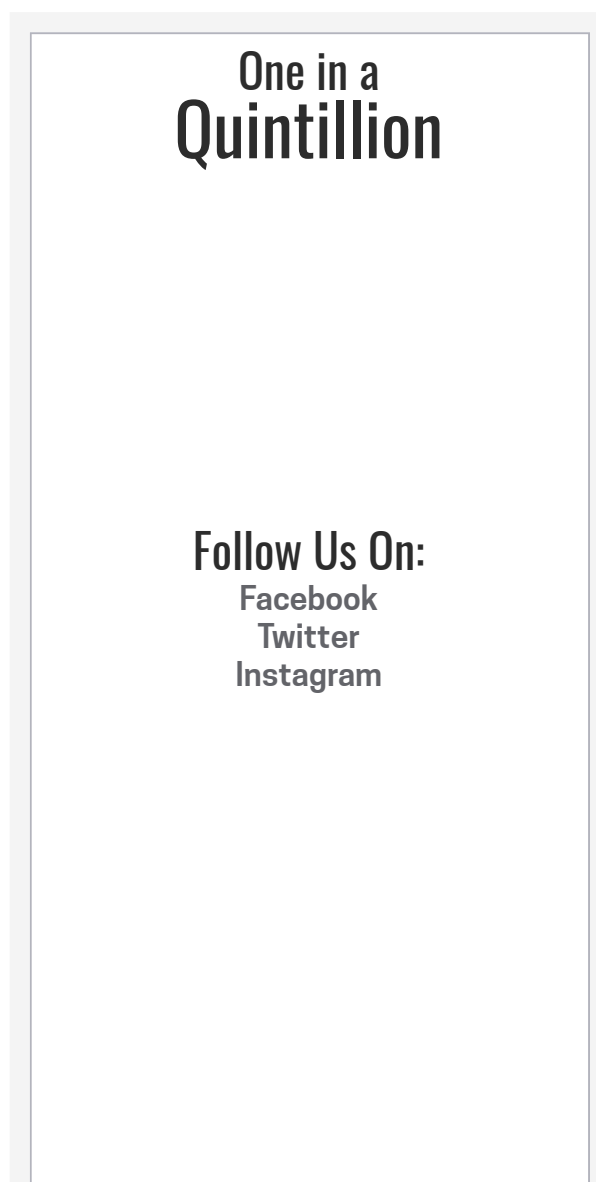
He had raised several issues of atrocities on the lower class by the higher class.

THE IMPACT

According to the [Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative](#) which maps cases of attacks on RTI users, there had been 419 cases of such attacks till August 20, and 72 people had lost their lives. The attack on Jindan takes the toll up to 73.

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