

Fake encounter: NHRC asks Manipur Govt to pay compensation

From Our Correspondent

GUWAHATI: Manipur government has been directed by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to pay Rupees five lakh compensation to the next of kin of the deceased R K Sanjoaba, who was killed in a fake encounter in the broad daylight on October 20 in 2004 by Manipur police personnel.

The NHRC in its directive of January 28 last asked Manipur government to submit the proof of payment to the Commission by February 26, 2010, according to information provided by the Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) which had filed the compliant in the case.

The NHRC further stated that the State of Manipur had not been sending any reports about encounter killings. The Commission has directed

the Chief Secretary, State of Manipur to "explain as to why the reports are not being forwarded to the National Human Rights Commission" in 111 reported cases of fake encounter killings.

"The order of the NHRC is historic considering the alleged systematic fake encounter killings by the Manipur Police under the guise of joint operations with the Central armed forces against insurgents. The Manipur Government must bear in mind that even if the Armed Forces Special Powers Act is imposed, the central armed forces are legally required to operate under the command of the police in aid of civil administration and the Police are duty bound to report to the NHRC" director of the ACHR Suhas Chakma said.

The ACHR in its complaint lodged before the NHRC on October 21, 2004 stated that in the morning of 20th October 2004, the deceased RK Sanajaoba was proceeding towards Sagolband from the direction of Wahengbam Leikai on his Honda Activa scooter when a police constable on escort duty of the Officer in Charge (OC) of Patsoi police station, Joyce Lalrimmiwi, landed a blow on the back of the deceased with a lathi for not giving way to the police Gypsy that was also heading towards the same direction.

Sanajaoba then overtook the police Gypsy and signalled the police vehicle to stop in front of a timber shop at Sagolband Khongnang Hogibi. Enraged at this, two policemen from the Gypsy started raining blows on Sanajaoba who also retaliated. According to eyewitnesses another police constable, who was armed with a baton also joined his colleagues and attacked Sanjaoba. However, he managed to snatch the cane of a cop and started thrashing the cops. The driver of the Gypsy, Ningombam Ibomcha then shot at Sanajaoba twice killing him on the spot as a bullet had hit him in the chest.