

URGENT ACTION

MAN PARALYSED IN JAIL NOW AT RISK OF EXECUTION

A Pakistani man convicted and sentenced to death for murder in 2009, Abdul Basit, is at risk of execution. His execution has been stayed three times, all at the last minute, in July, September and November 2015. He became paralysed in 2010 due to the inhumane conditions in which he was kept in Central Jail Faisalabad.

Abdul Basit was convicted of murder and sentenced to death over six years ago, although he has always maintained his innocence. He became paralysed from the waist down in 2010 due to the inhumane conditions in which he was kept in Central Jail Faisalabad, and the lack of sufficient healthcare after being diagnosed with TB meningitis. His execution was originally scheduled for 29 July, then again on 22 September, and yet again on 24 November 2015. All of these executions were stayed, first because authorities could not work out the logistics of hanging a man in a wheelchair and later because of international outcry.

He received the most recent stay of execution for three months on 25 January 2016, which has now expired.

On 22 April Abdul Basit's family were informed, that during a meeting at the Ministry of Interior a representative of the Presidency confirmed that they still believe Abdul Basit's execution cannot lawfully proceed. Despite this, no further stay of execution was ordered. Abdul Basit's family visited him in prison on 25 April and the prison authorities informed them that since the President had issued no further stay order, they are planning to imminently request a further execution warrant from the Sessions Judge imminently.

Please write immediately in English or Urdu:

- Urging the authorities to immediately grant Abdul Basit clemency and commute his death sentence;
- Urging them to re-establish the official moratorium on all executions in the country as a first step towards the abolition of the death penalty, in line with five UN General Assembly resolutions adopted since 2007;
- Calling on them to ensure that any measures taken to combat crime do not violate Pakistan's obligations under international human rights law and that all safeguards guaranteeing the rights of those facing the death penalty are respected.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JUNE 2016 TO:

President of Pakistan
Honourable Mr Mamnoon Hussain
President's Secretariat
Islamabad, Pakistan
Fax: +92 51 920 8479
Twitter: @Mamnoon_hussain
Salutation: Your Excellency

Prime Minister of Pakistan
Muhammad Nawaz Sharif
Prime Minister House
Secretariat, Constitution Avenue
Islamabad, Pakistan
Fax: +92 519 220 404 (PM Secretariat)
Twitter: @PMNawazSharif
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Chief Minister of Punjab
Shahbaz Sharif
Chief Minister Secretariat
7-Club Road
GOR-I, Lahore
Pakistan
Fax: +92 42 99204301
Twitter: @shahbazsharif
Salutation: Dear Mr. Sharif

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following the Pakistani Taliban attack on the army-run school in Peshawar on 16 December 2014, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif partially lifted the six-year moratorium on executions, allowing the death penalty to be used in terrorism cases. On 11 March 2015 the Pakistan government announced that it was unconditionally lifting the moratorium for all capital crimes. They threatened to send up to 1,000 prisoners, who have exhausted all legal options and their mercy petitions, to the gallows. In total, approximately over 368 prisoners have been executed since the moratorium was lifted.

Around 7,000 prisoners were on death row in Pakistan at the end of 2015. The death penalty may be imposed in Pakistan for at least 27 crimes, including for non-lethal offences which do not meet the threshold of the “most serious crimes” to which the use of the death penalty must be restricted under Article 6.2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Pakistan is a State party.

Amnesty International unequivocally condemned the Peshawar school attack which resulted in 149 deaths, including 132 children. The organization called for thorough investigations into indiscriminate attacks and attacks against civilians, including the Peshawar attack. In addition the organization insisted that suspected perpetrators face prosecution in proceedings that comply with international fair trial standards, without resort to the death penalty. Since the attack, Pakistan has amended its constitution to speed up the prosecution of terrorism-related cases and move them from civilian to military courts. The jurisdiction of military courts over cases of terrorism raises serious concerns about fair trial guarantees, as rights could be violated in the rush to ensure speedy terrorism-related convictions.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases and under any circumstances, regardless of the nature of the crime, the characteristics of the offender, or the method used by the state to carry out the execution. The organization considers the death penalty a violation of the right to life as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment. Furthermore, there is no convincing evidence that the death penalty is a particular deterrent in capital crimes compared to other forms of punishment. The most comprehensive study carried out by the UN in 1988 and most recently updated in 2008 concluded that there is no proof that executions are a greater deterrent to crime than life imprisonment.

In Pakistan many death sentences are handed down following trials that do not meet international fair trial standards. These trials are characterized by a lack of access to legal counsel and an acceptance of evidence inadmissible under international law. Statements extracted through torture continue to be used as evidence in court. Defendants often face restrictions in trying to access a lawyer or are given state-appointed lawyers who are often poorly trained and paid, and may not vigorously represent their clients unless given further payments by the defendant or their family. In addition, the right to fair trial has been undermined in trials before lower courts which continue to sentence people to death. These courts operate with restricted public access and with the requirement for trials to be completed within a matter of days or weeks, putting judges under extreme pressure to convict. In 2012 the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions concluded that military or other special jurisdictions should not have the authority to impose the death penalty.

Name: Abdul Basit
Gender m/f: m

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