

UA 249/91

Extrajudicial Executions

19 July 1991

INDIA: Baljit Singh Bachitar Singh
 Daswant Singh Sauzi Kartar Singh
 Jaswant Singh Jassa Tarsam Singh
 Harminder Singh Lida Lakhwilder Singh, aged 15
 Surjan Singh Narinder Singh Nidra

On 13 July 1991, Indian police personnel reportedly killed 10 Sikhs near Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh. Amnesty International is concerned that they may have been victims of extrajudicial executions, deliberately killed without provocation.

Police sources claim that the men were killed in three separate encounters after they had been traced to forest hideouts near the border with Nepal: at 8pm and 11.30pm on 12 July, and 3am on 13 July 1991. However, the *Times of India* on 18 July 1991 reportedly stated that the 10 men were taken from a bus that had been hired to tour Sikh shrines in the area. Baljit Singh and Daswant Singh Sauzi allegedly had links with an armed Sikh opposition group, but the other eight (Jaswant Singh Jassa, Harminder Singh Lida, Surjan Singh, Bachitar Singh, Kartar Singh, Tarsam Singh, Lakhwilder Singh - aged 15, and Narinder Singh Nidra) reportedly had no such links and no criminal records. All 10 had lived for several years in Pilibhit, which is over 200 miles east of the state of Punjab.

The *Times of India* report claimed that the police stopped the bus on 12 July 1991, acting on information that militants were aboard. Three Sikh youths fought with police, but were eventually overpowered. The women passengers were released. Local villagers reported that the following morning the 10 men were divided into three groups and taken in police jeeps to different parts of a nearby forest, where they were shot dead. Among the police alleged to have been involved were the Superintendent of Police and Additional Superintendent of Police from Pilibhit police station.

Members of both the upper and lower houses of India's parliament have demanded an inquiry, urging punishment of the police involved if official wrong-doing is found to have occurred. It is not known whether an inquiry has been ordered onto the incident.

Amnesty International regularly receives reports of human rights violations committed against Sikhs in Punjab who are suspected of being members or sympathizers of Sikh militant groups advocating a separate Sikh state, "Khalistan".

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports that the 10 Sikhs shot by police near Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh on 13 July 1991 were victims of extrajudicial execution, deliberately killed without provocation;

- urging that there be a prompt and impartial inquiry into the incident; that those selected to carry out the inquiry be selected for their impartiality; that the methods and results of the inquiry be quickly made public; and that if police officials are found responsible for extrajudicial executions, they

be brought to justice;

- urging that immediate steps be taken to ensure that those potentially implicated are removed from positions of control or power over complainants, witnesses and their relatives as well as those conducting the inquiry;

- urging that the family of the victims be granted adequate compensation.

APPEALS TO:

Mr Kaylan Singh
Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh
Office of the Chief Minister
Lucknow
Uttar Pradesh, India

Mr V. K. Jain
Director General of Police
Police Headquarters
Lucknow
Uttar Pradesh, India

COPIES TO:

Mr M. M. Jacob
Minister of State for Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
North Block
New Delhi 110 001, India

**Telegrams: Home Affairs Minister Jacob,
New Delhi, India**

**Telexes: 31 61879 frgn in; 31 61880 frgn in
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

and to diplomatic representatives of India in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 August 1991.