

UA 138/99

Harassmen

INDIAThe family of:

Gulsham Bano, 20 (f)

Raja Begum (f)

Muhammed Shafi Wani

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Gulsham Bano, her mother Raja Begum and father Muhammed Shafi Wani, and their family, who have reportedly been continually harassed by members of the ADA-322 battalion of the Indian army since 19 March 1999, when Gulsham Bano and her mother lodged a complaint that they had been raped by members of the battalion. On 31 May Gulsham Bano and her father were detained for several hours and reportedly threatened with false charges by members of the battalion, in an attempt to force the women to drop the complaint.

On 14 March Raja Begum and Gulsham Bano were detained by soldiers of ADA-322 battalion as suspected militants after a landmine exploded near their village, Moradaree, in Mangota Tehsil district, near Doda in Jammu and Kashmir. The two women were detained until 19 March, when they were released without charge. While in custody they were reportedly raped repeatedly by soldiers of the ADA-322 battalion. On their release Gulsham Begum and her mother filed a complaint at Doda police station against the men they alleged had raped them.

Amnesty International has received reports that while they were in Doda after filing the complaint, the women were approached by soldiers of the same battalion who threatened to harm male members of their family unless they dropped the complaint.

On 31 May Gulsham Bano and her father, Muhammed Shafi Wani, were travelling to Doda when soldiers of ADA-322 battalion stopped the bus and made them get off. The soldiers searched both of them, and accused Muhammed Shafi Wani of carrying a hand grenade and other explosives in his bag. They were taken to Doda police station and later released without charge, reportedly on condition that Raja Begum and Gulsham Bano drop the complaint against their alleged rapists.

Amnesty International is concerned about the reports of continued harassment of this family by the security forces and that they are at risk of further human rights violations. The high profile of this case, following public protests by the local population and its being reported in the press, may have contributed to the harassment of the family.

To Amnesty International's knowledge, the police have so far taken no action on the complaint lodged by the women against their alleged rapists.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:**

- pressing the authorities to prevent any further harassment of the women and their family by providing them with proper protection;
- urging the authorities to immediately investigate allegations that Gulsham Bano and her father, Muhammed Shafi, were threatened with false charges, in order to intimidate them, and to bring those responsible to justice;
- calling on the authorities to safeguard the right to raise complaints of human rights violations against the security forces without threats of harassment, arbitrary arrest or detention.

**APPEALS TO:**

Mr Girish Chandra Saxena  
The Governor  
Office of the Governor  
Raj Bhavan  
Srinagar/Jammu  
India

**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Dr Farooq Abdullah  
The Chief Minister  
Office of the Chief Minister  
Raj Bhavan  
Srinagar  
Jammu and Kashmir  
India

**Telegrams: Chief Minister, Srinagar, India**

**Salutation: Dear Chief Minister**

The Unified Command  
c/o The Chief Minister  
Address as above

**Telegrams: The Unified Command, c/o Chief Minister, Srinagar, India**

Mr Sardar Gurbachan Jagat  
Director General of Police  
Office of the DGP  
Police Headquarters  
Srinagar

**COPIES TO:**

Mr Lal Krishna Advani  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Room No.104  
North Block  
New Delhi 110 001

**Faxes: + 91 11 301 5750**

and to diplomatic representatives of India accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 26 July 1999.