

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 31/08/99

13 August 1999

Further information on EXTRA 11/99 (ASA 31/03/99, 29 January 1999)
-Disappearance/Fear of Torture

NEPAL Rajendra Dhakal (m), 30, lawyer, human rights defender

Amnesty International remains concerned for the safety of Rajendra Dhakal, a lawyer and human rights defender, whose whereabouts remain unknown since he was reportedly arrested by police on 8 January 1999 in Tanahun District. There are fears that he may be tortured in custody.

A *habeas corpus* petition was filed in the Supreme Court in January on Rajendra Dhakal's behalf. At a hearing of the petition on 26 January, the court issued an order to the authorities to produce the detainee in court. The authorities responded by denying that he had been arrested. At a further hearing on 23 March the Supreme Court ordered Police Headquarters to search for Rajendra Dhakal at all places of detention in the country.

In their response the police stated that Rajendra Dhakal had been charged with the murder of a police inspector and that the case was pending at the Tanahun District Court.

At a further hearing on 11 May the government attorney was ordered to present the details of the case pending against Rajendra Dhakal in the Tanahun District Court to the Supreme Court. A date for the next hearing of the petition at the Supreme Court has not yet been decided.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please continue to send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Rajendra Dhakal, whose whereabouts remain unknown following his arrest by police on 8 January 1999;
- urging the government to take immediate steps to investigate his fate and whereabouts;
- urging that, if he is found to be in detention, he be promptly charged with a recognizable offence, or immediately released, and that steps be taken in the meantime to safeguard his physical integrity;
- calling upon the government, if he is in detention, to allow him immediate access to his family, legal counsel and medical care;
- expressing concern at the human rights situation in Nepal and appealing for an immediate halt to human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Rt Hon Prime Minister K P Bhattarai
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
Singha Durbar
Kathmandu
Nepal

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Kathmandu, Nepal
Faxes: +977 1 227 286 or 428 570
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Hon Purna Bahadur Khadka
Minister of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
Singha Durbar
Kathmandu
Nepal

Telegrams: Minister of Home Affairs, Kathmandu, Nepal

Faxes: +977 1 241 942

Salutation: Dear Minister

Mr Achyut Krishna Kharel
Inspector General of Police
Police Headquarters
GPO Box 407
Naxal
Kathmandu
Nepal

Telegrams: Inspector General of Police, Kathmandu, Nepal

Faxes: +977 1 415 593

Salutation: Dear Inspector General

COPIES TO:

diplomatic representatives of Nepal accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 September 1999.