

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Fear of Extrajudicial Execution

15 April 1993

INDIA:

Umrao Singh

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Umrao Singh and fears that he may be tortured or killed in police custody.

Umrao Singh was arrested in Delhi on 1 April 1993 and was detained without charge in Lodhi Road Police Station Interrogation Centre, Delhi. He was handed over to the Punjab police on 7 April. On 14 April police reported that Umrao Singh had escaped. There is a persistent pattern of extrajudicial executions and deaths in custody in Punjab which are often attributed by officials to an "encounter" between militants and the police, or to an "escape" during such an "encounter". Umrao Singh's family and lawyer fear that he may still be in police custody and may be tortured and killed.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International regularly receives reports of allegations that alleged members or sympathizers of armed opposition groups, or their relatives, in Punjab have been killed in police custody, often after torture, their deaths or "disappearances" later being wrongly attributed by officials to an "encounter" between militants and the police, to an "escape" during such an "encounter" or to other improbable causes.

Even though legal safeguards against unacknowledged detention exist in India's ordinary criminal law and procedural code, they are often simply not adhered to and prisoners are held in unacknowledged detention for weeks and sometimes months.

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

- noting concern at reports that Umrao Singh has escaped from police custody and that due to the persistent pattern of extrajudicial executions which are often wrongly attributed by officials to an "encounter" between militants and the police, or to an "escape" during such an "encounter" that Umrao Singh may still be in police custody and may be killed while in detention;

- seeking assurances that if Umrao Singh is still in custody of the Punjab police that he be humanely treated and be allowed immediate access to lawyers and relatives and be brought before a magistrate forthwith;

- urging that he be immediately released if he is not charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

**APPEALS TO**

1) Beant Singh  
Chief Minister of Punjab  
Office of the Chief Minister  
Chandigarh  
Punjab  
India

**Telegrams: Punjab Chief Minister, Chandigarh, Punjab, India**

**Salutation: Dear Chief Minister**

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2) Mr S. B. Chavan  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
North Block  
New Delhi 110 001  
India

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

**Faxes: +91 11 301 0700/0680 (c/o Ministry for External Affairs)**

**Telexes: 3166427 REND IN**

**Salutation: Dear Home Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

Mr Rajesh Pilot  
Minister of State for Home Affairs  
Ministry for Home Affairs  
North Block  
New Delhi  
India

Mr Dinesh Singh  
Minister of External Affairs  
Ministry of External Affairs  
South Block  
New Delhi 110 001  
India

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 27 May 1993.