

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 20/48/96

5 November 1996

Further information on UA 39/96 (ASA 20/06/96, 16 February 1996) and follow ups (ASA 20/14/96, 25 March, ASA 20/20/96, 16 May, ASA 20/40/96, 30 August, ASA 20/43/96, 13 September and ASA 20/45/96, 27 September) - Death Penalty

**INDIA Gantela Vijayavardhana Rao, aged 25
Satuluri Chalapathi Rao, aged 24**

Gantela Vijayavardhana Rao and Satuluri Chalapathi Rao will soon be hanged in the first judicial executions to take place in Andhra Pradesh for 17 years, unless the President of India commutes their death sentences.

The High Court of Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad had stayed their execution, which was scheduled to take place on 30 September, acting on a writ petition filed by the Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC). The petition, filed on 25 September, had called for a stay to allow the Governor of Andhra Pradesh and the President of India time to decide on the mercy petitions, filed by the two men, appealing for commutation of their sentences.

Following the refusal of the appeal by the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, the petition was dismissed on 5 November by a bench headed by Chief Justice Prabha Shankar Mishra. Another mercy petition is being submitted to the President of India urging him to exercise his powers under Article 72 of the Constitution of India to commute the death sentence.

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

- urging that the death sentences on Gantela Vijayavardhana Rao and Satuluri Chalapathi Rao not be carried out and that their sentences be commuted;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect.

APPEALS TO:

President Shankar Dayal Sharma
Office of the President
Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi 110 004
India

Telegrams: President of India, New Delhi, India

Faxes: +91 11 301 7290

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES TO:

Mr Indrajit Gupta
Minister of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
North Block
New Delhi 110 001
India

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Faxes: + 91 11 301 5750

Mr Krishna Kanth
Governor of Andhra Pradesh
Office of the Governor
Hyderabad
Andhra Pradesh
India

Faxes: + 91 40 234 055 [ATTN: Governor of Andhra Pradesh (ask for fax tone)]

COPIES 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 12 December 1996.