

URGENT ACTION

TORTURE FEARS FOR TWO PAKISTANI STUDENTS

Brothers Abdullah and Ibrahim Mohamed El-Sharkawi have been allegedly abducted by Pakistani intelligence agencies in Pakistan on 25 and 29 May. Ibrahim was located in detention nine days later. Abdullah is still missing. There are fears that both are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment and that Abdullah's life is at serious risk.

Ibrahim Mohamed El-Sharkawi is only 17 years old and his family discovered on 6 June that he was transferred to Adiala jail in Rawalpindi, near the capital Islamabad, by the Federal Intelligence Agency (FIA). According to a human rights defender working on behalf of the family, authorities at Adiala jail told them that the FIA had charged Ibrahim with illegal residency in Pakistan and resisting arrest. Ibrahim's mother met him in Adiala jail on 6 June and he told her he had been beaten and handcuffed and was being kept in a cell with adult men. The charges against Ibrahim appear to be without grounds, as Ibrahim is a Pakistani citizen under Pakistan law.

According to eyewitnesses, Ibrahim was allegedly abducted by several people wearing civilian clothes from Attock after leaving home in the morning to buy groceries on 29 May. There has been no news of his brother, **Abdullah Mohamed El-Sharkawi**, who is an engineering student in Islamabad. He went missing after leaving his hostel to go to the local shops at around 6pm on 25 May. He has not been charged with any offences so far. His family fears he is a victim of enforced disappearance and is being held in secret detention where he is at serious risk of torture or other ill-treatment. They also are seriously concerned that Abdullah's life might be at grave risk.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Urdu, English or your own language:

- Express concern that Abdullah Mohamed El-Sharkawi might have been arbitrarily arrested and held in secret detention since 25 May in circumstances that amount to being subjected to enforced disappearance;
- Urge the Pakistani authorities to immediately investigate and disclose the whereabouts of Abdullah Mohamed Sharkawi, to ensure that he has access to family, legal assistance of choice and any medical care he might require and to ensure that he is protected from torture or other ill-treatment;
- Insist the authorities release Abdullah immediately if he is held in their custody, unless he is transferred to an official place of detention and promptly charged with an internationally recognizable offence and remanded by an independent court;
- Express concern that Ibrahim Mohamed El-Sharkawi, a child, has been held in secret detention for nine days, without disclosing his fate or whereabouts, which amounts to enforced disappearance and has been ill-treated, and that he has been held in prison since 6 June on charges that appear to be groundless;
- Call on the authorities to treat Ibrahim according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Pakistan is state party – to allow access to his family, lawyers and an independent, civilian court and be protected from torture or other ill-treatment while in detention, and to be held separately from adult detainees;
- Call on the authorities to investigate and hold into account those responsible for their enforced disappearance.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 21 JULY 2011 TO:

Prime Minister

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani
Pakistan Secretariat
Constitution Avenue
Islamabad, Pakistan
Fax: +92 51 9213780; +92 51
9221596

Email: secretary@cabinet.gov.pk

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Advisor / Minister for Interior

Rehman Malik
Room 404, 4th Floor, R Block,
Pakistan Secretariat
Islamabad, Pakistan
Fax: +92 51 9202624

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Following the disappearance of Abdullah and Ibrahim Mohamed El-Sharkawi, the family contacted a Pakistani NGO, "Defence of Human Rights" and through them contacted various government officials inquiring into the alleged abductions of both brothers. They have filed missing person reports in police stations in Islamabad and in Attock.

According to their family, Abdullah and Ibrahim are not affiliated with any political movements.

Abdullah, an engineering student in the capital Islamabad, went missing after leaving his hostel to go to the local shops around 6pm on 25 May.

On 27 May, while taking part in a press conference about Abdullah's disappearance, his mother said she received a phone call from Ibrahim telling her that he and his younger sibling were being questioned by men claiming to be members of the "special branch police" at the family home in Attock, 90km northwest of Islamabad.

Ibrahim disappeared from Attock two days later, after leaving home in the morning to buy groceries. A shopkeeper who claimed to have witnessed the incident said that Ibrahim was forcefully taken by several men in civilian clothes who beat him and drove him away. The shopkeeper said that he had seen the assailants' cars parked by the family house the previous night.

The charges against Ibrahim appear on the surface to be baseless for a number of reasons. Both of Ibrahim's parents are Pakistani nationals and because he was born in Pakistan he is entitled to Pakistani citizenship under Pakistan law. Moreover, individuals below the age of 18 are not eligible for separate identity cards in Pakistan.

Despite this, the family has been struggling to obtain Pakistani identity cards for years because their father was until only recently in administrative detention in Egypt and unable to travel to Pakistan to sign the necessary documents. The Peshawar High Court ruled in the family's favour in January 2010, ordering the relevant authorities to issue Pakistani identity cards and passports to them. But authorities have not provided these documents, leaving them vulnerable to abuse.

The father of the two brothers, Mohamed Abdel Rehim El-Sharkawi, and their older brother, Abdel Rahman, were both tortured in Pakistan before being rendered to Egypt in 1995 and 2006 respectively where they faced further torture. Older brother Abdel Rahman was arrested by the Pakistani intelligence agencies in 2004, who held him for 14 months before his rendition to Egypt.

Further information on UA: 162/11 Index: ASA 33/005/2011 Issue Date: 9 June 2011

