

PUBLIC

AI Index: 31/108/2003

16 December 2003

Further Information on UA 363/03 (ASA 31/104/2003, 11 December 2003) Fear for safety/ possible "disappearance"

NEPAL Yuba Raj Chaulagain (m), aged 31, taxi driver
 Rebakala Tiwari (f), aged 21, student
 Subash Shrestha (m), aged 18, student
 Shaha Dev Ghimire (m), aged 29, government surveyor
 Lila Dahal (f), aged 34, women's activist
 Ganesh Dhakal (m), aged 24, teacher

New name: Bhawanath Dhamala (m), aged 27, student

Amnesty International has just learnt that Rebakala Tiwari's husband Bhawanath Dhamala was reportedly arrested at the same time as her on 30 October. At 2:30 pm, security force personnel reportedly arrested them at his rented room in Chabahil, Kathmandu.

Bhawanath Dhamala is originally from Amjani village in Okhaldhunga district of Eastern Nepal and it is not known why he was arrested. Attempts to locate both Bhawanath Dhamala and Rebakala Tiwari, including informing the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), have so far failed.

There is no further information on the whereabouts of Yuba Raj Chaulagain, Rebakala Tiwari, Subash Shrestha, Shaha Dev Ghimire, Lila Dahal, and Ganesh Dhakal, who were reportedly arrested in Kathmandu district between 3 September and 3 December.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The human rights situation in Nepal has deteriorated since the CPN (Maoist) launched a "people's war" in February 1996. Reports of human rights abuses by the security forces and the CPN (Maoist) escalated after the army was mobilized and a state of emergency imposed between November 2001 and August 2002. On 29 January 2003, both the CPN (Maoist) and the security forces agreed to a cease-fire. The CPN (Maoist) announced they were withdrawing from the cease-fire agreement on 27 August. Since then, fighting between the two sides has resumed and there have been reports of human rights abuses committed by both sides in the conflict. In particular there has been a rise in the number of 'disappearances' by the security forces and abductions by the CPN (Maoist).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Bhawanath Dhamala, Yuba Raj Chaulagain, Rebakala Tiwari, Subash Shrestha, Shaha Dev Ghimire, Lila Dahal, and Ganesh Dhakal who were reportedly arrested by members of the security forces in Kathmandu district between 3 September and 3 December;
- urging the authorities to make public the whereabouts of the six people and to grant them immediate access to their relatives, lawyers and any medical attention they may require;
- calling for their immediate and unconditional release, unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

Deputy Brigadier General Nirendra Prasad Aryal

Head, Army Human Rights Cell

Army Headquarters

Kathmandu, Nepal

Telegram: Deputy Brigadier General, Kathmandu, Nepal

Fax: + 977 1 4 226 292/ 229 451

Salutation: Dear Deputy Brigadier General

General Pyar Jung Thapa

Chief of Army Staff (COAS)

Army Headquarters

Kathmandu, Nepal

Telegram: Commander-in-Chief, Kathmandu, Nepal

Fax: + 977 1 4 242 168

Salutation: Dear Commander-in-Chief

COPIES TO:

Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa

Prime Minister's Office

Singha Durbar

Kathmandu, Nepal

Fax: + 977 1 4 227 286

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

and 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 27 January 2004.