

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 33/01/98

UA 22/98

Fear of torture / Possible prisoner
of conscience

22 January 1998

PAKISTAN Shaukat Ali Kashmiri

On 18 January 1998 Shaukat Ali Kashmiri, Chairman of the United Kashmir People's National Party, was arrested near Bag in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and taken to an unknown destination. Amnesty International fears that he may be ill-treated in incommunicado detention as torture and ill-treatment are widespread in Pakistan. Shaukat Ali Kashmiri appears to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for advocating an independent and united Jammu and Kashmir.

Shaukat Ali Kashmiri was travelling to Bag when two jeeps stopped the car he was in. His driver and two party members witnessed how Shaukat Ali Kashmiri was surrounded by some 10 armed men in plain clothes and forced into one of their vehicles. The three witnesses were beaten when they asked to see an arrest warrant.

The men who carried out the arrests are believed to be members of the security forces, although their specific agency is not known.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Shaukat Ali Kashmiri was previously detained without charge or trial for one month in 1994. He was abducted from near his house in Islamabad in August 1994 and authorities denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. Shaukat Ali Kashmiri was eventually released from an army detention centre in Attock Fort in September 1994. He had not been physically tortured during his detention but been subjected to threats during lengthy interrogation.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of Shaukat Ali Kashmiri and to provide him with immediate access to a lawyer and his family;
- urging the authorities to ensure the physical safety of Shaukat Ali Kashmiri;
- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Shaukat Ali Kashmiri unless he is charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- calling for an investigation into reports that three witnesses to the arrest were beaten, and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Fax tones can be difficult to obtain. When faxing, if unable to obtain a tone, try again later, preferably in office hours, Pakistani time.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif
Office of the Prime Minister
Islamabad, Pakistan

Telexes: 5742 PMH PK

Telegrams: Prime Minister, Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: +92 51 9208890, 9201545

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain
Minister of the Interior
Ministry of the Interior

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Islamabad, Pakistan

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: +92 51 9201472

Salutation: Dear Minister

President Rafiq Tarar

Office of the President

Islamabad, Pakistan

Telegrams: President Tarar, Islamabad, Pakistan

Faxes: +92 51 9204067, 9211018

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Pakistan accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 5 March 1998.