

THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN KASHMIR



A Pattern of Impunity

Asia Watch

A DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Physicians for Human Rights

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A Pattern of Impunity

With the bloody conflict in Indian-controlled Kashmir now in its fourth year, Indian troops have embarked on a "catch and kill" campaign against Muslim militants, resulting in a sharp escalation of human rights abuses, including summary executions of hundreds of detainees in the custody of security forces. Troops have also engaged in reprisal attacks against civilians, assaults on medical workers, rape, torture and arson. The upsurge in killings and other abuses is testament to the failure of the Indian government's attempt to resolve the crisis through force.

Masroof Sultan (pictured on the cover), was detained by security forces in April 1993, beaten, tortured with electric shock, then shot and left for dead.

They stood me up against a tree and told me, "Now we will release you forever." I heard them cock their guns. Someone said, "One, two, three," then they fired. I was shot in both legs. I heard someone say, "Make sure he's dead." One of them kicked me in the head and said, "he's still alive." The officer said, "Shoot him in the heart." Then the soldier shot me in the chest and arm. Someone kicked me again and said, "He's still alive." Then a voice said, "Shoot him in the head." A bullet grazed the back of my neck. I held my breath. Someone kicked me again, then shouted, "He's dead."

The *Human Rights Crisis in Kashmir* provides comprehensive documentation of the consequences of India's abusive policy in Kashmir. It also documents violations by armed militants, including killings, rape and indiscriminate attacks in populated areas, and concludes that these abuses and India's policy of impunity toward its own security forces has helped fuel the conflict and create a human rights disaster in Kashmir.



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**THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN
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A Division of Human Rights Watch

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Human Rights Watch

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Cover photo: Masroof Sultan, a 19-year-old college student, who was taken into custody on April 8, 1993, by Border Security Force troops, beaten and tortured with electric shock and then taken to a field where he was shot and left for dead. Photo copyright © Klaus Holsting, April 1993.

Asia Watch was founded in 1985 to monitor and promote internationally recognized human rights in Asia. The Chair is Jack Greenberg and the Vice Chair is Orville Schell. Sidney Jones is Executive Director. Mike Jendrzeczyk is Washington Representative. Therese Caouette, Patricia Gossman, Jeannine Guthrie and Robin Munro are Research Associates. Grace Obama-Layat and Vicki Shu are Associates, and Mickey Spiegel is Research Consultant.

Asia Watch is a division of Human Rights Watch, which also includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch and the Fund for Free Expression. The Chair of Human Rights Watch is Robert L. Bernstein and the Vice Chair is Adrian DeWind. Kenneth Roth is the Acting Executive Director

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) is an organization of physicians and other health professionals that brings the knowledge and skills of the medical sciences to the investigation and prevention of violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws. Since its founding in 1989, it has conducted over forty missions concerning over twenty-five countries.

Physicians for Human Rights works to apply the special skills of health professionals to stop torture, "disappearances" and political killings by governments and opposition groups; to report on conditions and protection of detainees in prisons and refugee camps; to investigate the physical and psychological consequences of violations of humanitarian law and medical ethics in internal and international conflicts; to defend the right of civilians and combatants to receive medical care during times of war; to protect health professionals who are victims of human rights abuses and to prevent physician complicity in torture and other human rights abuses.

Physicians for Human Rights adheres to a policy of strict impartiality and is concerned with the medical abuses regardless of the ideology of the offending government or group. The President of the Board of Directors is H. Jack Geiger, M.D.; the Vice President is Carola Eisenberg, M.D.; Eric Stover is the Executive Director; Susannah is Deputy Director; Shana Swiss, M.D. is Director of the Women's Program; Barbara Ayotte is Senior Program Associate; and Gina VanderLoop is Development Director. Physicians for Human Rights is located at 100 Boylston Street, #702, Boston, MA 02116, USA; Tel: (617) 695-0041; Fax: (617) 695-0307.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

Human Rights Watch conducts regular, systematic investigations of human rights abuses in some sixty countries around the world. It addresses the human rights practices of governments of all political stripes, of all geopolitical alignments, and of all ethnic and religious persuasions. In internal wars it documents violations by both governments and rebel groups. Human Rights Watch defends freedom of thought and expression, due process of law and equal protection of the law; it documents and denounces murders, disappearances, torture, arbitrary imprisonment, exile, censorship and other abuses of internationally recognized human rights.

Human Rights Watch began in 1978 with the founding of Helsinki Watch by a group of publishers, lawyers and other activists and now maintains offices in New York, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, London, Moscow, Belgrade, Zagreb and Hong Kong. Today, it includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch, the Fund for Free Expression and three collaborative projects, the Arms Project, Prison Project and Women's Rights Project. Human Rights Watch is an independent, nongovernmental organization, supported by contributions from private individuals and foundations. It accepts no government funds, directly or indirectly.

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This report is dedicated to Hirdai Nath Wanchoo (1925-1992), human rights monitor and colleague, assassinated on December 5, 1992. He documented the violence and fell victim to it.

This report is also dedicated to all those in Kashmir who have been advocates for human rights, especially those in the medical community.

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