

REDRESS

Seeking Reparation for Torture Survivors

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Chief Constable Norman Bettison
Merseyside Police Headquarters
Canning Place
Liverpool, L1 8JX

[via facsimile (0151 777 4988) and courier; enclosures by courier only]

27 August 2003

Dear Chief Constable Bettison,

Re: **UK-Indo Police Conference in Liverpool (30 August to 6 September 2003); Two delegates accused of torture and disappearances**

We are contacting you regarding a matter of extreme sensitivity, involving the forthcoming visit of two delegates from India, Sanjeev ("Sanjiv") Gupta and Mohammed Izhar Alam who are due to attend a police conference in Liverpool from 30 August to 6 September 2003.

The Redress Trust, an international non-governmental organization that seeks justice for survivors of torture, has received credible and reliable information that Sanjeev Gupta, Inspector General of Police (Punjab) has been involved in acts of torture and disappearances of civilians from the mid 1980s to mid 1990s. Likewise, REDRESS has information that Mohammad Izhar Alam, Additional Director General of Police of Amritsar (Punjab) was also involved in these heinous crimes during the same period.

These serious allegations against both men have been well documented by international human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.¹ Moreover, in the recently-released report, *Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab*, the Committee for the Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab details over 600 specific cases of torture, disappearance, and extrajudicial execution from Amritsar district, where both Gupta and Alam served as senior police officers.² To date, neither police official has been brought to account for these abuses despite India's ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that outlaws these crimes.³ Furthermore, since these events, both Sanjeev Gupta and Mohammad Izhar Alam have been promoted to the second and third highest positions in Punjab Police, respectively - in REDRESS' view, this only reinforces the impunity that persists in the Punjab.

¹ Human Rights Watch/Physicians for Human Rights *Dead Silence: The Legacy of Abuses in Punjab 2* (May 1994). Amnesty International. *India: Human Rights Violations in Punjab: Use and Abuse of the Law 4* (May 1991).

² This report is available at www.punjabjustice.org.

³ Sanjeev Gupta has been charged by the Central Bureau of Investigation for the disappearance of Captain Sukhdev Singh.

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In association with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims

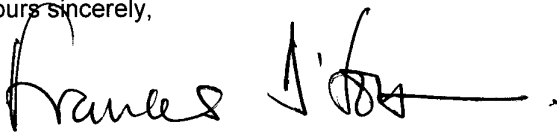


REDRESS notes that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has taken a strong stance towards the eradication of torture and in naming this as one of its priorities.⁴ In light of this and both the UK and India's obligations to investigate all allegations of torture with a view to prosecution under international law, REDRESS urges you:

- to reconsider urgently your invitation to allow Sanjeev Gupta and Mohammad Izhar Alam's visit to Britain. Not only would their visit be contrary to the stated policy aims of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office but also the UK may be complicit in the on-going impunity that these two police officials currently enjoy in India; and
- to use your relations with the Indian police to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to respond to these allegations and all those relating to torture in compliance with its international obligations.

Enclosed please find certain background materials on these two individuals and the crimes they are alleged to have participated in. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Frances D'Souza, CMG
Executive Director

Encls:

1. Summary information on Mohammad Izhar Alam, Additional Director General of Police (Administration)
2. Summary information on Sanjeev Gupta, Inspector General
3. Kumar, Ram Narayan; with Amrik Singh, Ashok Agrwaal and Jaskaran Kaur. Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab. Final Report, Vol. 1, SAFHR publications, 2003 (excerpts)
4. Kulwant Singh Compensation Case, In the Supreme Court of India, Civil Appellate Jurisdiction, Civil Appeal No. 7243 of 1993
5. Pettigrew, Joyce, The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerrilla Violence, London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1995 (excerpts). Amnesty International: India: Human Rights Violations in Punjab / Use and Abuse of the Law, AI Index: ASA 20/11/91, May 1991 (Excerpts)
6. Copy of unsworn declaration of Vincent Iacopino, Physicians for Human Rights, 1998
7. The Committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab (CCDP), Summaries of Affidavits
8. Human Rights Watch/Asia & Physicians for Human Rights. Dead Silence: The Legacy of Abuses in Punjab, May 1994 (excerpts)

cc: Ms Beverley Hughes, Minister of State (Citizenship, Immigration and Counter-Terrorism)
Chris Mullen, MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Ann Clywd, Chair of the All Party Human Rights Group
Ms. Maria Eagle, Mrs. Louise Ellman, Mr. Peter Kilfoyle, Ms Jane Kennedy, Mr. Robert Wareing,
Members of Parliament from Liverpool

⁴ Human Rights Annual Report 2002, United Kingdom, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, page 129.