

GENERAL URGENT APPEAL

A book on Kashmir banned and the writer threatened with death

Thursday 28 December 2006, by [AHRC](#) (Date first published: 15 December 2006).

UA-403-2006: PAKISTAN: A book on Kashmir was banned and writer is threatened with death by Islamic fundamentalist government of a province

PAKISTAN : violation of freedom of speech & movement; unconstitutional provincial order

Dear friends,

The Asian Human Rights Commission has received information from Pakistan that the government of the North Western Frontier Province has banned the booklet on Kashmir titled “Kashmir Ki Pukar” (loud voice of Kashmir) on October 21 by issuing an official notification. The writer was informed through telephone calls that if he enters the province he will face dire consequences, including loss of his life. The writer is receiving threatening calls at his home and to his mobile phone insisting that he denounce the book and make an apology in public, otherwise his family will not be safe. The writer says that most of the calls are from the officials of Pakistan secret services (ISI). When the writer made a phone call to the number from which he was receiving the threats no one answers the call. Even if it was answered by chance, there is just an announcement telling that this number is not in use. The police have not yet registered the author’s complaint of being threaten yet.

CASE DETAILS:

Mr. Arif Malik is a prominent journalist from Mirpur, the capital city of the Pakistan territory of Kashmir and has worked in several leading newspaper companies in different cities of the country. He is the editor of monthly magazine “Bharosa” in Mirpur, which was closed down after the ban on his booklet was announced by the government. The book “Kashmir Ki Pukar” (the loud voice of Kashmir) was largely circulated in Pakistan and it has given a different view about Kashmir’s stand with the Pakistani government and holy war in Kashmir on the both sides of India and Pakistan.

The writer criticised the Muslim religious Parties and their leaders about their role in holy wars in the book. Mr. Malik accused the government of Pakistan that it had treated Pakistani side of Kashmir as its colony, not as an independent state and claimed that Pakistani Kashmir is run by the ministry of interior of Pakistan. Although Pakistan Kashmir has a parliament, the elected members all have close connections to the government of Pakistan and the military intelligence service including the ISI.

He also pointed out the role of the ISI in the holy war against India by referring to several examples from the past. The audacious greediness of religious fundamentalist parties and its leadership was

also criticised by him in the book and he pointed out the privileges that those people had been enjoying over the propaganda that they made during the war, urging youths in the country to sacrifice their lives for the holy war.

In the book he also pointed out a cynicism towards the two-faced attitudes of the religious parties that once fought against Pakistan government for the rights of people in the Kashmir territory and called the youth to sacrifice their life for the so called “holy war” against the imperialism of the United States. The religious parties now are catering to the extremist Pakistani government.

The writer, Mr. Arif Malik is now facing threats to his life since his book was published. He tried to register the report to the police however the Mirpur police station refused to register the case. Instead the police officials said this is a high profile matter so that only high officials in the rank of Superintendent Police can register this type of case. The writer is receiving continuous threats, not only from fundamentalists groups but also from the army, particularly from the ISI. Mr. Malik and his family cannot move about freely after they started to receive threats and now they are taking shelter in different places. The government of NWFP instructed the police in the province to arrest the writer when they find him in the province.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The government of North Western Frontier Province (NWFP) is purely Islamic fundamentalist and the members are from Islamic religious groups who had started a holy war after the intervention of USSR in Afghanistan in 1980.

The fundamentalist religious parties have won the elections in NWFP in 2002 as an alliance group called Muttehdha Majlis-e-Amal (MMA). This alliance has also won several seats in different assemblies including National Assembly. In 2002 MMA formed a government in NWFP and announced the Islamic system by introducing the Hisba bill (accountability bill) that allows district Islamic officers to monitor the religious conviction and practice of Islam of all citizens.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Please write letters to the concerned authorities and urge them to provide protection for the life of Mr. Arif Malik and his family and take necessary actions to stop the intimidation and take legal action against the perpetrators. Please also demand the governments of NWFP and Pakistan to respect the freedom of speech and movement within the country as it has been guaranteed in constitution of Pakistan that meets the international human rights standards. To support this appeal, please click the link in the field below the title.

Sample letter:

Dear -----

PAKISTAN: A book on Kashmir was banned and writer is threatened for his life by Islamic fundamentalist government of a province

Name of the victim: Mr. Arif Malik, senior journalist from Mirpur, Azad Kashmir. Also a writer of “Kashmir Ki Pukar” a book on the voice of Kashmir

Names of the Perpetrators:

1. Government of North Western Frontier Province, Peshawer, Pakistan.
2. Chief Minister of NWFP government, Peshawer, Pakistan.

3. Chief Secretary, Government of NWFP, Peshawar, Pakistan.

Period of intimidation: since 21 October 2006 to the present

I am writing to you to show my deepest concern about unconstitutional ban of a book called "Kashmir Ki Pukar" (loud voice of Kashmir) written by Mr. Arif Malik that was laid by the North Western Frontier Provincial government, and the continuous threats against Mr. Malik and his family by unknown persons.

According to the information I have received, Mr. Arif Malik is a prominent journalist from Mirpur, the capital city of the Pakistani territory of Kashmir, and has worked with several newspapers in different cities in the country. He is also the editor of monthly magazine "Bharosa" of Mirpur and that publication was also banned after the banning of his book was enforced by the North Western Frontier Provincial government on October 21.

The book, "Kashmir Ki Pukar" (the loud voice of Kashmir) has been largely circulated in Pakistan and it has given a different view about Kashmir's stand of the Pakistan government and the holy war in Kashmir on the both sides of India and Pakistan.

In the book, the writer criticised the Muslim religious Parties and their leaders about their role in holy wars. Mr. Malik accused the government of Pakistan that they had treated Pakistani side of Kashmir as its colony not as an independent state. The territory of Pakistani Kashmir is governed by the ministry of interior of Pakistan and there is a parliament in the territory. However the elected members all have close connection to the government of Pakistan and the military intelligence service including the ISI.

He also pointed out the role of the ISI in holy war of against India by referring several examples from the past. The audacious greediness of religious fundamentalist parties and its leadership was also criticised by him in the book and pointed out the privileges that those people had been enjoying over the propaganda that they made during the war urging youths in the country sacrifice their life for the holy war.

In the book he also pointed out a cynicism towards the two-faced attitudes of the religious parties that once fought against Pakistan government for the rights of people in the Kashmir territory and called on the youth to sacrifice their lives for the so called "holy war" against the imperialism of the United States. The religious parties now are catering to the extremist Pakistani government.

The writer, Mr. Arif Malik is now facing threats to his life since his book was published. He tried to register a report with the police. However, the Mirpur police station refused to register the case. Instead the police officials said that because this is a high profile matter only high officials in the rank of Superintendent Police can register this type of case. The writer is receiving continuous threats not only from fundamentalists groups but also from some secret services of army particularly from the ISI. Mr. Malik and his family cannot move about freely after they started to receive threats and now they are taking shelter in different places. The government of NWFP instructed to police in the province to arrest the writer when they find him in the province.

I regret to say that the banning of the book along with a governmental order to arrest the author of the book is a huge destruction of freedom of speech and the security of people engage in journalism. This case also tells another story of the inefficiency of Pakistani police in dealing with complaints from the citizens and protecting them from the imminent threats.

Therefore, I urge you to take all necessary steps to provide the security for the author of the book and his family from the threats to their life. Moreover, the complaint made by Mr. Malik should be treated seriously by the police, and I urge the police to take any necessary actions to provide Mr. Malik and his family sufficient security. Also I urge your intervention to lift the unconstitutional order of hunting Mr. Malik imposed by the NWFP government immediately.

I look forward to your immediate intervention to this case.

Yours sincerely,

PLEASE SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

1. General Pervez Musharraf

President

President's Secretariat

Islamabad

PAKISTAN

Fax: +92 51 922 1422, 4768/ 920 1893 or 1835

E-mail: (please see - [http://
www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/
WTPresidentMessage.aspx](http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/WTPresidentMessage.aspx))

2. Mr. Muhammad Wasi Zafar

Minister of Law, Justice and Human Rights

S Block

Pakistan Secretariat

Islamabad

PAKISTAN

Fax: +92 51 920 2628

E-mail: minister molaw.gov.pk

3. Mr. Mohamag Ali Durrani

Federal Minister for Information and
Broadcasting

Government of Pakistan

Islamabad

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E-mail: infominister infopak.gov.pk

4. Mr. Tariq Azeem

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting

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E-mail: mos infopak.gov.pk

5. Mr. Akram Khan Durrani,

Chief Minister of North Western Frontier Province

Peshawer

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Fax: +92-91-9211718

6. Mr. Ejaz Ahmed Quereshi,

Chief Secretary

Governemnt of North Western Frontier Province

Peshawer

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Fax: +92-91-9210970

E-mail: ziagul hotmail.com

7. Mr. Capt. (R) Azmat Hanif Orakzai

Secretary to the governor of North Western
Frontier Province

Peshawer

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Fax: +92-91-9210087

8. Mr. Ambeyi Ligabo

Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and

expression

c/o J Deriviero

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Thank you.

Urgent Appeals Programme

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View online : [To sign the letter of concern](#)