

of the Manipur Bar Association who was arrested with his wife and charged with harbouring armed opposition leaders; a lawyer whose house was raided by a team of the Indian Army and the Rapid Action Police Force of Manipur; a judge whose house was raided; and, a lawyer and executive director of the Delhi-based South Asian Documentation Centre, who reportedly received threatening phone calls from someone who identified himself as Deputy Commissioner of Police of Delhi.

The response of the government with regard to these cases variously indicated: an investigation had been conducted by the Special Investigation Team, the Division Bench of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court of Srinagar had issued an order requesting that the Territorial Army Officer be brought in for questioning, and that the authorities concerned collaborate with the Special Investigation Team; the National Human Rights Commission was conducting inquiries into the allegations of harassment; the attack was made by unknown individuals; and, the raid on the home of the judge was brought to the attention of the Chief Justice of the Guwahati High Court and the army officers concerned were directed to file their reply within a week — noting that the Guwahati High Court ultimately concluded that the incident had been the result of confusion arising from mistaken identity. The government informed the Special Rapporteur (SR) that information regarding other allegations raised in the communication would be provided in due course.

The SR welcomed positive steps taken in cases transmitted but expressed concern about the frequent allegations he received of the harassment and intimidation of lawyers by police and security forces. The SR requested the government to investigate systematically, thoroughly and impartially these allegations, to identify those responsible, and to bring them to justice.

Racism and racial discrimination, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/79, paras. 53, 57–59)

The report recalls that communications concerning the situation of untouchables in India were sent to the government in December 1996 and August 1997. In its reply, the government rejected allegations that it tolerated untouchability, provided the Special Rapporteur (SR) with a list of the measures taken to curb discrimination between castes and maintained that a practice that is so old cannot be eliminated rapidly. The SR noted the discrepancy between the facts alleged and the government's reply and stated that a visit to India would permit him to evaluate the situation in cooperation with the government and the communities concerned.

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/6, para. 23, 29, 48, 50, 62)

The report refers to violations of freedom of religion and belief against Christianity. On the freedom to change one's religion, the Special Rapporteur (SR) noted that legislation banning conversion had been drafted and that, in one case, a Hindu who converted to Christianity was reported to have been attacked by Hindu extremists.

Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1998/101, para. 107)

In the section dealing with children exposed to sexually explicit material on the Internet, the report notes that the government has attempted to prevent such misuse of the Internet by limiting access to the Internet to the academic world. The Special Rapporteur stated that, as a result, the Internet remains inaccessible to the individual or commercial user. The report also noted that the entry of foreign print and electronic media into the country has provoked a controversy, with the government still undecided about its stand.

Torture, Special Rapporteur: (E/CN.4/1998/38, paras. 4, 111–113; E/CN.4/1998/38/Add.1, paras. 160–173)

The report notes that the government has not responded positively to the Special Rapporteur's (SR) request for an invitation to visit the country. The SR informed the government of reports indicating that the use of torture by police in Punjab was widespread, with the methods including: beatings with fists, boots, lathis (long bamboo canes), pattas (leather straps with wooden handles), leather belts with metal buckles or rifle butts; suspension by the wrists or ankles and beatings; *kachcha fansi* (suspension of the whole body from the wrists, which are tied behind the back); application of electric shocks; burning of the skin; removing nails with pliers; *cheera* (forcing the hips apart), sometimes to 180 degrees and often repeatedly, for 30 minutes or more; and insertion of chili peppers into the rectum.

New allegations concerning 16 persons were sent to the government as were four urgent appeals. The cases and appeals related to, *inter alia*: arrest and interrogation under torture at the police post in Kot Khalsa by officers of the Islamabad police station; arrest followed by detention and torture of a 17-year-old boy at the premises of the Central Investigation Agency (CIA) Staff Nabha; arrest followed by torture and death in which the police reportedly maintained that the victim died of a heart attack; detention and torture — including sexual assault — of a couple for suspected possession of narcotics, noting the government's denial that torture had taken place; beatings against a Nigerian student at Khalsa College Chandigarh and a companion, followed by detention, torture and death threats prior to an appearance before the judicial magistrate on charges of drug trafficking; detention and beatings against five persons following a meeting they had had with a parliamentary committee concerning a threat of forced eviction; beatings of villagers by soldiers in connection with elections which, in one case resulted in the death of a seven-year-old girl — noting the government's claim that the girl had fallen down and was trampled when the arrival of militants caused the crowd to panic; arrest and incommunicado detention of one person with links to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference; arrest and torture of a Bhutanese national and Chairman of the United Front for Democracy in Bhutan following a request by the government of