

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Amnesty International concludes significant visit to Jammu and Kashmir

A two member delegation of Amnesty International has recently concluded a six-day visit to Srinagar (17-22 May).

The visit was aimed at securing a better understanding of the current human rights situation Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), which has witnessed an armed uprising since 1989, and discussing Amnesty International's future work as part of its continued engagement in the region.

The delegation met with chief minister Omar Abdullah, leader of the opposition Mahbooba Mufti, political leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Yasin Malik and Javed Mir, Maulana Abdullah Tari, Abdul Ahad Parra and family members of detained leaders Shabbir Ahmed Shah and Nayeem Ahmed Khan.

While in Srinagar, Amnesty International held discussions with a wide range of organisations including the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons, Coalition of Civil Society, People's Right Movement, Muslim Khawateen Markaz and Majlis-e-Mashawarat, Shopian. The delegation also met representatives of the Kashmiri Pandit and Sikh communities and a number of activists from Baramulla, Sopore and Poonch.

Members of the delegation also conducted research on cases of preventive detention under the J&K Public Safety Act. They met with former detainees and families of those currently in detention, the J&K Bar Association, International Committee of the Red Cross, State Human Rights Commission and various lawyers and journalists.

In a meeting with top officials of the State Government including the Chief Secretary; Home Secretary; Director-General of Police and Additional Director-General of Police (Criminal Investigation Department), the delegation raised preliminary concerns relating to the misuse of the Public Safety Act. A request to visit detainees lodged at Central Jail, Srinagar was denied by the officials, but the Chief Minister later promised to consider the same.

Amnesty International will complete its ongoing research into preventive detentions and subsequently release its report.