

Beant-Gill duo," writes Masud, "committed mass incarceration and disappearances and called it 'normalcy'" (*The Pioneer*, Nov. 4, 1995).

Through a series of interviews with respected human rights activists, intellectuals, Punjab police officers, and eye witnesses, "Disappearances in Punjab" reveals the extent to which the so-called "world's largest democracy" has used brutal oppression to silence the voice of dissent in Khalistan. For over a decade, Sikhs have claimed that the Indian police have followed a *modus operandi* in which they abduct Sikhs, torture them and then kill them claiming that the victim was killed in an "armed encounter" with the police. In the following excerpt, a female police officer confirms these allegations.

Woman: "I work for the Punjab police. I joined out of patriotic sentiments, but what I saw, atrocities—including those against women—that I cannot bear. Women suffer much. Male officers torture them. They also rape detainees. Some, who have been picked up, were in the interrogation center. Then I read that they had been killed in an encounter. But I had seen them in detention."

Interviewer: What was their condition in custody?

Woman: Their legs had been broken.  
 Interviewer: Could they have run away?  
 Woman: They could not even have walked.  
 Interviewer: Are you afraid disclosing this?  
 Woman: No. I do not fear telling the truth.  
 The Chief Medical Officer at Patti Hospital sheds similar light on the tactics of police in Punjab. He recalled the time when police officers brought the body of Sarabjit Singh into his hospital to acquire a postmortem report. However, there was a problem: Sarabjit Singh was still alive. Upon learning of this, the police officers took Sarabjit away and returned his body later when he was actually dead! During his interview, the Chief Medical Officer offered some startling information on how he assisted police in giving them the postmortem reports they legally needed to cremate the bodies of their victims:

I ordered that the [postmortem] lists be prepared. The lists must say where the deaths have taken place. Also, mention the time of death and say "death due to firearms." My boss said that postmortems should take time. I told him to do whatever he wanted. My example set the precedent in Punjab. Five minutes a portmortem, five minutes a postmortem.

After obtaining their postmortem reports, police cremate their Sikhs victims as "unidentified bodies" at municipal cremation grounds. An attendant at the cremation ground in Patti commented on the alarming rise such cremations:

Unclaimed bodies have continuously been burnt here. Previously, it used to happen once in awhile. In the last four-five years, it has been common. They only cremate. . . . No one cares to take away the remains.

"Disappearances in Punjab" also explores the case of Sikh human rights activist, Jaswant Singh Khalra. According to the findings of Mr. Khalra, police have killed and cremated over 25,000 Sikhs in the manner described above. Mr. Khalra arrived at this number by visiting municipal cremation grounds and tallying up the number "unidentified bodies" recorded on their registers. During a press conference announcing these findings, the Amritsar district police chief publicly threatened Mr. Khalra saying "We have made 25,000 disappear. It would be easy to make one more disappear." The police chief followed through on his threat. Mr. Khalra was abducted by Indian police in front of his home in the presence of witnesses at 9:15 AM on September 6, 1995. Amnesty International and other human rights

organizations have taken up his case. On October 19, 1995, sixty-five Members of the U.S. Congress sent a letter to Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao demanding Khalra's release. India has yet to respond. Mr. Khalra's whereabouts remains unknown.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, praises "Disappearances in Punjab" as a milestone in the movement for Sikh freedom. "This is a rare case in which the truth about Indian atrocities against the Sikhs has managed to find its way out of India. It shows that India is not the democracy it claims to be, but rather a repressive tyranny where the right of minorities are brutally violated. Now the world can see what the Sikhs have been enduring for over ten years. India has killed over 150,000 Sikhs and the time for an independent Khalistan is long overdue. After word of this video gets out to the international community, India will no longer be able to deny its policy of genocide against the Sikhs. Khalistan will be liberated."

#### AMBASSADOR BENJAMIN LU ON A FREE TAIWAN

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 1996*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, a few days before the first free and democratic elections in Taiwan, Ambassador Benjamin Lu, the official representative of the Government of Taiwan here in the United States, made the following remarks to Members of Congress and others interested in a secure, free and prosperous Taiwan. I commend my colleagues' attention to his excellent remarks.

ADDRESS BY AMBASSADOR BENJAMIN LU

Distinguished guests, and Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you all for joining us today. I am delighted that so many good friends and associates could be here to share in this exciting event.

The ROC has embarked on a path of political reform which is transforming Taiwan into a full democracy. Adding to the many institutions of personal freedom, human rights, popular elections, and a full-scale market economy which my country already enjoys, this week, on the 23rd of March, the people of Taiwan will conduct their first direct popular election for president of the Republic of China, an historic milestone in our democratization movement. At this very moment, there is a spirited campaign underway among four presidential candidates, including the incumbent President Lee Teng-Hui; a DPP candidate; and two others running as independents.

By any standard, the Republic of China is functioning today as a genuine pluralistic democracy, with ample political choices and fully representational government. This is an amazing transformation in just one decade. The stark contrast with deteriorating political and human rights conditions on China's mainland today could not be more obvious.

The Republic of China and the United States today share the same political ideology, principles and objectives. As fellow democracies with a closely intertwined history of friendship, cooperation and trade in this century, we have much in common. Moreover, there is much we can accomplish together for the sake of regional and international peace, freedom, and prosperity in the 21st century.

The 21 million people on Taiwan are grateful that the United States has responded to mainland China's military exercises and missile tests in the Taiwan Strait, and reassured that Americans share our concern for the region's stability. A continued American presence in the area will discourage unnecessary escalation of tension and will help advance those principles and goals which are championed by your country and mine, as prospering democracies. The success of Taiwan's democratic reforms hopefully can influence mainland attitudes toward political reform in a positive way by encouraging the establishment of democratic process and institutions. Only within the framework of democracy can reunification be eventually achieved.

Mainland China's coercive and hostile actions should cease immediately, allowing the process of democratic elections and free market commerce in the region to continue unimpeded. Let us work together to support the causes of peace and democracy throughout the Asia-Pacific region, and indeed throughout the world.

#### SUPPORTING THE KARENNI FREEDOM FIGHTERS

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 1996*

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, Karenni freedom fighters are in battle today against the hired thugs of the Burma Army. Heavily outnumbered and outgunned, the Karenni are fighting to defend their homes along the Thai-Burma border from the inhuman onslaught of the SLORC regime. The SLORC regime is using air attacks and heavy artillery against the Karenni, a peace-loving Christian nation, who defend themselves with a few rifles.

Last year, thousands of SLORC troops attacked the Karen in neighboring territory. Then, the SLORC used brutal methods to systematically terrorize thousands of innocent hilltribe families. That tragic scene is now being replayed in the Karenni State.

Over 6,000 SLORC troops are relentlessly attacking less than 1,000 Karenni farmers, fisherman, and schoolteachers. These men and women are desperately fighting an honorable battle to defend their families, heritage, and identity. Although they may think that they are in the jungle alone, our spirit is with them. The heroes in the wilderness should know that we condemn the SLORC regime for its brutal aggression, and that we support their noble struggle for freedom and democracy.

In the past, the SLORC regime has justified aggression against the Karenni as a necessary first step before it could control the activities of Khun Sa, the infamous drug thug. Now, the SLORC regime has allowed Khun Sa to retire in luxury, while the aggression continues. It shouldn't surprise anyone that the SLORC regime was lying. Their entire system is based on lies.

I intend to visit the Karenni during the upcoming Easter break. Until then, I wish them success against their evil oppressors. Freedom loving people in the United States are on their side, and we will remember them in our prayers. Because they are striving for democracy and justice, they should know, that their victory is our victory.