

KHIR seeks UN Special Rapporteur's urgent attention towards rising incidents of custodial killings in IIOJK:

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MIRPUR (AJK): February 15; 1Chairman Kashmir Institute of International Relations Altaf Hussain Wani has sought the UN Special Rapporteur on Extra-Judicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Mr. Morris Tidball Binz's urgent attention towards rising incidents of custodial deaths at the hands of Indian forces in disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

In his letter addressed to the UN special Rapporteur on Saturday, the KHIR chairman said that the persistent and systematic use of custodial torture by Indian occupation forces in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) was in violation of fundamental human rights and international law.

“Torture in custody remains a tool of coercion, used to extract forced confessions, intimidate marginalized communities, and suppress dissent”, the letter said, adding that the practice not only contravenes India's obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) but also blatantly disregards the absolute prohibition of torture under the Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), which India has yet to ratify.

Referring to the recent killing of a tribal youth Makhan Din, the letter stated that 25-year-old man hailing from Kathua district of Jammu & Kashmir, died by suicide after facing brutal custodial torture by the J&K Police.

The KHIR chairman said that custodial torture was not an isolated issue but an institutionalized practice enabled by draconian laws such as the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) and the Unlawful Activities and Prevention Act (UAPA).

“These laws provide occupation forces with sweeping powers and blanket immunity from prosecution, fostering a climate of impunity”, he added.

He said that the psychological and physical suffering inflicted upon detainees not only results in wrongful convictions but also fuels resentment, instability, and distrust in state institutions.

Makhan Din's case, he said, is a harrowing testament to the consequences of this unchecked brutality. “In a recorded video before his death, Makhan Din explicitly stated that he was coerced into falsely confessing to links with militants and subjected to inhumane treatment in custody”, he further added.

Makhan Din's tragic death, he said, underscores the urgent need for accountability and human rights protections in Jammu & Kashmir.

Wani urged the UN Rapporteur to use his good office and take immediate and decisive action and hold Indian government accountable to prevent further violations and ensure accountability by:

1. Launching an independent international investigation into custodial torture, coerced confessions, and extrajudicial actions by Indian occupation forces in Jammu & Kashmir. 2. Demanding urgent accountability measures from the Indian government, including the prosecution of those responsible for the custodial torture and forced confessions of Makhan Din and Mukhtar Hussain Shah.
3. Establishing a UN-led monitoring mechanism to document and investigate cases of torture, enforced disappearances, and other rights violations in J&K.
4. Pressuring the Indian government to ratify the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) and implement domestic legislation criminalizing custodial torture.