

INTERNATIONAL PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND JUSTICE IN INDIAN-ADMINISTERED KASHMIR

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**PRESS NOTE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Srinagar, March 18, 2010

**INTERNATIONAL PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
JUSTICE IN INDIAN-ADMINISTERED KASHMIR (IPTK)**

**BURIED EVIDENCE**, a preliminary report on Unknown, Unmarked, and Mass Graves in Indian-administered Kashmir, released by the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice (IPTK) in December 2009, was presented at a sidebar event held during the United Nations Human Rights Council at its 13th Regular Session in Geneva. The event was held on March 17, 2010, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., at the United Nations Office at the Palais des Nations.

Dr. Angana Chatterji, Co-convener, IPTK, and Professor, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, United States, presented the report, speaking on a panel entitled, 'The Global Phenomenon of Enforced Disappearances and the Entry Into Force of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.' Dr. Chatterji spoke on behalf of herself and her colleague, co-founder and co-convener of IPTK, Advocate Parvez Imroz. Imroz has been denied a passport by the Government of India since 2005, and could not join her in Geneva.

Mr. Jeremy J. Sarkin, Chairperson and Rapporteur, UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, welcomed the participants. Mr. Sarkin spoke to the urgency of ratifying the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance in order to address institutionalized systems of impunity. The Convention has been ratified by 18 countries, while 81 have signed it, and only two additional signatures are required for it to take effect. India signed the Convention on February 6, 2007, but has not yet ratified it.

The event was convened by eight organizations, including those with consultative status at the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), including the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD), Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (APDH), Euromediterranean Federation Against Forced Disappearances (FEMED), Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared-Detainees (FEDEFAM), Nonviolence International (NVI), Philippine Human Rights Information Center (PHILRIGHTS), and International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID). The Representatives of the Governments of Argentina and France offered critical remarks on the occasion, reiterating their commitment to the issue.

In addition to Dr. Chatterji, the other speakers included: Mrs. Devi Sunwar, Mother of Maina Sunwar who was disappeared, and Mr. Govinda Bandi from Nepal; Ms. Mary Aileen Diez-Bacalso, Secretary-General, AFAD, from the Philippines. Ms. Jenny Bettancourt of FEDEFAM, who spoke to issues in Latin America; Ms. Victoria Pais Demarco of APDH, who spoke to disappearances in Argentina; Mr. Wadih Al-Asmar of FEMED, who spoke to enforced Disappearances in the Euromediterranean; Ms. Djimi Elgalia of Comite De Familiares de Desaparecidos en El Sahara Occidental, who addressed issues in the Sahara; Mr. Rachid El Manouzi of FEMED, who spoke to Morocco; Dr. Gabriella Citroni, Professor, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy and Legal Adviser, FEDEFAM, who addressed legal and institutional issues; and Mr. Michael Anthony of ALRC, who offered concluding remarks.

On behalf of IPTK, Chatterji stated that independent investigations must be undertaken in Indian-

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administered Kashmir, across all 10 districts, to inquire into if and how the 8,000+ enforced disappearances since 1989 correlate with the number of bodies in unknown, unmarked, and mass graves. As well, the existence of these graves, and how they came to be, may be understood as indicative of the effects and issue of militarization, and the issues pertaining to militarization. Evidence from these graves must be used to seek justice, through the sentencing of criminals and other judicial and social processes. The cessation of violence and cruelty must be prioritized in Kashmir, and violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including crimes against humanity, be addressed.

**BURIED EVIDENCE** is authored by Angana P. Chatterji, Parvez Imroz, Gautam Navlakha, Zahir-Ud-Din, Mihir Desai, and Khurram Parvez. **BURIED EVIDENCE** documents 2,700 unknown, unmarked, and mass graves, containing 2,943+ bodies, across 55 villages in Bandipora, Baramulla, and Kupwara districts of Kashmir, based on applied research conducted between November 2006-November 2009. The graveyards entomb bodies of those murdered in encounter and fake encounter killings between 1990-2009. These graves include bodies of extrajudicial, summary, and arbitrary executions, and massacres committed by the Indian military and paramilitary forces.

Of these graves, 2,373 (87.9 percent) were unnamed. Of these graves, 154 contained two bodies each and 23 contained more than two cadavers. Within these 23 graves, the number of bodies ranged from 3 to 17. The report also examines 50 alleged “encounter” killings by Indian security forces in numerous districts in Kashmir. Of these persons, 39 were of Muslim descent; 4 were of Hindu descent; 7 were not determined. Of these cases, 49 were labelled militants/foreign insurgents by security forces and one body that was drowned. Of these, following investigations, 47 were found killed in fake encounters and one was identifiable as a local militant. Report, photographs, video clips available at [www.kashmirprocess.org](http://www.kashmirprocess.org)

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