

# KASHMIR'S AGONY

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**THE INDEPENDENT**

London 14<sup>th</sup> June 1994

PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD



## Kashmir's Agony

By: Senator Professor Khurshid Ahmad

Sir: Taking two innocent British tourists (David Mackie and Kim Housego) hostage in Kashmir cannot be condoned (report, 8 June). It is significant that almost all Mujahid groups, including the largest ones, Hizbul Mujahideen and JKLF, have unequivocally condemned this action and demanded unconditional release of the two hostages. The Pakistan Foreign Office has also come out with a strong statement on this issue.

The only ethical option for those who have taken these hostages is to release them without delay. If the Indian armed forces do not act foolishly, the hostages are bound to be released any moment. However desperate the situation, there cannot be any justification to take innocent people hostages. The message of world opinion is clear: even terrorism born out of desperation is not justifiable. The freedom struggle in Kashmir must take note of this.

While we all are seeking the release of the British hostages, is it too much to expect the civilised world to spare a few moments to reflect on the fate of 12 million people of Jammu and Kashmir who are held hostages by the more than half a million strong Indian forces?

Only during the past five years, some 40,000 innocent people have lost their lives; the entire Kashmir valley is under perpetual curfew; schools, colleges and vast localities have been destroyed; and more than 4,000 women have been gang-raped. It is time some serious thought should be given to the sad plight and unending agony of these unfortunate and forgotten millions.

**Sincerely,**

**June 14, 1994**

**KHURSHID AHMAD**

**Member, Senate of Pakistan**

**Islamabad 13 June**

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