

## About LFHRI

### Who We Are

In early eighties, a group of lawyers, committed to the work of human rights formed a loose group in order to defend the victims of State Repression. Later on, in 1992 when the Punjab police and the security agencies who were operating in Punjab,

started a campaign to harass and kill the human rights defenders and the group started suffering losses, the group formally organised themselves under the name and style of "LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS", which later on came to be known as "LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL". The organisation which initially was formulated for protection of the lawyers themselves, later on proved to be an effective protector of human rights for the people.

Provision of free legal aid to the poor and indigent persons, strive to eradicate human rights abuses, filing of Public Interest Litigation on various human rights issues and undertaking projects for creating awareness about human rights among general public, are among the many aims and objects of the organisation. The founder members of the body, Mr.Amar Singh Chahal, Mr.Navkiran Singh, Mr.Rajvinder Singh Bains, Mr.Brijinder Singh Sodhi, Mr.V.P.S. Bhatia, Mr. Arunjeev Singh Walia, Mr.Tejinder Singh Sudan, earned a reputation with their dedicated and sincere efforts. At present the organisation is having more than a hundred members and also have district units at eight district headquarters of Punjab and Chandigarh with more than a dozen members in each district unit.

The organisation is fighting cases of human rights violations, including custodial violence by the state agencies, domestic violence, sexual abuses against women, prisoners rights in the Supreme Court, Punjab & Haryana High Court, National Human Rights Commission, Punjab State Human Rights Commission and also in Subordinate Courts. To eradicate the evil of torture from every Police Station in Punjab and Chandigarh, and to fight State repression, its members have succeeded in bringing to book down many senior police officials who were guilty of committing excesses. In this ongoing struggle, they suffered colossal loss with six of its member lawyers, namely Ranbir Singh Mansahia(Bathinda), Jagwinder Singh alias Happy(Kapurthala), Sukhwinder Singh Bhatti(Sangrur), Kulwant Singh,his wife and four year old son(Ropar), Satnam Singh(Jammu),and Dharamvir Singh(Amritsar) being abducted and killed. Also a battery of human rights activists including Jaswant Singh Khaira,Avtar Singh Mander and Ram Singh Billing(both journalists) losing their lives at the hands of Punjab police.

### Organisational Structure:

Office Bearers of Governing Body

Units in Punjab.

Units in Haryana.

Links with other Indian Human Rights Organisations.

Links with International human rights bodies.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Provision of free legal aid to the poor and indigent persons, launch campaign to eradicate human rights abuses, filing of Public Interest Litigation on various human rights issues and undertaking educational projects for spreading awareness about human rights among general public, are among the many aims and objects of the organisation.

To unite lawyers and human rights activists for educating and protecting human rights among the people, the organisation consisting of only lawyers, has avowed to protect the human rights of the citizens through legal means and to uphold the Rule of Law.

## **ACTIVITIES**

1. LFHRI is filing cases of human rights violations, including custodial violence by the state agencies, domestic violence, and sexual abuses against women, prisoner's rights in different courts like, the Supreme Court of India, Punjab and Haryana High Court, National Human Rights Commission, Punjab State Human Rights Commission and also in Subordinate Courts.
2. Contributing in its own way to fight custodial torture, the LFHRI has started a campaign to stamp out torture from every Police Station in Punjab and Chandigarh, and to nail every police officer responsible for using third degree methods upon any person, it has succeeded to a large extent, in bringing to book many senior and subordinate police officials guilty of human rights violations.
3. LFHRI conducts investigation into the cases of human rights violations and monitors periodically the overall human rights situation in Punjab. It has investigated into many cases of custodial deaths and torture in Punjab during the last more over a decade and is zealously continuing with their efforts.
4. LFHRI has also established a free legal aid unit in every district headquarters with competent lawyers having good standing in criminal law. They provide free legal aid to the poor and indigent persons in the Subordinate Courts as well as High Court.
5. LFHRI has also undertaken educational campaigns to educate general public about their rights and obligations of the State agencies in protecting and respecting the human rights of the people. It regularly publishes handbills, booklets and other publicity material for spreading human rights education among the people. It also organises seminars, rallies

and processions to mark World Human Rights Day and against incidents of human rights violations concerning minorities in India and other events related to human rights situation in India.

6. The organisation has recently started a campaign seeking abolition of death penalty from Indian statutes, as the organisation feels that the same is being mis-used in India after Independence against minorities and depressed classes, besides being inhuman, cruel and degrading to human life.

#### PUBLICATIONS

LFHRI publications are periodically distributed free of charge to general public, non-governmental organisations and communities in India and abroad who can use them to exercise their human rights and promote human rights education. Prominent publications of the organisation are:

1. **“WAILS OF INJUSTICE”**. It exposes the dubious role of Central Bureau of Investigation and the indifferent attitude of the law courts in Punjab (India) dealing with cases of human rights violations in Punjab.
2. **Compilation of Custodial deaths** in Punjab during 1997-June 2001.
3. **“GENESIS OF STATE TERRORISM IN PUNJAB”**. It speaks volume of atrocities committed on innocent people in Punjab by the State agencies. This publication has undoubtedly added feather to its cap.
4. **“PUNJAB AT WAR WITH HUMAN RIGHTS”**—comprehensive study of human right situation in Punjab during 2001.
5. **“COMPILATION OF INVESTIGATION REPORTS OF LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL”**.
6. **“KNOW YOUR RIGHTS”**.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

While violation of human rights in different forms exist everywhere, Lawyers For Human Rights International has made substantial gains over the past decade in guaranteeing constitutional protections for people living in Punjab (India) in all areas of our society. The LFHRI as the people's advocate before law courts, and in educating the public about crucial human rights issues— has given a hope to millions of Indians and strengthened people's faith in the Rule of Law. The accomplishments described below were realized through the organisation's network of more than hundred of human rights activists and members of the organisation. These matters are but a handful of the many accomplishments the LFHRI has forged over the past decade on behalf of hundreds of thousands of Indians.

Our deep gratitude extends to all of our lawyer members as well as many individuals and institutions that provide moral support to the LFHRI.

1. LFHRI has succeeded in bringing to book many police officers into dock for human rights violations committed by them, after the report of investigations into human rights violations having being relied upon by the Courts.
2. LFHRI has filed cases on behalf of victims of State repression in Punjab in the Supreme Court of India, Punjab & Haryana High Court, and Punjab State Human Rights Commission and subordinate Courts and got compensations, indictments against guilty police men and conducted trial on behalf of the victim's families on pro-bono basis.
3. LFHRI organised many seminars, rallies and public awareness functions for promoting human rights among the general public.
4. LFHRI represented in the World Conference against Racism, Racial discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerances held in Durban from 31st August to 7th September, 2001.
5. LFHRI has succeeded in checking the incidents of Police torture in Custody in Police Stations. It has launched a campaign to remove all the torture instruments kept in Police Stations in Punjab and Chandigarh.

## **WE WORK IN COORDINATION WITH FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS**

1. Punjab Human Rights Organisation
2. Lawyers For Social Reforms, Chandigarh
3. Human Rights Law Network, Mumbai
4. Punjab Rights Organisation, Belgium
5. People's Union For Civil Liberties
6. Amnesty International, UK
7. Sikh Human Rights Group, UK
8. Co-ordination Committee For Disappearances in Punjab
9. Voices for Freedom, USA

## **HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?**

**LFHRI** relies on the support of individuals and non-governmental organisations to further its work with victims of human rights violations.

If you belong to legal fraternity or interested in human rights cause and would like to know more about how we could work together, please contact us or write to us.

**APPLICATION FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S/HUSBAND'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHOTOGRAPH

PERMANENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER (Res.) \_\_\_\_\_ (Office) \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR OF ENROLMENT \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF PRACTICE \_\_\_\_\_

FIELD OF EXPERTISE \_\_\_\_\_

ANY OTHER MATERIAL INFORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT

PLACE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Regd.Office :**

Chamber NO.122, District Courts, Sec.17, Chandigarh. India. 160017