

**Welcome Police Station
Anti Auto Theft Unit**

POLICE CHASES POLICE

**People's Union For Democratic Rights
(PUDR)
Delhi
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On 18th March the press reported the death of a youth. Darshan Singh, in police custody. This takes the Death toll to four in the very first three months of 1992.

Police picked up Darshan Singh on 10th March along with another youth. While the latter was released on payment of Rs. 400/-, Darshan Singh was illegally detained and tortured for five days. He succumbed to the injuries caused by brutal police torture on 17th March.

PUDR team investigated the incident and met with the family, the police (Welcome Police Station) and SDM. Following is the report.

Family

Darsnan Singh lived with his parents and uncles in New Seelampur Colony, East Delhi. Prem Singh, his father is a T.B. patient and unemployed. Darsnan Singh, a motor mechanic, had been the main support of the family. He was picked up on the charge of robbery from his uncle's residence K-455, New Seelampur by constable Anand Tyagi around 2.30 a.m. on 10th March. When the family went in the morning to enquire at the Welcome Police station they were directed to the Anti Auto Theft unit of Delhi Police where Anand Tyagi is a constable. Tyagi assured the family that Darshan Singh would be released in the evening. He demanded Rs. 10,000 - from the family for the release. Bui Darshan Singh was not released in the evening, nor for the next five days. For the family is too poor to be able to pay the exorbitant sum demanded. The family ran from pillar to post while Tyagi and other policemen kept giving them false assurances. During this period they could not even see Darshan Singh.

Finally on 16th night a man came and informed the family that Darshan was admitted in Mohan Nursing Home, Zafrabad and was in very bad shape. The family had difficulty in locating him at the nursing home, for Darshan had been clandestinely put in the gynae (female patients) ward along with female patients. He could barely speak, and his body was covered with marks of beating. Darshan told them of the inhuman torture and sexual exploitation he was subjected to by Anand Tyagi, Shakti Singh, Neeraj Kumar, Sunil Kumar and Mars pal Singh. All of them are officials of the Anti Auto Theft unit. These officials "humanely" offered Rs. 10,000/- for medical expenses and assured the family that no case against Darshan would be registered. They asked the family to take responsibility for Darshan and shift him to some other hospital. The family refused, and informed the DCP office. In the presence of Additional ACP Kewai Singh, Darshan was transferred to LNJP (Irwin) hospital, where he died around midnight. The postmortem was conducted at LNJP. The five policemen absconded. Next day there was a chakka jaam (traffic blocking) and demonstration at the G.T Road near Seelampur Chowck. There was stone throwing and reportedly some public property damaged. The Chakka jaam was titled at the intervention of the DCP and the SDM. Assurances were given that action would be taken against the involved policemen.

Police

SHO V.P. Kholi of Welcome Police station initially decline to make any comments as the case has been transferred to DCP Crime and Railways (Police Headquarters). He later stated that an FIR was registered at the thana on March 17. Charges under section 344,323,34,of the *IPC* have been changed to S-302. *IPC* (murder), but against no specific names. He said that procedural violations were involved but it was not a case of Custodial death However both the DCP Ranjeet Narayan and Addl. ACP Kewal Singh acknowledge Darshan Singh's as a custodial death They stated that the five policemen are charged under S.302 *IPC* and that a special police team has been formed to trace- and arrest the absconding policeman. All five have been suspended. The SDM. Rajesh Kumar Mishra also deemed it a custodial death and added that Inspector Shakti Singh has been dismissed from service.

PUDR appreciates the preliminary action taken against the involved policemen. But it should be noted that the DCP's office is located right opposite the Anti Auto theft unit and the thana is just down the road. How come neither the SHO nor the DCP were aware of the prolonged torture taking place for five days? This is a serious lapse of responsibility.

PUDR Demands

- 1. The higher police officials under whose jurisdiction the Anti Auto Theft unit falls should own responsibility**
- 2. Immediate compensation to the family of the deceased.**
- 3. Prosecution of the involved policemen.**
- 4. SDM be given power of extempore inspection of any police station falling under his jurisdiction**