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Compensate police atrocity victim's kin: NHRC

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In a significant decision, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has put aside the contention of the J&K Government that it has no rights to interfere over the latter's jurisdiction and directed it on Thursday to pay ₹5 lakh as compensation to the next kin of a victim of police atrocity.

The case pertained to one Mohan Lal, a rickshaw puller who was allegedly picked up by State police way back on June 21, 2003 from Amritsar for his alleged role in some burglaries in Jammu region. But almost two weeks later, Mohan died in District Police Lines Hospital in the district.

The matter was brought before the rights watchdog by Suhas Chakma, Director, Asian Centre for Human Rights who also submitted various reports to suggest that the death of

Mohan was due to police brutality in custody.

Taking cognisance of the reports including medical report which indicated death due to third degree torture (by the police) during interrogation, the Commission in 2009 recommended the State Government to shell out ₹ five lakh as monetary relief to the next of kin of the victim. But it was only recently when the Commission reminded the State Government of its failure to pay the compensation as directed, the later contended that the former has no jurisdiction in the matter and cited several legislations in its favour which gives the State the special status in the country.

However, the panel out rightly rejected the Government's contention and clarified that the order "is not regarding the violation of human rights, if any, arising out of any Legislation made by the State in respect of any of the Entries in List II."