

Indian under death sentence to be freed

by UPI

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan - An Indian national who has spent more than 30 years on death row in Pakistan for espionage was pardoned Thursday by President Pervez Musharraf.

Kashmir Singh was arrested in 1973. Ansar Burney, the Pakistani interim minister for human rights, told The Hindu he learned of the case during a visit this month to Kot Lakhpat Prison, where Singh has been on deathrow for decades.

"I think God made me a Minister only for Kashmir Singh," Burney said. "I am so happy today that I cannot express myself properly."

Burney, describing the deathrow cell as a "hell," said the 70-year-old Singh is physically weak but appears to be mentally alert. He said Singh is anxious to be reunited with his wife after 35 years apart from her.

Paramjit Kaur, Singh's wife, told him they had had a loving relationship, Burney said.

The pardon came as India and Pakistan came to an agreement on prisoners. Indian nationals held in Pakistan and Pakistanis in India would be freed immediately if accused or convicted of minor crimes. This would include fishermen picked up on suspicion of crossing into the wrong territorial waters.

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