

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 13/007/2004

UA 170/04

Death threats

12 May 2004

BANGLADESH

**Zabid Ahsan Sohel (m)
Motiur Rahman Moti (m)
And their families**

Killed:

Ahsanullah Master (m) aged 54, Awami League Member of Parliament

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of the family of Ahsanullah Master, an Awami League Member of Parliament who was killed by up to ten gunmen at about 12.25 pm on 7 May. His family have reportedly been receiving death threats following a case against 18 people, filed by his younger brother Motiur Rahman Moti.

Ahsanullah Master's son, Zabid Ahsan Sohel has told newspapers that the family have also been receiving telephone calls in which threats are made to remove his father's body from the grave if the family does not withdraw their case.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Political tension has been on the rise in Bangladesh in recent weeks. Following a campaign of general strikes by the opposition Awami League, to unseat the government, thousands of opposition activists have been detained and reportedly held without charge.

The Killing of Ahsanullah Master highlights the deteriorating law and order situation and the vulnerability of opposition politicians.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to ensure the safety of Ahsanullah Master's family following death threats against them;
- calling for those responsible for making the threats to be brought to justice;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the family has unimpeded access to the criminal justice system in seeking justice for the murder of Ahsanullah Master;
- calling for a prompt, impartial investigation into the killing of Ahsanullah Master and for those who were responsible for his death to be brought to justice;
- urging the government to ensure the protection of all witnesses including family members in the face of the reported death threats they have received.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia
Office of the Prime Minister
Gona Bhaban
Old Sangsad Bhaban, Tejgaon,
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegram: Prime Minister, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Fax: + 880 2 8113244/8113243/9133722/8111015

Telex: 672802 PSEC BJ / 632220 RAPA BJ / 672803 PM SEC BJ

Email: pm@pmobd.org / psecretary@pmobd.org / pressecec@pmobd.org / pmo@pmobd.org

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Md. Lutfuzzaman Babar
State Minister for Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat
Building 4
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegrams: Minister of Home Affairs, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: + 880 2 8619667
Salutation: Dear Minister of State

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of Bangladesh accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 June 2004.