



## ADPAN NEWSLETTER NO.2 April - June 2010

AI Index: ASA 01/009/2010  
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### INTRODUCTION

This ADPAN Newsletter is issued quarterly and includes significant developments and events in the region and in the world. It also includes media reports, the E-News, noting action undertaken by ADPAN where relevant. These media reports are a distillation of some of the key press reports on the death penalty which are sent regularly each week.

### SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

#### **Victims' Families -MVFHR Speakers' Tour: 20 June – 6 July 2010**

**ADPAN** member organization, Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights (MVFHR), recently conducted an educational speaking tour along with other ADPAN partners from South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. The tour, which discussed the impact of the death penalty and how societies can best meet the needs of victims' families in the wake of violence, consisted of live testimony from participants who have lost family members to murder or state execution. The tour was intended to open-up the death penalty debate in Asia to new perspectives in relation to support for abolition amongst murder victims' relatives. The tour met with elected officials, lawyers, religious leaders and family members of murder victims.

#### **Drugs and the Death Penalty**

The International Harm Reduction Association (IHRA) has published a new report, 'Complicity or Abolition: The Death Penalty and International Support for Drug Enforcement'. The report exposes the links between the carrying out of executions and the financial contributions from European governments, the European Commission and the UNODC to support drug enforcement operations in countries that use the death penalty, including China and Viet Nam.

[http://www.ihra.net/files/2010/06/21/IHRA\\_DeathPenaltyReport\\_2.pdf](http://www.ihra.net/files/2010/06/21/IHRA_DeathPenaltyReport_2.pdf)

#### **Constitutional challenge on the death penalty: SOUTH KOREA**

The South Korean Constitutional Court's summary ruling on the constitutionality of the death penalty has been published on their website in English:

[http://english.court.go.kr/home/english/decisions/rcnt\\_decision\\_view.jsp?seq=512&sch\\_code=9](http://english.court.go.kr/home/english/decisions/rcnt_decision_view.jsp?seq=512&sch_code=9)

#### **Abolition of the death penalty in the Military Code: FIJI**

Peceli Vocea, Fijian Ambassador to 14th session of the UN Human Rights Council, has announced the government's intention to consider removing the death penalty from the

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country's Military Code. Fiji has already removed the death penalty from its Criminal Code.

11/06/10, *All Headline News*

<http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7018964987?Fiji%20Considering%20Abolition%20of%20Death%20Penalty>

### **Mentally Ill: JAPAN**

AI Switzerland has collected 1,172 signatures worldwide in support of the call to the Japanese government to exempt the mentally ill from execution.

Amnesty International's report, 'Hanging By a Thread: Mental Health and the Death Penalty in Japan' can be found at:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA22/005/2009/en/acc1c64b-e5ed-425f-bb93-36be3ec25f59/asa220052009eng.pdf>

### **Torture: CHINA**

According to two newly- issued regulations, evidence obtained illegally, through the use of torture during interrogation, cannot be used in testimony, particularly in cases involving the death penalty. While human rights activists have welcomed the move, there is concern that the move stems not from a deepening conviction in human rights but from an attempt to ease public anger over a high-profile wrongful conviction case, where Zhao Zuohai said police beat him to secure his confession.

31/05/10, *China Daily*

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-05/31/content\\_9909042.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-05/31/content_9909042.htm)

31/05/10, *AP*

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100531/ap\\_on\\_re\\_as/as\\_china\\_torture\\_2](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100531/ap_on_re_as/as_china_torture_2)

02/06/10, *Voice of America*

<http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/asia/Activists-Wary-of-Chinas-Ban-on-Evidence-Obtained-from-Torture-95421574.html>

### **Retrial for Okunishi on death row since 1972: JAPAN**

The Supreme Court has ordered the Nagoya High Court to review its decision in 2006 not to reopen the trial of Masaru Okunishi, who has been on death row since 1972, following his conviction for murdering five women and injuring 12 others with poisoned wine in Mie Prefecture in 1961. Okunishi's case represents the first decision by the Supreme Court in 34 years to revoke a lower court ruling involving a retrial application by a death-row inmate.

07/04/10, *Japan Times*

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100407a2.html>

### **Book review - *Once a Jolly Hangman: Singapore Justice in the Dock* by Alan Shadrake**

Singapore stands in defiance of the worldwide trend towards the abolition of the death penalty, having executed over 420 prisoners since 1991 and, in 2008, it voted against the United Nation's resolution calling for a worldwide moratorium on executions.

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Alan Shadrake's excellent new book, *Once a Jolly Hangman: Singapore Justice in the Dock*, reveals the injustices, contradictions and disturbing truths at the heart of Singapore's use of the death penalty.

The book includes an interview with Darshan Singh, Singapore's former chief executioner. as well as his experiences as an executioner for almost fifty years.

The book draws attention to Singapore's mandatory death penalty law for drug trafficking. Alan Shadrake makes the point that not only does the mandatory death penalty violate fair trial standards, by presuming the guilt of the defendant, but also shows how the death penalty has discriminated against drug traffickers, like Nguyen Van Tuong, Angel Mou Pui-Peng, Amara Tochi, Vignes Mourthi, and Shanmugam Murgugesu, while deferring to powerful economic and political vested interests in other cases.

Shadrake points out the contradictions of Singapore's death penalty policy by the fact that Singapore has continued to show support for, and has invested heavily in, Myanmar, "the world's second biggest producer and supplier of heroin." It is the steady stream of impoverished drug mules that pay the ultimate price. The death penalty does not provide a real deterrent to crime: Shadrake argues that the evidence shows "drug use has increased in recent years and that trafficking goes on despite the dire consequences."

In his book, Shadrake argues that, "the absence of independence in a compliant judiciary and a media silenced through state ownership and the ever-present threat of defamation and libel suits has created a climate for the suppression of basic political freedoms. And in that context there is simply no meaningful debate about the death penalty and its repercussions."

The decision of the Singaporean authorities to arrest Alan Shadrake following the launch of the book on 18 July has caused an international outcry and response. ADPAN released a statement urging his release on 19 July. He has now been released on bail; ADPAN defence lawyer, M. Ravi has been working on his behalf.

The case against the use of the death penalty in Singapore, conveyed in *Once a Jolly Hangman*, has been strengthened by the coverage of the past week's events and the arrest of its author in Singapore.

[www.amnesty.org/.../singapore-must-release-british-author-death-penalty-book-2010-07-19](http://www.amnesty.org/.../singapore-must-release-british-author-death-penalty-book-2010-07-19),

<http://today24news.com/offbeat/alan-shadrake-the-author-of-once-a-jolly-hangman-singapore-justice-in-the-dock-arrested-192058>

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#### E-NEWS

##### AFGHANISTAN

###### **Aussie on death row will offer compensation**

A lawyer for an Australian man, Robert Langdon, sentenced to death for murdering an Afghan colleague while working as a contractor for US-based security firm Four Horsemen International, has said that his client's family will try to have the judgment overturned by paying compensation to the victim's family.

17/05/10, *ABC News*, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/05/17/2901548.htm>

###### **Afghanistan Christians Detained Amid Execution Threats**

Over 20 Afghan Christians have been detained in Afghanistan after Abdul Sattar Khawasi, a deputy of the lower house, called for Muslim converts to Christianity to be executed. President Hamid Karzai has also made clear his interest in following the issue of the alleged involvement of international organizations in evangelism.

25/06/10, *BosNewsLife*

<http://www.bosnewslife.com/13224-breaking-news-afghanistan-christians-detained-amid-execution-threats>

##### BANGLADESH

###### **Six Bangladeshis back from UAE row after paying blood money**

Six Bangladeshi workers who were sentenced to death in the United Arab Emirates three years ago for the murder of a Pakistani have returned home after the Prime Minister ordered the Labour Ministry to pay the entire 9.57 million taka as blood money.

17/05/10, *New Nation*, <http://ittefaq.com/issues/2010/05/17/news0158.htm>

##### CHINA

###### **A high price for drug smuggling**

Following the execution of four Japanese nationals in China for drug-related offences, questions remain as to whether the individuals were given a fair trial.

11/04/10, *Japan Times*

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ed20100411a2.html>

###### **Chinese accused of vast trade in organs**

An estimated 9,000 members of Falun Gong, as well as Tibetans, 'house church' Christians and Muslim Uighurs, have been executed in order to harvest their organs for worldwide sale.

27/04/10, *Washington Times*

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/apr/27/chinese-accused-of-vast-trade-in-organs/>

###### **New rules on confession to limit death sentences**

According to two newly issued regulations, evidence obtained illegally - such as through torture during interrogation - cannot be used in testimony, particularly in cases involving the death penalty.

31/05/10, *China Daily*

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-05/31/content\\_9909042.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-05/31/content_9909042.htm)

###### **New rules ban illegal evidence in China courts**

Further coverage of the new rules saying that evidence obtained illegally cannot be used in death penalty cases and other criminal prosecutions. It is the first time that China has explicitly stated that evidence obtained under torture or duress is illegal and inadmissible in court.

31/05/10, *AP*

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100531/ap\\_on\\_re\\_as/as\\_china\\_torture\\_2](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100531/ap_on_re_as/as_china_torture_2)

###### **China amends law to limit executions**

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In May, the Supreme People's Court issued regulations stating that death sentences should only be imposed where evidence had been obtained by legal means. The new regulations followed criticism of the use of confessions obtained through torture, the limited appeals process, the lack of transparency in the judicial system, and the poor qualifications of legal staff.

07/06/10, *National – UAE*

<http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100608/FOREIGN/706079950/1015/rss>

### **Senior Chinese judge urges courts to use strict evidence standards in death penalty cases**

Supreme People's Court (SPC) Vice President, Zhang Jun, has stated that the courts must apply strictest standards in death penalty cases. The statement follows the SPC's ruling, in January 2007, to review all death penalty decisions made by the lower courts.

09/06/10, *Xinhua News Agency*

<http://china.globaltimes.cn/chinanews/2010-06/540068.html>

### **Executions in China under Growing Scrutiny**

The case of Gan Jinhua, a hardware salesman from southern China, is perceived by legal experts as a test case for China's recent legal reforms relating to the death penalty, including a ban on the use of illegally obtained evidence and the Supreme Court's prerogative to review provincial court decisions. Experts, including Gan's lawyer, Teng, argue that the Supreme Court's review of death sentences remains imperfect and that it is a closed process, based mainly on court documents.

22/06/10, *NPR*

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127375392>

## **FIJI**

### **Fiji Considering removing the Death Penalty from the Military Code**

Peceli Vocea, Fijian Ambassador to 14th session of the UN Human Rights Council, has announced the government's intention to consider removing the death penalty from the country's Military Code. Fiji has already removed the death penalty from its Criminal Code.

11/06/10, *All Headline News*

<http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7018964987?Fiji%20Considering%20Abolition%20Of%20Death%20Penalty>

## **INDIA/United Arab Emirates (UAE)**

### **17 Indians facing death sentence in UAE were tortured, forced to make confession of crime**

Seventeen Indians awaiting execution for the murder of a Pakistani were tortured by the Sharjah police and received no visit from the Indian Consulate during their time in custody, according to a petition placed before the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

01/05/10, *Punjab Newsline*

<http://www.punjabnewsline.com/content/17-indians-facing-death-sentence-uae-were-tortured-forced-make-confession-crime>

### **17 Indians on death row: UAE court adjourns hearing**

The case of 17 Indians sentenced to death for killing a Pakistani man in Sharjah has been adjourned for a second time by an appeals court due to the lack of a translator. The 17 defendants only understand Punjabi. The Indian consulate had provided a Punjabi-English translator, but the court proceedings had been held in Arabic, requiring an Arabic-Punjabi translator.

16/06/10, *Zee News*

<http://www.zeenews.com/news634488.html>

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#### **India gives death penalty to gunman in Mumbai terrorist attack**

Ajmal Amir Kasab, 22, has been sentenced to death following his conviction for the murder of 52 people in the 2008 terrorist attack on Mumbai.

06/05/10, *Washington Post*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/06/AR2010050601426.html>

#### **High Court commutes Death term of man who killed minor**

The Delhi High Court has stated that the key factor in determining whether the death sentence should be awarded is whether or not the convict is such a dangerous person that sparing his life would endanger the community. The court commuted the death sentence awarded to a man who had raped and murdered a five year old girl to 20 years imprisonment.

07/05/10, *Hindustan Times*

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/HC-commutes-Death-term-of-man-who-killed-minor/Article1-540766.aspx>

#### **Hanging for Pakistani Sets Back Anti-Death Penalty Campaign**

The death sentence awarded to Mohammad Ajmal Kasab for his role in the 2008 terrorist attack on Mumbai was a setback to the campaign to abolish the death penalty in India. However, human rights activists in India and Pakistan have continued to argue against Kasab's execution.

10/05/10, *IPS*

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51370>

#### **Death penalty: the third way**

Clearer sentencing guidelines are needed in order to avoid the perception that the executive will inevitably release convicted murderers after 14 years. Legislation is required for different categories of murder, ranging from 20 years, through 35 years to full life imprisonment.

15/05/10, *Times of India*

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Death-penalty-The-third-way/articleshow/5934884.cms>

#### **Is death penalty the right way to punish terrorists?**

Article that argues for an alternative to the death penalty, stating that India's national crime statistics show that the death penalty has not significantly reduced crime.

18/05/10, *Merinews*

<http://www.merineews.com/article/is-death-penalty-the-right-way-to-punish-terrorists/15806557.shtml>

#### **Delay in hanging leads to reduced sentences, show rulings**

The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that excessive delay in decisions on mercy pleas renders the death penalty too inhuman to be inflicted, thus entitling the prisoner to the lesser sentence of life imprisonment.

30/05/10, *IANS*

<http://www.newkerala.com/news/fullnews-117735.html>

#### **10 condemned prisoners got 'mercy' from president in three decades**

Seventy-seven mercy petitions have been decided during the last 30 years, of which 10 have been commuted to life imprisonment. There are currently 29 condemned prisoners in the country who are awaiting a decision on their mercy plea. If the appeal is rejected under Article 72, the decision of the president is communicated to the relevant state government, who will then set the date of execution.

04/06/10, *Press Trust of India*

[http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report\\_10-condemned-prisoners-got-mercy-from-president-in-three-decades\\_1391885](http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_10-condemned-prisoners-got-mercy-from-president-in-three-decades_1391885)

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#### **No specific time frame for carrying out death sentence: Balakrishnan**

The new National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) chairperson, K G Balakrishnanon, has stated that it is not prescribed under any code of punishment to execute a convict with a stipulated period of time.

08/06/10, *Indian Express*

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/no-specific-time-frame-for-carrying-out-deat/630833/>

#### **Stop death by hanging, go for lethal injection: most states to Centre**

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), is to consider alternative modes of death for those on death row in response to the support from state governments to a suggestion that death by hanging be replaced by execution through lethal injection. One state, Tamil Nadu, has gone further and advocated the abolition of the death penalty.

13/06/10, *Indian Express*

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/stop-death-by-hanging-go-for-lethal-injection-most-states-to-centre/633134/>

#### **Commute all death sentences: Krishna Iyer**

Justice VR Krishna Iyer, former judge of the Supreme Court, has requested that all death sentences be commuted in celebration of the World Tamil Conference.

23/06/10, *Express Buzz*

<http://expressbuzz.com/topic/commute-all-death-sentences-krishna-iyer/183835.html>

#### **President commutes death for 8 to life in jail**

Eight convicts on death row in two separate cases of murder have had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment by President Pratibha Patil. The decision leaves a list of 21 mercy petitions pending.

28/06/10, *Indian Express*

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/president-commutes-death-for-8-to-life-in-jail/639256/>

### INDONESIA

#### **Rights activist against death penalty for graft convicts**

Human rights activist, and chairman of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI), Patra M. Zein, has challenged the government's determination to use the death penalty to combat corruption in the country.

06/04/10, *Jakarta Post*

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/04/06/rights-activist-against-death-penalty-graft-convicts.html>

#### **Muhammadiyah backs death penalty for corruptors**

Din Syamsudin, chairman of Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest Islamic organization, supports the idea of extending the death penalty for corruption ..

12/04/10, *ANTARA*

<http://www.antaraneews.com/en/news/1271031000/muhammadiyah-backs-death-penalty-for-corruptors>

### JAPAN

#### **Retrial for Okunishi on death row since 1972**

The Supreme Court has ordered the Nagoya High Court to review its decision in 2006 not to reopen the trial of Masaru Okunishi, who has been on death row since 1972, following his conviction for murdering five women and injuring 12 others with poisoned wine in Mie Prefecture in 1961. Okunishi's case represents the first decision by the Supreme Court in 34 years to revoke a lower court ruling involving a retrial application by a death-row inmate.

07/04/10, *Japan Times*

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100407a2.html>

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#### **Court begins review process for man on death row for 1961 murders**

The Nagoya High Court is to review the case of Masaru Okunishi, 81, who has been on death row since 1972 following his conviction for the murder of five women and injuring 12 others with poisoned wine.  
20/04/10, *Japan Today*

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/crime/view/court-begins-review-process-for-man-on-death-row-for-1961-murders>

#### **Chinese Executions and the Japanese Dog That Did Not Bark**

ADPAN members, including the Center for Prisoners' Rights Japan and Amnesty International Japan, have criticized the muted response of the Japanese government to the execution of four Japanese citizens convicted of drug trafficking. The government's capacity to criticize the death penalty has been severely disabled by its repeated claims that the death penalty is "not a human rights issue," but "a matter of domestic criminal justice."

03/05/10, *Asia Pacific Journal*

[http://www.japanfocus.org/-David\\_T\\_Johnson/3355](http://www.japanfocus.org/-David_T_Johnson/3355)

#### **Japanese man, once on death row, released from Philippine prison**

Hideshi Suzuki, a 54-year-old Japanese man sentenced to death for drug trafficking in 1994 has been released from prison following a presidential pardon. The Supreme Court had previously commuted his death sentence to life in prison.

22/06/10, *Mainichi Daily News*

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20100622p2g00m0in001000c.html>

#### **MALAYSIA**

##### **Impose death penalty on those killing kids**

The Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF) has said that it is in favour of introducing the mandatory death penalty for those that murder children.

24/04/10, *Daily Express – Malaysia*

<http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/news.cfm?NewsID=71999>

##### **Lawyer urges Malaysian government to intervene in death row case**

Lawyer and ADPAN member, M Ravi, who is representing Yong Vui Kong, has urged the Malaysian government to intervene in the case and to persuade the Singaporean President to grant clemency.

11/06/10, *Online Citizen*

<http://theonlinecitizen.com/2010/06/lawyer-urges-malaysian-government-to-intervene-in-death-row-case/>

##### **14 Death-Row Prisoners Get Pardon, Says Hishammuddin**

Home Minister, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein, announced that fourteen prisoners on death row were pardoned between 2000 and 2009, including two who had been freed.

22/06/10, *Bernama*

<http://deathpenaltynews.blogspot.com/2010/06/malaysia-14-death-row-prisoners-get.html>

##### **Hangman's noose: All the doors will close on Yong**

Singapore's history of executing convicted drug-traffickers, like the Australian, Nguyen Van Tuong, suggests that there is little hope of reprieve for Yong Vui Kong. The letter goes onto question the effectiveness of the death penalty as a deterrent, and asks how Singaporeans can reconcile their high standard of living with a "primitive and pitiless justice system."

22/06/10, *Malaysiakini*

<http://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/135217>



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#### MALDIVES

##### **Islamic Foundation calls for death sentence if apostate fails to repent**

The Islamic Foundation has called for the self-confessed apostate Mohamed Nazim to be stripped of his citizenship and sentenced to death if he does not repent and return to Islam. According to the Maldivian constitution, all citizens are required to be Muslim.

30/05/10, *Minivan News*

<http://minivannews.com/politics/islamic-foundation-calls-for-death-sentence-if-apostate-fails-to-repent-7606>

#### NORTH KOREA

##### **N Korean officials executed over currency bungle**

North Korea has executed two officials over a currency revaluation that was blamed for fuelling food shortages and unrest. Economic officials and members of the Communist Party central committee were ordered to watch the executions.

06/04/10, *ABC News*

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/04/06/2864680.htm>

##### **North Korean 'hitmen' face death over plot to slit throat of defector**

Two North Korean spies, Kim Myong Ho and Dong Myong Kwan, face the death penalty after prosecutors in South Korea accused them of being sent on a mission to assassinate Hwang Jang Yop. A former secretary of the North Korean Workers' Party, and tutor to the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il, Mr Hwang defected to South Korea in 1997.

22/04/10, *The Australian*

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/north-korean-hitmen-face-death-over-plot-to-slit-throat-of-defector/story-e6frg6so-1225856757527>

#### PAKISTAN

##### **EU Parliament slams Pakistan blasphemy laws that condone 'murder' of minorities**

The EU Parliament has condemned Pakistan for its blasphemy laws, which the Parliament believes can be easily abused and have "led to an increase of violence against members of religious minorities."

21/05/10, *ANI*

<http://news.oneindia.in/2010/05/21/euparliament-slams-pak-blasphemy-laws-that-condonemurder.html>

##### **Burney wants conversion of death sentences into life term**

Ansar Burney, the UN Adviser on Human Rights, has re-stated his call for the President to commute all death sentences to life imprisonment under Article 45 of the Constitution, claiming that 60 to 65 percent of prisoners on death row, including women and children, were innocent.

21/05/10, *News - Pakistan*

[http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily\\_detail.asp?id=240487](http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=240487)

##### **373 Convicts at Adiala Jail urge president to repeal death sentence**

373 prisoners of Adiala Jail, who have been sentenced to death have appealed, by letter, to President Asif Ali Zardari to abolish the death penalty in accordance with the wishes of former PPP leader Benazir Bhutto.

19/06/10, *News - Pakistan*

[http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily\\_detail.asp?id=245872](http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=245872)

#### PHILIPPINES

##### **Migrante: Saudi court sentences Pinoy worker to death**

A Saudi court has sentenced to death a Filipino worker, identified only as 'OFW Joseph' by Migrante, a Filipino Human Rights group, for killing his landlord. The group has complained of the Philippine embassy in Riyadh's failure to hire a lawyer to represent Joseph during court hearings.

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16/04/10, ABS CBN News

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/04/16/10/migrante-saudi-court-sentences-pinoy-worker-death>

#### **OFW on Saudi death row beaten up in jail, sister says**

The family of Joselito Zapanta, an overseas foreign worker sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia has reported that he has been beaten by fellow inmates. The Philippine Consulate in Riyadh said they had not received information about the alleged beating, and refused to disclose updates on Joselito's appeal, citing the case's 'sensitivity'. There are 28 OFWs on death row in the Middle East.

20/05/10, GMA New, <http://www.gmanews.tv/story/191448/ofw-on-saudi-death-row-beaten-up-in-jail-sister-says>

#### **SINGAPORE**

##### **Singapore justifies mandatory death penalty for drug traffickers**

Referring to the pending case of Malaysian, Yong Vui Kong, sentenced to death for drug trafficking, Singapore's Law minister, K Shanmugam, justified the mandatory death penalty for drug traffickers, arguing that it would send the wrong signal to drug barons if the sentence was commuted.

10/05/10, Deutsche Presse-Agentur

<http://yoursdp.org/index.php/news/singapore/3696-spore-justifies-mandatory-death-penalty-for-drug-traffickers>

##### **Singapore may impose death penalty for kidnapping**

Law minister K. Shanmugam has suggested that the death penalty may be imposed for kidnapping.

10/05/10, IANS

[http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/world-news/singapore-may-impose-death-penalty-for-kidnapping\\_100361376.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/world-news/singapore-may-impose-death-penalty-for-kidnapping_100361376.html)

##### **Why should death sentences be mandatory**

Opinion piece that argues against the mandatory death penalty, suggesting that judges should have discretion when it comes to sentencing.

17/05/10, Today – Singapore

<http://www.todayonline.com/Singapore/EDC100517-0000039/Why-should-death-sentences-be-mandatory>

##### **Singapore Is Still Out Of Step On Death Penalty Policy**

The decision to retain the mandatory death penalty for drugs, combined with the decision to sentence to death Yong Vui Kong, arrested in his teens, for drug trafficking, clearly indicates that Singapore continues to exist on the fringe of the international trend of limiting the application of the death penalty.

18/05/10, Guardian – UK

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2010/may/18/singapore-death-penalty-drug-dealer>

##### **Hung Up on the Death Penalty**

Article exploring the arguments for and against the death penalty in Singapore, particularly in relation to the case of Yong Vui Kong and the mandatory death penalty for drug traffickers.

18/06/10, IPS

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=51872>

#### **SOUTH KOREA**

##### **Untold story of last execution of death row inmates**

The Lee Myung-bak administration may break South Korea's moratorium on the death penalty in an attempt to tackle the rise of serious crime. Last month Justice Minister Lee Kwi-nam hinted at the resumption of executions.

04/04/10, Korea Times

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#### **SRI LANKA**

##### **Sri Lankan house maid on death row appeals once again**

The parents of Rizana Nafeek, who is on death row in Saudi Arabia following her conviction for murdering her employer's baby, have appealed to the president of the governmental Human Rights Commission, Dr Bandar bin Mohamed Al-Aiban, for clemency.

*12/06/10, Asian Tribune*

<http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2010/06/12/sri-lankan-house-maid-death-row-appeals-once-again>

#### **TAIWAN**

##### **State executions could hurt Taiwan's image in EU: parliamentarian**

Laima Liucija Adnrikiene, vice president of the EU parliament's subcommittee on Human Rights, has stated that a resumption of executions could count against Taiwan in the European Parliament's review of a proposal to include Taiwan in its visa waiver program.

*01/04/10, Central News Agency*

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1217650&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=83.jpg&cate\\_rss=news\\_Politics](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1217650&lang=eng_news&cate_img=83.jpg&cate_rss=news_Politics)

##### **MOFA, EU lawmakers to communicate over death penalty**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has stated its intention to hold talks with EU parliamentarians regarding the death penalty in Taiwan, in parallel with talks aimed at securing Schengen visa-free treatment for Taiwanese nationals. While not directly related to the death penalty, an end to Taiwan's moratorium could inform the decision of EU parliamentarians to withhold visa waivers.

*07/04/10, China Post*

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/foreign-affairs/2010/04/07/251463/MOFA-EU.htm>

##### **Death penalty to be phased out eventually: justice minister**

Abolishing the death penalty is the government's ultimate goal, but the executions of 44 death row inmates will be carried out in accordance with the law, said Justice Minister Tseng Yung-fu.

*08/04/10, Central News Agency*

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2010/04/08/251748/Death-penalty.htm>

##### **Minister of Justice looking to replace death penalty with non-parole life sentence**

Minister of Justice, Tseng Yung-fu, has said that the Minister of Justice (MOJ) will propose amendments to the Criminal Code within a year to pave the way for the gradual abolition of the death penalty.

However, the MOJ has not set a timetable for completion of the process.

*15/04/10, Central News Agency*

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1227950&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=83.jpg&cate\\_rss=news\\_Politics\\_TAIWAN](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1227950&lang=eng_news&cate_img=83.jpg&cate_rss=news_Politics_TAIWAN)

##### **Executions to occur before end of year**

The justice minister has said that executions for death row inmates will be completed before the end of the year, while also adding that the ultimate goal of the Ministry of Justice was to abolish the death penalty.

*16/04/10, China Post*

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2010/04/16/252724/Executions-to.htm>

##### **First public hearing on death penalty scheduled for April 21**

A series of public hearings on whether the death penalty should be abolished will commence on 21 April in Taipei County. The hearings will focus on two main questions - whether the 44 convicts currently on death row should be executed and what the government's policy on capital punishment should be.

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18/04/10, Central News Agency

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1230384&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=logo\\_taiwan&cate\\_rss=TAIWAN\\_eng](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1230384&lang=eng_news&cate_img=logo_taiwan&cate_rss=TAIWAN_eng)

#### **Many steps needed to end capital punishment**

Editorial piece by TAEDP member, Chiu Hei-yuan, arguing that, while policy makers have indicated that the abolition of the death penalty is a long-term goal of the government, President Ma Ying-jeou and Minister of Justice Tseng Yung-fu have a public duty to explain why they favour abolition and how they intend to achieve it.

27/04/10, Taipei Times

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2010/04/27/2003471568>

#### **Abolition groups need to review attitudes**

Those in favour of the abolition of the death penalty cannot simply rely on personal beliefs and principles, but should, in addition, "propose substantive measures and evidence" in favour of abolition, such that any proposed amendments to Taiwan's Criminal Code retain "judicial credibility."

28/04/10, Taipei Times

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2010/04/28/2003471668>

#### **Taiwan bishops seek death penalty suspension**

Taiwan bishops have published a declaration calling for a total suspension of executions as a step towards the abolition of the death penalty.

28/04/10, CathNews Asia

<http://www.cathnewsasia.com/2010/04/28/taiwan-bishops-want-death-penalty-suspension/>

#### **EU Condemns Resumption of Executions in Taiwan**

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, issued a statement condemning the executions of Chang Jun Hong, Hong Chen Yao, Ke Shi Ming and Chang Wen Wei, and urging the Government of Taiwan immediately to resume a de facto moratorium on the death penalty.

01/05/10, Eurasia Review

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/eu-condemns-resumption-of-executions-intaiwan.html>

#### **Executions were illegal: rights groups**

ADPAN member organization, the TAEDP, and other human rights groups, have staged a protest outside the Ministry of Justice's offices, accusing it of illegally executing four death row prisoners (Chang Wen-wei, Ko Shih-ming, Chang Wei-long, and Hong Chen-yao) before the Council of Grand Justices had agreed to hear their cases. The TAEDP had filed constitutional interpretation applications on behalf of all 44 prisoners on death row.

02/05/10, Taipei Times

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2010/05/02/2003472011>

#### **European Parliament's statement on the resumption of death penalty in Taiwan**

Statement from the President and Vice-President of the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament, expressing their "deep regret and shock" at the execution of four death row prisoners. The statement highlights the failure of the ruling Kuomintang party to take sufficient steps to seek cross-party consensus on the abolition of the death penalty in Taiwan, and suggests that the Democratic Progressive Party's support for abolition provides a real window of opportunity to abolish the death penalty. The end of Taiwan's moratorium on the death penalty acts against Taiwan's aspirations to join the UN and other international organizations.

06/05/10, Taiwan News

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[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1247844&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=logo\\_taiwan&cate\\_rss=TAIWAN\\_eng](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1247844&lang=eng_news&cate_img=logo_taiwan&cate_rss=TAIWAN_eng)

### **Time not ripe for death penalty referendum, says Justice Minister**

Justice Minister Tseng Yung-fu has said that the time is not ripe to hold a referendum on the death penalty as too many people still support it. Tseng pointed out that an MOJ opinion survey conducted in January showed that 74 percent of the public was in favour of keeping the death penalty.

13/05/10, *Taiwan News*

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1254385&lang=eng\\_news](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1254385&lang=eng_news)

### **Justice minister meets with anti-death penalty group**

Minister of Justice, Tseng Yung-fu met with the TAEDP and both agreed that while Taiwan's ultimate goal is the abolition of the death penalty, this would require collaborative approach to persuade the public of the case for abolition.

21/05/10, Central News Agency

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2010/05/22/257631/Justice-minister.htm>

### **Ma says he will respect decision on death penalty**

President Ma Ying-jeou has said that he will respect any decision made by the Ministry of Justice on the execution of death row inmates. The comment was made in response to concerns that executions might affect Taiwan's bid to have its citizens included in Europe's Schengen visa-waiver programme.

29/05/10, *Central News Agency*

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2010/05/30/258690/Ma-says.htm>

### **International human rights groups appeal to Taiwan on death penalty**

Human rights organizations have repeated their appeals to the Taiwan government to restore an unofficial moratorium on executions to spare the lives of 40 death row inmates. Amnesty International and ADPAN issued statements to express their regret over the decision reached by the Justices of the Constitutional Court to reject a petition filed by the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty on behalf of the prisoners.

03/06/10, *Central News Agency*

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1276503&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=49.jpg&cate\\_rss=news\\_Society](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1276503&lang=eng_news&cate_img=49.jpg&cate_rss=news_Society)

### **Taiwan's top court rejects appeal to suspend executions**

Further coverage of ADPAN's statement in response to Taiwan's decision to execute four prisoners, ending a five-year moratorium on executions.

07/06/10, *World coalition against the death penalty*

[http://www.worldcoalition.org/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=440&sel\\_lang=english](http://www.worldcoalition.org/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=440&sel_lang=english)

### **President clarifies stance on death penalty**

In a meeting with representatives from the TAEDP, President Ma Ying-jeou accepted that the abolition of the death penalty was "a world wide trend," but cited a recent public opinion poll, showing strong support for the death penalty, as justification for a gradual reduction in the number of death sentences. However, President Ma said that he would not contemplate further reform until there was a public consensus in favour of abolition.

15/06/10, *Central News Agency – Taiwan*

[http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news\\_content.php?id=1288994&lang=eng\\_news&cate\\_img=49.jpg&cate\\_rss=news\\_Society](http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1288994&lang=eng_news&cate_img=49.jpg&cate_rss=news_Society)

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#### VIET NAM

##### **Vietnam considers axing firing squads**

Vietnam's legislature is set to consider replacing execution by firing squad with lethal injection. Most death sentences in Vietnam are handed down for drug trafficking and murder cases.

20/05/10, AFP

<http://www.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20100520-217421.html>

##### **Court commutes death sentence in public land fraud case**

Pham Thi Tuyet Lan, 52, had her death sentence, for an orchestrating an illegal property deal, commuted to 25 years imprisonment by HCM City People's Court.

23/06/10, Vietnam News <http://www.breakingnews.vn.com/news-court-commutes-death-sentence-in-public-land-fraud-case-21413.html>

#### WORLD DEVELOPMENTS

##### **USA:Utah firing squad death announced on Twitter**

Utah Attorney General, Mark Shurtleff, announced - via Twitter - the execution of convicted murderer, Ronnie Lee Gardner, by firing squad. Gardner opted for death by firing squad rather than lethal injection.

18/06/10, BBC News Online

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/us\\_and\\_canada/10348685.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/us_and_canada/10348685.stm)

##### **Over 1,000 executed every year for drugs: report**

The number of people executed for drug offences each year around the world very likely exceeds 1,000 according to the International Harm Reduction Association in its Global Overview 2010 report. China, Vietnam, Singapore and Malaysia were among those cited as the worst offenders.

17/05/10, AFP

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Europe/Over-1000-executed-every-year-for-drugs-Report/articleshow/5940296.cms>

##### **International drug crime measures 'lead to executions'**

Further coverage of the International Harm Reduction Association's report that shows the United Nations, the European Commission and individual states, including Britain, are flouting international human rights law by funding anti-drug crime measures that are inadvertently leading to the executions of offenders.

20/06/10, Guardian - UK

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jun/20/international-drug-crime-executions>

##### **IRAN: Iranian woman faces death by stoning**

Sakineh Mohamamadi e Ashtiani, a 43-year-old mother of two in the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz convicted of adultery has been sentenced to death by stoning. Infidelity is illegal in Iran, and usually punished with lashes and prison time. While the Iranian penal code allows for the death sentence in infidelity cases, execution by stoning is rare.

30/06/10, Jerusalem Post

<http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=180005>