

URGENT ACTION

RISK OF TORTURE AND EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION

A 20-year-old man, Manik, is at risk of torture and extrajudicial execution in Bangladesh after being arrested on 8 March 2011. He was showing his relatives the place where his elder brother was killed on 12 February 2011, allegedly by security forces.

On 7 February, Manik and his 25-year-old brother, Shahid, were both taken into custody by plain clothes men in a special police force, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) vehicle in Asholia, north of Dhaka, in central Bangladesh. Manik was released on the same day whereas Shahid was not. The family went to the police station to find out where he was, but the police denied that he had ever been in their custody.

At about 5am on 12 February, local people heard gun shots in the Bhashantek area of Dhaka. They saw Shahid's body being carried by the police and the, the RAB. Shahid's mother, a domestic worker, rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where she saw Shahid had already died from gun shots. The police claimed that Shahid was a top criminal and was killed in "gunfight" with the RAB. The family has rejected the police's claim and say that Shahid was in police custody at the time that he was shot.

The RAB warned the family to remain quiet about the incident. Because Manik is the only witness to his brother's arrest, he is under a lot of pressure from the police. Manik's second arrest, on 8 March, appears to be a ploy by the RAB to make the family comply with their demand. Manik is reported to have been beaten by the police at the time of his arrest on 8 March, but the details are not known.

Manik is currently detained in Dhaka Central Jail but he is likely to be transferred to the custody of the RAB where he will be at risk of torture and possible extrajudicial execution.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English or your own language:

- Urging that Manik is not subjected to torture by the Rapid Action Battalion or other police personnel;
- Urging that Manik is released immediately and unconditionally, unless he is charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- Urging that Manik and members of his family are not intimidated by the Rapid Action Battalion to keep quiet about the alleged extrajudicial execution of Shahid;
- Urging that a thorough, independent and impartial investigation is carried out into the death of Shahid, and any RAB or police personnel known to have committed extrajudicial execution, or other human rights violations against him, are brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 APRIL 2011 TO:

Home Secretary

Mr. Abdus Sobhan Sikder
Ministry of Home Affairs
Dhaka – 1000
Bangladesh
Fax: +88 02 7164 788
Email: sobhansikder@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Home Secretary

Home Minister

Advocate Shahara Khatun
Ministry of Home Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka – 1000
Bangladesh
Fax: +88 02 7169 667 or
+88 02 7171 611

Salutation: Dear Home Minister

And copies to:

Inspector General of Police
Hassan Mahmood Khandker
Police Headquarters
Pheonix Road
Dhaka – 1000
Bangladesh
Fax: +88 02 712 5840
Email: ig@police.gov.bd

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 7 February, when the two brothers were arrested, Manik, a taxi driver, was taking 500 taka (about £5) from their mother to give to Shahid who needed it. When Manik met Shahid in Asholia, north of Dhaka, and was about to give him the money, three men in plain clothes approached them. The two brothers tried to run away but the men stopped them. The men then forced them to enter a car. Manik saw a sign in the car which read "RAB-4".

The two brothers were then blindfolded and were told not to speak to each other. After about 10 hours, the men took Shahid away, telling Manik that Shahid would be released. The men then took Manik to a nearby police station and asked the police to file a criminal case against him. They then changed their mind and took Manik to a derelict area and told him to step out of the car and not to remove his blindfold. He was there until some passers-by helped him get home.

On hearing Manik's story, the family went to police station but police denied that Shahid was or had been in their custody. There was no news of Shahid's whereabouts until 12 February when local people heard gun shots in Bhashantek area of Dhaka at about 5am. They saw Shahid's body being carried by the police and the RAB. Shahid's mother, a domestic worker, rushed to hospital where she saw Shahid had already died from gun shots.

The RAB is a security force formed in 2004 from members of the Army and Police, with the special task of fighting criminality and terrorism. Its actions have led to more than 600 people killed since its inception. In most cases, victims have died in the custody of the RAB, but police authorities have routinely reported that the victims were killed during "crossfire", police "shoot-outs" or "gun-battles".

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