

23 April 2002

**Further information on UA 91/02 (ASA 13/003/2002, 26 March 2002) - Torture/
Fear for Safety**

**BANGLADESH Bahauddin Nasim (m)]Senior members of the Awami
Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir (m)]League - Bangladesh's main
opposition party**

Bahauddin Nasim is reportedly in ill-health due to torture and requires urgent examination by a medical board, but the government appears to be preventing this. Despite being a diabetic, Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir is also being denied medical attention and was the target of an attempted attack by a man armed with a knife in his cell at Dhaka Central Jail on 14 April.

On 24 March, Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir had testified before the High Court that he had been tortured. So far the authorities have reportedly failed to investigate his allegation of torture, or provide him with adequate medical care.

The High Court ordered the police on 3 April to disclose where, and under what legal authority, they had held Bahauddin Nasim for seven days on remand and in their custody. This was done in order "to ascertain whether the accused was subjected to any torture as alleged". The High Court also ordered that a new medical board should be set up to examine Bahauddin Nasim, as there were grounds to believe that a previous medical board may not have recorded or disclosed the details of the alleged torture to the court.

On 8 April 2002 a "stay order" was issued by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, following an appeal by the Attorney General on behalf of the government. The "stay order" prevents the High Court from carrying out its directive and Bahauddin Nasim's lawyers are seeking its withdrawal.

Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir has been charged with sedition for instigating government officials and employees to join a rally against the then Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government in 1996. Soon after the rally the then BNP government had to hand over its power to a caretaker government.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Bahauddin Nasim and Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir have been tortured in custody;
- urging the authorities to allow the prisoners to be examined by an independent and impartial medical body and given any medical care they may require;
- urging the government to protect the safety of Dr Mohiuddin Alamgir in Dhaka Central Jail and to launch an independent investigation into the attempted attack against him in Dhaka Central Jail on 14 April;
- reminding the government of its obligation under the Constitution of Bangladesh and provisions of the Torture Convention, to which Bangladesh is a party, to ensure that the High Court is able to investigate whether the prisoners have been tortured;
- urging the government to ensure that all information regarding the allegation of torture is provided to the court without further delay, and to ensure that alleged perpetrators of acts of torture are not afforded immunity from prosecution.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia
Office of the Prime Minister
Gona Bhaban
Sher-e Bangla Nagar
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegrams: Prime Minister Zia, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: + 880 2 811 3243
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Mr Altaf Hossain Chowdhury
Minister of Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat
Building 4
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegrams: Minister of Home Affairs Chowdhury, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: + 880 2 861 9667
Salutation: Dear Home Minister

Mr Muddabir Hossain Chowdhury
Inspector General of Police
Police Headquarters
Fulbaria
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegrams: Inspector General Chowdhury, Fulbaria, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: + 880 2 956 3362
Salutation: Dear Sir

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 4 June 2002.