

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 13/07/93

Distr: UA/SC

UA 216/93

Fear of imminent execution

2 July 1993

BANGLADESH: Munir HUSSAIN

Amnesty International is very concerned that the execution of Munir Hussain is imminent. Munir Hussain, aged about 34, convicted for murder and sentenced to death in 1990, has exhausted all legal mechanisms of appeal. If his appeal for clemency to the President is turned down, his execution will take place soon. No date has been announced yet, but the execution could be immediately after a public announcement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Munir Hussain, a wealthy manufacturer, was sentenced to death for murdering his wife Rima on 9 April 1989. He was arrested on the following day and sentenced to death by the District and Sessions Court in Dhaka on 21 May 1990. He is reported to have confessed to the crime. The court also sentenced his mistress, Hosne Ara Khuku, to death for abetting the murder.

The High Court Division of the Supreme Court on 5 July 1992 acquitted Hosne Ara Khuku, as the charge of abetting could not be proved, but confirmed Munir Hussain's death sentence.

A full bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court on 20 June 1993 upheld the death sentence. Munir Hussain appealed to the President for clemency.

The trial of Munir Hussain and Hosne Ara Khuku attracted extensive media coverage in Bangladesh, and women's groups in particular have demanded that Munir Hussain be hanged. It is not known if or to what extent the publicity generated by the case influenced the court's judgement.

Munir Hussain is currently in the death cell of Dhaka Central Jail. To Amnesty International's knowledge there have been no executions so far in 1993 in Bangladesh. In 1992 four people were executed, three of them for murder.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life, and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing your concern about the impending execution of Munir Hussain;
- urging the President to commute the death sentence of Munir Hussain under his powers to commute any sentence under Article 57 of the Constitution of Bangladesh;

- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of torture and as a violation of the right to life.

APPEALS TO:

President Abdur Rahman Biswas
Presidential Secretariat
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Telegrams: President Biswas, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Faxes: + 880 2 813 243

Salutation: Dear President

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS 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 13 August 1993.