

**BANGLADESH Kamal Ahmed Majumder (m), former MP**

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of opposition party Awami League politician and former member of parliament, Kamal Ahmed Majumder. According to Bangladeshi media reports, he was arrested at his home in Dhaka sometime between late night on Wednesday 21 August or in the early hours of Thursday 22 August. He is in danger of being tortured.

He was reportedly arrested by the police under section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Section 54 allows the police to detain people without a warrant of arrest.

Kamal Ahmed Majumder has not been charged but is being kept in detention for further questioning. Most instances of torture occur prior to suspects being charged. According to Amnesty International's information, almost all people arrested under Section 54 have been subjected to torture by the police. These prisoners have included several opposition Awami League politicians.

According to reports, police also went to the residences of other Awami League leaders to arrest them, but fearing arrest and possible torture, these politicians had gone into hiding.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Past governments in Bangladesh have all pursued a policy of harassment, intimidation and arrest of opposition politicians. Following October 2001 general elections in Bangladesh which were won by a Bangladesh National Party (BNP) led coalition which includes two Islamist parties, there have been sporadic waves of arrests members of the opposition party Awami League politicians on what appear to be politically motivated grounds.

Earlier this year, two senior members of the Awami League, Dr. Mohiuddin Alamgir and Bahauddin Nasim were subjected to torture after being arrested. Dr. Alamgir was arrested on 15 March 2002. When he was produced before the High Court nine days later he claimed that he had been beaten by three masked men with bamboo sticks and glass bottles filled with water while in police custody. He also claimed to have been beaten on his buttocks, feet and other muscular parts of his body. He was denied medicines required for his diabetes.

Bahauddin Nasim, a private secretary to the leader of the Awami League, was arrested on 28 February. While he was in custody Bahauddin Nasim says that he was tied up, hooded, severely beaten, and given electric shocks.

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

- expressing concern about the safety of Kamal Ahmed Majumder, seeking guarantees that he will not be subjected to torture or ill-treatment
- urging the authorities to ensure that Kamal Ahmad Majumder has access to a lawyer, members of his family and adequate medical attention;
- urging the authorities to investigate allegations of torture of other detainees, including other Awami League politicians, make the results of this investigation public, and bring those responsible to justice.
- Calling on the authorities to release Kamal Ahmad Majumder immediately and unconditionally, if he is not to be charged with a recognizable criminal offence.

**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**

**Email: pm@pmobd.org / psecretary@pmobd.org**

**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. Md. Lutfozzaman Babar  
Deputy Minister of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Bangladesh Secretariat  
Building 4  
Dhaka  
Bangladesh

**Telegrams: Deputy Minister of Home Affairs , Dhaka, Bangladesh**

**Fax: + 880 2 861 9667**

**Salutation: Dear Deputy 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 October 2002.