

URGENT ACTION

AUTHORITIES TOLD TO RESPOND ABOUT DETAINEES

Two student opposition activists in Bangladesh, Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah, are still missing after they were allegedly detained by security forces on 4 February. On 15 February a court ordered the government to respond by 7 March to allegations that the two men had been illegally detained.

Al Mukaddas (22) and **Mohammad Waliullah** (23), both members of the Islamic student organisation Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir, were allegedly detained by members of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), a specialised law enforcement agency, and the Detective Branch (DB) of the Bangladesh Police on 4 February. They have not been heard from since and their whereabouts are unknown. The RAB has denied detaining the two men in a statement to a Bangladeshi newspaper. However, reports from several sources and a pattern of disappearances thought to have been conducted by RAB in recent months cast doubt on RAB's denial. There are credible allegations that RAB is often involved in the abduction, torture and extrajudicial execution of suspected criminals.

So far the authorities appear to have taken no action to establish the whereabouts of Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah. The men remain at risk of torture and extrajudicial execution.

On 12 February, the families of Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah lodged petitions in the Dhaka High Court, calling for the government to produce them before the court. In response, on 15 February the court ordered the Bangladesh authorities, including the Secretary of the Home Ministry, the Inspector General of Police and the Director General of the RAB to respond by 7 March. In the past, the authorities have rarely responded to such court orders. Amnesty International notes with grave concern that to date the authorities have failed explain what they are doing to establish the two men's whereabouts.

Please write immediately in Bangla, English or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to act without delay to establish the whereabouts of Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah;
- Seeking assurances that Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah's physical safety will be protected and that they are not subjected to torture or other inhumane treatment should they be found to be in the custody of the authorities;
- If it is established that they are detained, calling on the authorities to release them unless they can bring recognizably criminal charges against them

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 APRIL 2012:

Home Secretary

Mr CQK Mushtaq Ahmed
Ministry of Home Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka 1000
Bangladesh

Fax: +880 2 716 4788

Salutation: Dear Home Secretary

Inspector General of Police

Mr Hasan Mahmud Khandker
Bangladesh Police HQ
Dhaka 1000

Bangladesh

Fax: +880 2 7125840

Email: ig@police.gov.bd

Salutation: Dear Inspector General

And copies to:

Director General of RAB

Mr Mohammad Mukhlesur Rahman
RAB Forces Headquarters,
Cargo Admin Building, Zia, Kurmitola,
Dhaka 1229
Bangladesh

Email: rab1bd@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Director General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 47/12. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA13/001/2012/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RAB is a special police force, created, to much public acclaim, to combat criminal gang activity throughout the country. But since its inception in 2004, RAB has been implicated in the unlawful killing of at least 700 people. At least 200 of these killings have occurred during the tenure of the current Awami League government, despite the Prime Minister's pledge to end extrajudicial executions. In some cases, RAB has not even explained how people, whom witnesses say were detained by RAB, were later found dead. For further information, see 'Crimes Unseen: Extrajudicial Executions in Bangladesh'.

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA13/005/2011/en/c18ad74b-75fe-4b15-b043-5982eebdb27d/asa130052011en.pdf>

Name: Al Mukaddas and Mohammad Waliullah

Gender m/f: Both male

Further information on UA: 47/12 Index: ASA 13/002/2012 Issue Date: 20 February 2012