

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

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**Death penalty**

**20 June 1995**

**SINGAPORE**

**Navarat Maykha (f), 32, Thai national, cook**

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Amnesty International is concerned that Navarat Maykha may soon be executed.

The 32-year-old Thai woman was sentenced to death in July 1994 for importing 3.2 kg of heroin into Singapore the previous year. Navarat's appeal against her conviction was rejected in October 1994. In February this year her lawyer submitted a petition for clemency to the President of Singapore. This is the final stage in capital cases in the island republic.

Navarat Maykha, an uneducated mother of two children, claims she was tricked into carrying drugs by a Nigerian acquaintance in Bangkok. He reportedly told her that he was in the garments business and persuaded her to carry what she believed was just a bag of clothes to Singapore. She was arrested at Changi Airport when officials discovered the drugs concealed inside the lining of the bag.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The death penalty was employed in Singapore during the colonial period and was retained after the country became an independent republic in August 1965.

Amnesty International is aware of at least 28 executions which have taken place since the beginning of 1995, the majority for drugs-related offences.

However, the organization fears that the real figure may be much higher as many executions are not publicized. According to the Ministry of Information, 76 people were executed in Singapore in 1994. The President has discretionary powers to commute death sentences, but clemency is rarely granted.

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 or degrading treatment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The organization is concerned that the death penalty is often imposed on those with fewer resources available for their defence, or whose social status has made them vulnerable to unfair conviction. The risk of error in applying the death penalty is inescapable, yet the penalty is irrevocable.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send faxes or telegrams either in English or in your own language:**

- urging the President to commute the death sentence passed on Navarat Maykha;
- expressing Amnesty International's opposition to the death penalty as the ultimate form of cruel punishment and a violation of the most basic of human rights, the right to life;
- urging that all existing and pending death sentences be commuted.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

The President

His Excellency Ong Teng Cheong

Office of the President

Istana, Orchard Road

Republic of Singapore 0922

**Telegrams: President Ong Teng Cheong, Singapore**

**Faxes: +65 738 4673**

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

The Prime Minister

The Honourable Goh Chok Tong  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Istana Annexe, Istana  
Republic of Singapore 0923

**Faxes: +65 732 4627**

**Telegrams: Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, Singapore**

Minister of Law

Professor Shanmugham Jayakumar  
Ministry of Law  
250 North Bridge Road  
Raffles City Tower 21-00  
Republic of Singapore 0617

**Faxes: +65 336 6165**

**Telegrams: Minister of Law, Singapore**

Minister of Home Affairs

Wong Kan Seng  
Phoenix Park  
Tanjong Road  
Republic of Singapore 1024

**Telexes: 34360**

**Telegrams: Minister of Home Affairs, Singapore**

and to diplomatic representatives of Singapore accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 August 1995.