

PUBLIC

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28 November 2008

Further Information on UA 276/08 (ASA 12/003/2008, 26 September 2008) Medical concern/Torture/Legal concern

BANGLADESH

Rang Lai Mro (m), Indigenous community leader

The authorities responsible for the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) have written to Amnesty International members, saying that they have noted the organization's concerns about Rang Lai Mro's health, and passed them on to the Inspector General of Prisons. However, despite the authorities' assurances that the Inspector General of Prisons has been asked to take "necessary action in this regard", Amnesty International has not been informed that Rang Lai Mro is receiving the medical attention he needs.

Rang Lai Mro is the head of a community of Indigenous Mro people in the CHT, in the south-east of the country, and is held in Chittagong District Jail. He was arrested in February 2007, charged with possessing a pistol without a license. Four months later he was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment for the offence, though his lawyers informed the court that his pistol was licensed.

After his arrest he was severely beaten by army officers in custody at the local army headquarters, Bandarban Cantonment. This torture has never been investigated. He had to be treated in Bandarban General Hospital, where doctors found he had suffered a heart attack. He was sent back to jail without appropriate medical treatment. In October 2007 his health further deteriorated, and he had to be treated in hospital, where doctors said he needed treatment in a hospital with better equipment, but he was once more sent back to jail, without any improvement in his health. He is at risk of a heart attack and deteriorating health.

The government has transferred over a dozen prisoners needing specialist attention to well-equipped hospitals so far this year, but Rang Lai Mro has not been one of them. Some of these prisoners have even been allowed to go abroad for treatment.

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

calling on the Inspector General of Prisons to ensure that Rang Lai Mro receives all necessary treatment for his serious heart condition immediately.

APPEALS TO:

Brigadier General Zakir Hassan
Inspector General of Prisons (IG Prisons)
Office of the Inspector General of Prisons
Nazimuddin Road, Dhaka,
Bangladesh

Fax: +88 02 7300333

Salutation: Dear Brigadier General Zakir Hassan

COPIES TO:

Major Gen (ret.) MA Matin
Adviser
The Ministry of Home Affairs
The Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka-1000
BANGLADESH
Fax: +88-02-7160405, +88-02-7164788
Email: info@pmo.gov.bd
Salutation: Dear Adviser

Raja Debashish Roy
Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser on Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs
Building No. 4, 6th Floor
Bangladesh Secretariat
Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh
Email: devasish59@yahoo.com
Salutation: Dear Mr Roy

and 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 9 January 2009.