

URGENT ACTION

OPPOSITION ACTIVIST ABDUCTED IN BANGLADESH

Bangladeshi opposition activist Anwarul Islam Masum was allegedly abducted by police officers on 4 April. The police deny it. His family have looked for him at local police stations without success. He is at risk of torture or extrajudicial execution.

Anwarul Islam Masum is a university student and Rajshahi City Office Secretary of Bangladesh Islami Chhatra Shibir (BICS), the student wing of the opposition political party Jamaat-e-Islami. According to members of his family, in the early hours of 4 April, 30-40 officers from the Bangladesh Police and the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), a special police force implicated in hundreds of killings, raided Anwarul Islam Masum's home in Rajshahi and abducted him. Family members told Amnesty International they were not allowed to leave the house during the raid, so did not see where he was being taken. Neighbours told them they had seen the officers putting Anwarul Islam Masum inside a vehicle with RAB markings and take him away.

Anwarul Islam Masum was abducted a few days after violent clashes between supporters of BICS and police. According to local media, a number of protesters and several policemen were injured in the clashes. Bangladeshi TV stations showed people they said were BICS supporters singling out a policeman in the street, and beating him repeatedly until he collapsed.

Following the abduction, Anwarul Islam Masum's family went to look for him at the local police station. Police said they had no knowledge of him being detained. The family then tried to register a formal report of his abduction, but the police refused to do so. The family also visited the local RAB headquarters; RAB also denied that they had detained him. In response to a petition Anwarul Islam Masum's mother submitted in early June, the High 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 explain within three weeks why Anwarul Islam Masum could not be produced before the court.

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

- Calling on the authorities to launch an immediate investigation into the alleged abduction of Anwarul Islam Masum, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that Anwarul Islam Masum will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated should he be found to be in the custody of the authorities;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that, if it is established that Anwarul Islam Masum is detained by the authorities, that he be released unless he is charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 JULY 2013 TO:

Minister of Home Affairs
Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir
Ministry of Home Affairs
H-16, R-25, B-A, Banani
Dhaka-1213, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 7164788 (keep trying)
Email: mkalamgir@yahoo.com
minister@mha.gov.bd
Salutation: Dear Home Minister

Inspector General of Police
Mr Hassan Mahmud Khandker
Bangladesh Police HQ
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 7125840
Email: ig@police.gov.bd
Salutation: Dear Inspector General

And copies to:

Prime Minister
Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister's Office
Old Sangsad Bhaban
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 811 3244
Email: pm@pmo.gov.bd
ps1topm@pmo.gov.bd
psecy@pmo.gov.bd

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Reports of enforced disappearances have frequently surfaced in the Bangladeshi media in recent years. Bangladeshi human rights organizations have investigated and reported on dozens of such cases. In 2012 alone, Amnesty International received credible allegations that at least 10 people had been subjected to enforced disappearance.

Most abductions are carried out by people in civilian clothes who tell witnesses they are from the security forces. Nothing is then heard about the people abducted, who have all so far been men. In some cases, usually when there was no witness to the abduction, the body of the victim is found some distance from where he was abducted.

Most of those abducted appear to be members of opposition parties, but people with no political affiliation have also been abducted. The pattern of official responses appears to reinforce families' suspicions that police have been responsible for the abductions. Police have denied that they have been involved but they have also persistently failed to disclose what they have done to establish what has happened, and who was responsible for the abductions. There has been no news of a credible investigation by the police into any enforced disappearance.

For example, trade union leader Aminul Islam went missing on 4 April 2012. He was found dead a day later in Ghatail town, north of Dhaka. His family saw evidence of torture on his body and believe he had been abducted by the security forces. He had previously been arrested and beaten by members of the National Security Intelligence for his trade union activities.

Amnesty International has also issued an Urgent Action in response to a similar recent case. On 12 April Nazrul Islam, Joypurhat district secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami, was allegedly abducted from his home in Saheb Parha in Joypurhat district, northern Bangladesh. His abductors identified themselves to Nazrul Islam's family as being "from the administration". He has not been seen or heard from since. There are fears he has been taken to an unknown location and is at risk of torture and extrajudicial execution. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA13/008/2013/en>

Name: Anwarul Islam Masum

Gender m/f: M

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