

# URGENT ACTION

## PROMINENT OPPOSITION LEADER EXECUTED

**Muhammed Kamaruzzaman, a prominent leader of the opposition party Jamaat-e-Islami, was executed in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 11 April after the Supreme Court rejected his review petition on 6 April. He refused to seek clemency from Bangladesh's President.**

On 9 May 2013, Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) found **Muhammed Kamaruzzaman** guilty of five of the seven charges against him. The ICT is a Bangladeshi court trying people accused of crimes committed during Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence. The ICT sentenced Muhammed Kamaruzzaman to death on two of the charges (one for murder, another for mass killing) and to periods of imprisonment on the other charges.

Bangladeshi civil society, Amnesty International and other international bodies have welcomed the government's move to end the longstanding impunity in Bangladesh for serious human rights violations in 1971. However, most observers including Amnesty International expressed concern over how the proceedings before the ICT violated international fair trial standards. There were also irregularities in the proceedings, for instance, the court did not allow the defence to challenge the credibility of prosecution witnesses.

Following Muhammed Kamaruzzaman's appeal, the Supreme Court changed one death sentence to life imprisonment in November 2014 as it did not find the punishment proportionate to the crime and upheld the death sentence relating to a mass killing. Muhammed Kamaruzzaman filed a review petition before the Supreme Court on 5 March 2015. This review petition, which would have allowed him an additional scrutiny of his death sentence by the same bench of judges, was rejected on 6 April. This ruling opened the door for his execution.

Muhammed Kamaruzzaman was executed just after 10pm on Saturday 11 April in Dhaka Central Jail. Twenty one members of his family, including his wife and son, visited him in prison on Saturday afternoon.

Kamaruzzaman is the second war crimes suspect in Bangladesh to be executed. Five other Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have been sentenced to death by the ICT, and their appeals are being heard in the Supreme Court.

There have been 43 executions in Bangladesh since 2005. As of today, 140 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the individual; or the method used by the state to carry out the execution.

**No further action is required. Many thanks to all those who sent appeals.**

This is the second update of UA: 283/14. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA13/1407/2015/en/>

Name: Muhammed Kamaruzzaman

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 283/14 Index: ASA 13/1513/2015 Issue Date: 24 April 2015

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