

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Imminent execution

31 May 1995

SINGAPORE

Jahabar Bagurudeen, aged 25, shop assistant  
Ismail Bin Sumali

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Amnesty International has learned that Jahabar Bagurudeen, an Indian national, is scheduled to be hanged on 2 June 1995. Ismail Bin Sumali, a Singaporean national, is believed to face execution on the same day.

Jahabar Bagurudeen was convicted by the High Court in July 1994 for a murder committed in October 1993. He lost his appeal on 24 October 1994. A petition for clemency was submitted to the President of Singapore on 31 May 1995 to allow the consideration of forensic evidence not fully considered at trial.

This evidence suggests that the victim's death may have been accelerated by high levels of alcohol and morphine in the bloodstream, and that the charge against Jahabar Bagurudeen should therefore be reduced to culpable homicide not amounting to murder. This is not a capital crime.

Ismail Bin Sumali was convicted of trafficking in 29.63 grams of diamorphine under Singapore's strict anti-drug laws. He also submitted a petition for clemency on 31 May on the grounds that the drugs were meant for his own consumption.

#### 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 22 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 who have less skilled lawyers to defend them, 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 telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:**

- urging the President to commute the death sentences passed on Jahabar Bagurudeen and Ismail Bin Sumali;
- expressing Amnesty International's unconditional 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**

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**

and to diplomatic representatives of Singapore accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**