

URGENT ACTION

BANGLADESHI JOURNALIST RELEASED

Shafik Rehman, an 81-year-old Bangladeshi journalist who was arrested on 16 April, has been granted bail by the Supreme Court. He was released from prison on 6 September after spending more than four months detained without charge.

Shafik Rehman is a well-respected journalist who is currently the editor of the monthly *Mouchake Dhil* magazine. He is a known supporter of the main opposition party, the Bangladesh National Party, and has been targeted by the authorities for his journalistic work several times in the past.

Shafik Rehman was arrested on 16 April, suspected of being involved in a plot to kidnap and assassinate Sajib Wazed Joy, the son of Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. After a period on remand, Shafik Rehman was sent to Kashimpur Central Jail on 27 April, where he was kept in solitary confinement and denied adequate medical care, despite suffering from diabetes and a heart condition. Shafik Rehman was on 22 May moved to Dhaka Central Jail where he was no longer kept in solitary confinement. He was granted improved, but not adequate, medical care and regular access to his family and lawyers.

Although Shafik Rehman was held for more than four months since his arrest, he has not been charged with any crime. Under international law, authorities have a duty to inform him of the case against him, and either promptly charge or release him. His bail plea was rejected three times, until the Bangladesh Supreme Court granted him bail on 31 August. His bail will expire after three months and he is not allowed to leave the country during this period. He was released from prison on 6 September.

Amnesty International will continue to monitor the case and re-open the action if necessary.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the third update of UA 120/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4691/2016/en/>

Further information on UA: 120/16 Index: ASA 13/4775/2016 Issue Date 6 September 2016

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