

forces during an operation to disperse peaceful gatherings and deaths in police custody as a result of lack of medical care. The government replied to several communications sent by the Special Rapporteur during 1996, stating: the person alleged to have died in a military hospital some hours after being shot by security forces had in fact died in a private hospital as a result of a heart attack which occurred at home, and the security forces had no connection with her death; the death was not the result of injuries inflicted by security forces when they intervened in a peaceful demonstration but rather of an epileptic seizure following a known history of epilepsy and, further, the person named had not participated in a demonstration in Daih.

Independence of judges and lawyers, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1998/39, paras. 17, 19, 33–34)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) noted that the government requested clarification on the passage in his report to the 1997 Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/1997/32, para. 76) which expressed concern that “the trials before the State Security Court violate article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights owing to the apparent lack of due process in the Court”. The SR informed the government that serious allegations had been received concerning the lack of due process within the State Security Court. The information asserted that: defendants are not allowed access to legal counsel until they are brought to the State Security Court; defence lawyers do not have access to court documents, nor do they have adequate time to prepare a defence for their clients; defence lawyers are given limited access to their clients during the trials before the State Security Court; and the sessions before the Court are held in camera. The SR also noted that article 7 of the Criminal Security Court Law provides that the verdict passed by the court is final and no provision is made for appeal unless the verdict has been passed in the absence of the accused, in which case there is an appeal procedure in place. The information also asserted that, of the three State Security Courts, two are presided over by members of the Al-Khalifa family which governs Bahrain. The SR acknowledged that the State Security Court Law does in fact provide for procedural guarantees that address the allegations contained in the communications sent to the government; however, he stated that the allegations concerning specific cases referred to procedural guarantees which were not followed by the State Security Court.

Racism and racial discrimination, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/79, paras. 38)

The report refers to information received from a non-governmental organization concerning acts of discrimination and xenophobia, mostly encouraged by legislation which discriminates against Shiites in the country. The Shiites are reportedly excluded from all positions of importance in the state, and account for only 23 per cent of the best-paid civil servants. Shiite students are said to be kept out of the university, even when they have passed the necessary examinations.

Torture, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/38, paras. 25; E/CN.4/1998/38/Add.1, paras. 21–24)

One individual case and three urgent appeals were sent to the government, which responded to the urgent appeals. The urgent appeals related to arrests, followed by incommunicado detention and beatings during interrogation. The government denied the allegations of mistreatment and reported that, in one case, the person concerned had been released on bail. The case involved the arrest of an individual and his interrogation by two named officers at the Adlya Criminal Investigation Department about his alleged involvement in political activities. During the interrogation, the person was reportedly suspended by the hands, punched in the stomach, subjected to *falaqa* (beatings on the soles of the feet) and threatened with electric shocks and the extraction of fingernails. The information received also indicated that the man and four other detainees were kept in a toilet during a visit by the ICRC and not let out until the delegation had left.

Violence against women, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1998/54, Section II.D)

In the section dealing with custodial violence against women, the report refers to the arrest and incommunicado detention of eight women, with the associated risk of torture. The report notes that this was possibly in connection with their public demands for the release of political prisoners. Two of the detained women were married to political prisoners.



BANGLADESH

Date of admission to UN: 17 September 1974.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Land and People: Bangladesh has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 5 October 1998.

Declarations: Articles 1, 2, 7, 8, 10 and 13.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 11 June 1979.

Bangladesh's seventh through 10th periodic reports were due 11 July 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 respectively.

Discrimination against Women

Acceded: 6 November 1984.

Bangladesh's fifth periodic report is due 6 December 2001.

Reservations and Declarations: Article 2 and paragraph (1) (c) of article 16.