



*Committee on International Freedom of Scientists
of the American Physical Society
One Physics Ellipse, College Park, Maryland 20740, USA*

14 January 2008

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed, Chief Advisor
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Tejgaon, Dhaka
Bangladesh

CIFS 2008

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Via facsimile: 880-2-811-3244 & - 3243

Dear Dr. Ahmed,

In November of last year, the Committee on International Freedom of Scientists (CIFS) of the American Physical Society (APS) wrote to you concerning twelve professors from the University of Dhaka and Rajshahi University who had been arrested in August and September. APS is the largest organization of physicists in the United States with a large international membership. The Society is independent of any government. CIFS is charged by APS with monitoring the human rights of scientists throughout the world, including the United States, and assisting those in need.

Since our last letter we have learned that eight professors at Rajshahi University have been acquitted or pardoned and are back to their positions. However, four professors from the University of Dhaka are still in prison. We understand that their arrests are in connection with student protests in August, some of which resulted in violence.

CIFS is concerned about the rights and safety of the four professors, including a fellow physicist, who remain detained. We are troubled by the detention of the following scientists from the University of Dhaka:

- **Neem Chandra Bhowmick**, Chairman, Department of Applied Physics, Electronics and Communication Engineering
- **Anwar Hossain**, Dean, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- **Harunor-Rashid**, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science
- **Sadrul Amin**, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Department of English

Our worry that their rights may be at risk stems from reports in the international press that the professors—who were actually trying to serve as mediators between student protestors and the police—have not been formally charged with any crimes. Yet, they remain in detention after all of this time. In addition, there are reports that some of

them have been denied access to lawyers, their families, and medical care for extended periods of time. This makes us concerned for their safety.

CIFS requests information regarding the nature of the detention of the professors and we urge Bangladeshi authorities to either charge them or release them immediately and unconditionally.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. The allegations of denial of access to lawyers, medical care and family members are extremely troublesome. We are confident that you take these allegations seriously and will investigate them fully.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pavel Podvig". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Pavel Podvig
CIFS Chair 2008

Cc: His Excellency M. Humayun Kabir, Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
to the United States
General Moeen U Ahmed, Chief of Staff, Bangladesh Army