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Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

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27 July 2006

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Bangladesh: Membership documents issued by the Awami League (and its student and youth wings) to its members
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

The Constitution of the Bangladesh Awami League states that Bangladesh citizens aged 18 years and older are entitled to become members of the Awami League (AL) (Bangladesh Awami League n.d.). To become a member, a candidate must sign a declaration and pay a three-year subscription of five taka [approximately CAN \$0.08 (XE.com 6 July 2006)] (Bangladesh Awami League n.d.).

According to the Constitution, there are two types of memberships: primary and full. Primary (temporary) memberships are usually issued to new members and last one year (ibid.). Primary members automatically become full members after one year unless there are complaints against them (ibid.). Full memberships last three years and are renewable upon receipt of the appropriate form and a five-taka subscription fee (ibid.).

In 16 July 2006 correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the High Commission of Canada in Dhaka, Bangladesh stated that the High Commission contacted the Bangladesh Awami League's central office in Dhanmondi, Dhaka and confirmed that the AL issues cards to its members (Canada 16 July 2006).

According to information obtained by the High Commission, AL membership cards are issued by the AL central office, which sends them to AL district offices for distribution to individual members (ibid.). The AL youth and student wings reportedly issue their own membership cards to members through a similar distribution system from their respective central offices in Dhaka to their district offices (ibid.). Sources identify the AL student wing as the Chhatra League (Bangladesh Awami League 25 April 2006; UNB 14 May 2006) and the AL youth wing as the Jubo [or "Juba"] League (Bangladesh Awami League 25 June 2006; *Hindustan Times* 30 May 2006; UNB 28 June 2006).

The official at the High Commission of Canada in Dhaka also noted that, according to the AL central office, AL membership cards are always signed by two people: the secretary of the central office in Dhaka and the secretary or president of the relevant district office (Canada 16 July 2006).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

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Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: Bangladesh Awami League; Bangladesh Human Rights Networks; European Country of Origin Information (ECOI) Network; United Kingdom (UK) Home Office; United States Department of State.

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