

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

BGD 001 / 0813 / OBS 074

Arbitrary arrest

Bangladesh

August 10, 2013

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in **Bangladesh**.

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources of the arbitrary arrest of Mr. **Adilur Rahman Khan**, Secretary of Odhikar, a member of OMCT General Assembly and Executive Committee Member of Forum Asia, at his Gulshan residence, in Dhaka.

According to the information received, on August 10, 2013, at 10.20 pm, Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan was arrested by eight or nine detectives of the Detective Branch of Police (DB) as he was returning home with his family. The detectives, who brought a white microbus apparently belonging to the United Commercial Bank and a blue and silver coloured mitsubishi pajero, asked Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan to follow them. Reportedly, Mr. Rahman Khan was brought to the headquarters of the police DB in Dhaka.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police subsequently confirmed the arrest to the media, adding that Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan has been arrested under the Information and Communication Technology Act. The arrest was allegedly made on the basis of a general diary filed by the police with Gulshan Police Station, in relation to the report prepared by Odhikar about the killing of 61 people during an operation carried out on May 5, 2013 by law enforcement agencies against Hifazat-e Islam activists at the Dhaka's downtown Motijheel area. Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan has also been the Deputy Attorney General during the erstwhile four-party alliance government.

The Observatory expresses its deepest concern about Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan's arbitrary arrest, which seem to merely aim at sanctioning his peaceful human rights activities, and calls upon the authorities in Bangladesh to guarantee in all circumstances his physical and psychological integrity as well as to release him immediately and unconditionally.

Action requested:

Please write to the authorities in Bangladesh, urging them to:

- i. Guarantee, in all circumstances, the physical and psychological integrity of Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan and of all human rights defenders in Bangladesh;
- ii. Release Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan immediately and unconditionally as his detention is arbitrary since it only aims at sanctioning his human rights activities;
- iii. Put an end to any kind of harassment - including at the judicial level - against Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan and all human rights defenders in Bangladesh;
- iv. Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1998, especially:
 - its Article 1, which states that "everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels", as well as

- its Article 12.2, which provides that the State shall “take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of his or her rights”;

v. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Bangladesh.

Addresses:

- Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Gona Bhaban, Old Sangsad Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Fax: +880 2 8113243, Email: info@pmo.gov.bd
- Mr. Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, Minister for Home Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat Building 4, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Email: mksalamgir@yahoo.com; minister@mha.gov.bd;
- Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Email: info@minlaw.gov.bd
- Mr. Hasan Mahmud Khandaker, Inspector General of Police, Police Headquarters, Phoenix Road, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh, Email : ig@police.gov.bd
- H.E. Mr. Abdul Hannan, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations in Geneva, 65 rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41 22 738 46 16, E-mail: mission.bangladesh@ties.itu.int
- Embassy of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh in Brussels, 29-31 rue J. Jordaens, 1000 Brussels, Belgium, Fax: +32 2 646 59 98; Email: bdootbrussels@fregates.be

Please also write to the diplomatic missions or embassies of Bangladesh in your respective country as well as to the EU diplomatic missions or embassies in Bangladesh.

Geneva-Paris, August 10, 2013

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, an OMCT and FIDH venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org
- Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29
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