FORUM-ASIA Urgent Alert

Bangladesh: Arbitrary Arrest of Human Rights Defender, Adilur Rahman Khan, Secretary of Odhikar and Executive Committee Member of FORUM-ASIA

The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) received information of the arbitrary arrest and harassment of Adilur Rahman Khan, prominent human rights defender and Secretary of local human rights organization Odhikar. As the Executive Committee member of FORUM-ASIA and partner of various international human rights NGOs, he is renowned in international human rights circles.

Background:

According to reports provided by Odhikar, Adilur Rahman Khan, was picked up at his house in Gulshan, Dhaka on 10 August 2013 at 10:20pm by 8 to 9 men in plain clothes identifying themselves as belonging to the Detective Branch of Police. Adilur Rahman Khan was returning home from a relative's house with his wife and children. When he reached his house and came out of his car, the men surrounded him and requested him to come with them. No warrant of arrest was shown and the men denied giving any information.

Despite repeated requests, Adilur Rahman Khan’s family members, colleagues and lawyers were denied any information regarding his whereabouts. Meanwhile, the media reported that around 12pm midnight that he has been held in police custody under the Information and Communication Technology Act for the publication of a fact-finding mission on the 61 people allegedly killed by Bangladeshi security forces on 5 May 2013. On 11 August at around 4pm, Adilur Rahman Khan was produced in court and the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court remanded him to five days in custody.

FORUM-ASIA is deeply concerned about the physical and psychological integrity of Adilur Rahman Khan as he faces particular vulnerability and risk of further harassment in this extended period of custody.

We call on the authorities in Bangladesh to:

• Guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of Adilur Rahman Khan while in extended period of custody;
• Immediately release Adilur Rahman Khan and end all harassment meted out to him through the law enforcement and judicial agencies.

Suggested Action:

We encourage fellow human rights defenders to call for the immediate release of Adilur Rahman Khan by sending a copy of your letters to the officials below and to the Bangladeshi Embassy in your respective country and kindly inform us of any action undertaken:

H.E. Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister
Office of the Prime Minister
Gona Bhaban, Old Sangsad Bhaban, Tejgaon
Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 8113243
Email: info@pmo.gov.bd
H.E. Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir  
Minister for Home Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs, Bangladesh  
Secretariat Building 4  
Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Email: mkalamgir@yahoo.com; minister@mha.gov.bd

H.E. Dr. Dipu Moni  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Shegunbagicha  
Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Fax: 9562188 & 7171433  
Email: fm@mofa.gov.bd; dr.dipumoni@gmail.com; shanchitahaque@yahoo.com

H.E 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

Dr. Mizanur Rahman  
Chairperson  
National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh  
GulFeshan Plaza (11th Floor)  
8, Sohid Sangbadik Saleena Parvin Sorok, Mogbazar  
Dhaka - 1217, Bangladesh  
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