

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
Promoting human rights by protecting those who defend them

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Friday July 21st, 2017

H. E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

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Md. Shahriar Alam, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh.

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Dear Prime Minister Ms. Sheikh Hasina and Md. Shahriar Alam, State Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Bangladesh,

**Re. the denial of entry into Malaysia; detention by immigration officers; release and
subsequent deportation of Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan on July 20th, 2017.**

Lawyers Rights Watch Canada (LRWC) is gravely concerned about the arbitrary denial of
entry, detention and deportation of human rights activist and Secretary of leading
Bangladesh human rights organisation Odhikar, Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan on July 20th, 2017.

Background

According to information received, on July 20th, 2017, at about 4.00 am, Mr. Adilur Rahman
Khan was denied entry into Malaysia and detained by immigration officers upon his arrival
in Kuala Lumpur International Airport. Mr. Khan had come to attend the National
Conference on Death Penalty organised by the Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN)
from July 21 to 22, 2017.

Subsequently, at around 8 pm, Mr. Khan was deported back to Bangladesh after being
detained for more than 14 hours by Malaysian Immigration at Kuala Lumpur International
Airport.

At no time during his detention was he given access to a lawyer, nor a clear reason for his
detention. It is only around the end of this detention that he could meet with
representatives of the National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM).

ADPAN, the organizers of the conference, said that Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan was the only
foreign participant not allowed into the country.

This action by the Malaysian authorities was immediately and strongly condemned by
international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, the Observatory for

the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a partnership of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and FIDH.

Mr. Khan is an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, a former Deputy Attorney General for Bangladesh and a founder of the human rights organisation Odhikar. He is also a recipient of the May 18 Foundation Gwangju Prize for Human Rights and the International Bar Association (IBA) Human Rights Award. He has been a finalist for both the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders and the Front Line Defenders Award.

The detention of Mr. Khan now appears to be part of a trend of the Government of Malaysia to prevent discourse on human rights and democracy in Malaysia. Since 2015, several activists have been blocked from entering the country, including Indonesian human rights activist Mugiyanto Sipin, Hong Kong student activist Joshua Wong and Singapore activist Han Hui Hui.

LRWC strongly condemns Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan's arbitrary arrest, detention and subsequent deportation, and calls upon the Malaysian authorities to guarantee in all circumstances the freedoms of movement, peaceful assembly and association of all human rights defenders in Malaysia.

Significantly, Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan has been the subject of relentless acts of harassment over the past several years. We are deeply concerned that the detention of Mr. Khan may be the result of collusion between governments in Bangladesh and Malaysia. LRWC is further concerned that he may face additional harassment subsequent to his arrival in Dhaka.

Recommendations

LRWC calls upon the Government of Bangladesh to

- (i) Guarantee in all circumstances the freedoms of movement, peaceful assembly and association of Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan, as well as of all human rights defenders in Bangladesh;
- (ii) Refrain from any kind of harassment against Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan as well as all human rights defenders in Bangladesh, and ensure that they are able to carry out their legitimate activities without any hindrance and fear of reprisals;
- (iii) 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 Articles 1 and 12.2;
- (iv) Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by Bangladesh.

Sincerely,



Siobhán Airey, LRWC Director

Copied to:

Mr. Asaduzzaman Khan, State Minister for Home Affairs of Bangladesh.

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