



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT
Odhikar

2005

Odhikar at a glance

Organisational Profile

Odhikar is a human rights organisation in Bangladesh that was founded in 1994 and registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau in March 1995. The principal objectives of the organization are to raise the awareness of human rights and its various abuses, on the one hand and to create a vibrant democratic system through election monitoring on the other. The organization also carries out policy advocacy to address the current human rights situation. It has a network of human rights defenders all over the country.

One of the broader missions of Odhikar is election monitoring. Over the years, Odhikar has established itself as one of the credible and reliable organizations in Bangladesh on monitoring of elections, both national and local. Internationally it has earned reputation and has established relationship with regional election and democracy campaign organizations. Odhikar especially focuses on abuses committed by law enforcement agencies (in prisons, police stations etc.) and those affecting vulnerable groups, ethnic and religious minorities and women and children. It actively campaigns for more effective monitoring in all sections of governance where inefficient practice can lead to the violation of human rights. In doing so, it is hoped that a more transparent and accountable system can be achieved, leading to an active democracy in which all sections of society can freely participate.

Objectives

- Promotion of human rights;
- Advocacy for incorporation and ratification of various international instruments by the government;
- Documentation and fact-finding of human rights abuses which includes custodial death, rape, torture, political repression and also repression of women, i.e. death/ torture due to non-payment of dowry, acid throwing etc.;
- Promotion of human rights education and literacy;
- Fostering mass awareness on rights and duties;
- Mobilise and network with its members to enhance institutional capabilities of individual groups, organisations and agencies on human rights issues;
- Campaign and monitor for a free and fair electoral process to ensure voters rights;
- Organising seminars, workshops and symposiums on various human rights and related issues and attend such programmes organised by others.

Activity Profile

Odhikar's activities primarily focus on civil and political rights. These include: in depth fact-finding and dissemination of information in regard to human rights violations; local, national and international election monitoring; launching media campaigns to raise awareness; monitoring police stations; observing local and national government activities in specific areas so as to monitor any abuses; training human rights defenders; lobbying and advocacy through local and regional networks; organising seminars and workshops to discuss prevalent issues and raise awareness of them.

In 2005 Odhikar carried out 31 fact-finding programmes and 14 follow up fact-finding missions on instances of human rights violations perpetrated by law enforcing agencies. Odhikar uses its direct

approach as a means to intervene and educate others about the abuses that are taking place in our society today.

Networking profile

Odhikar is member of the following organisations:

- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum Asia), Thailand
- Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), Thailand
- International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), Japan
- International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Geneva-Switzerland
- International Federation for Human Rights – FIDH, France
- World Organization Against Torture (OMCT), Switzerland
- Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), USA
- South Asian Network against Torture and Impunity (SANTI)

At a national level, Odhikar works with key human rights and social development organisations on specific issue based agenda.

List of Executive Committee Members

The Members of the current Executive Committee of Odhikar are as follows:

Name	Profession	Gender	Function	Years on the board
Dr. Tasneem Siddiqui, President	Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka	F	a. She presides over all the meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Body. b. She advises and actively cooperates with the Director in implementing programs approved by Executive Committee. c. She asks Director to call Executive Committee meetings as and when felt necessary. d. She operates the Bank A/C of the organization jointly with the Treasurer and the Director.	2 Years

Name	Profession	Gender	Function	Years on the board
Dr. Tashmim Farhana Dipta, Vice-President	Physician	F	<p>a. She assists the President in performing her duties and functions and in absence of the President presides over the meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body.</p> <p>b. In case of President's inability to perform her constitutional obligations for some reason or in case of President's absence from the country for more than twelve weeks she performs all other functions of the President assigned by the rules and regulation of the organization.</p>	
Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan, Treasurer	Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh	M	<p>a. He jointly with the President and Director operates the Bank Accounts of the organization. He manages and support accounts and expenditures according to decisions taken by the Executive Committee.</p> <p>b. He provides all necessary support to and cooperates with the Director in implementing the decisions of the Executive Committee.</p>	
Mr. A.F. Hassan Ariff, Member	Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh	M	They attend the meetings of the Executive Committee and General Body and take active part in discussions and making decisions. They also cooperate with and provide necessary support to the Director in implementing decisions of the Executive Committee and running the programs/projects properly.	
Dr. C. R. Abrar, Member	Professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka	M		

Project Summery 2005: with Donor Agencies/ Partners

In 2005 Odhikar implemented the following projects. Some projects began in 2003 and one will continue beyond 2005, as highlighted.

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Development Partner	Period	
			Commencement of the project	Completion of the project
01.	Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations Program	Academy for Educational Development (AED)	January 2003	December 2005
02.	Ratification of the Statute of International Criminal Court by Bangladesh: An Advocacy and Campaign Initiative Project	Department Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada	August 2004	August 2005

Donor Agencies

Following organisations provided financial support to Odhikar in 2005:

- Academy for Educational Development (AED) of the USAID
- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada

Odhikar Activities

Police station monitoring

Since 2003 Odhikar has been monitoring the Police Station under the project on ‘Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations’ funded by the Academy for Educational Development (AED). A team of fact-finders examine the use – and extent of abuse – of the three following laws: Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which allows police to arrest any person without a warrant on the grounds of “reasonable suspicion”, Section 86 and 100 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance (a law similar to Section 54) and the Special Powers Act of 1974, a repressive law against terrorism that has led to a disturbing accumulation of human rights violations. Fact-finders also observe the behaviour of police towards detainees and common people, and the overall condition of the police stations. Findings are used to raise awareness of police abuse of these laws, such as the arresting of innocent people to obtain bribe money and, if this is not given, the subsequent torture arrestees sometimes face.

Fact-finding

Odhikar’s team of fact-finders are mainly concerned with human rights violations that occur at the hands of law enforcement agencies such as acts of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and abuse of laws that lead to a violation of human rights. As a basis for their fact-finding,

they scour twelve Bengali and English newspapers daily and act upon news stories in this area by making further enquiries to ascertain the extent of abuse, cause, and persons responsible. Whereas newspapers merely report incidents, Odhikar's fact-finders examine the cases from a socio-legal perspective to raise awareness of the trend in human rights violations by law enforcing agencies. In 2003 – 2004 fact-finding missions were carried out on a total number of 58 cases. Reports are submitted for the purpose of documentation, publication in newspapers and for inclusion in human rights publications prepared by Odhikar.

Campaign for ratifying the Rome Statute

Odhikar has been campaigning for Bangladesh to ratify the final text of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The country has remained a signatory since 1999 and was the first south Asian country to sign the treaty. However, since then the government of Bangladesh has not prioritised ratification of the Rome Statute, despite much active campaigning by pressure groups, of which Odhikar is at the forefront.

In 2002 the International Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) signed an agreement with Odhikar's Director to co-ordinate advocacy and campaign activities towards ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute and ICC in Bangladesh. Odhikar has continued its role of actively raising awareness and educating others: it organised three workshops in 2004 in conjunction with FORUM-ASIA and the CICC (April) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada (November and December). In addition, Odhikar briefs political parties on the ICC for their support, creates newsletters, organises TV coverage and training seminars etc., as part of its campaign.

1. Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations Program

Under this project Odhikar raises awareness through the media, the printing and distribution of annual reports and planned discussion meetings and these are also the medium by which the information obtained on its fact-finding missions are disseminated and discussed. From 2003 to 2005, as part of the AED funded project, Odhikar organized three successful South Asian regional discussion meetings on pressing issues of human rights violations perpetrated by law enforcement agencies in the police stations and outside.

Project Goal:

To highlight the violation of civil and political rights through investigation and research and to monitor the activities of law enforcing agents in order to help contribute towards the movement for good governance.

Specific Objectives:

- Fact-finding missions on human rights abuses perpetrated by law enforcing agencies, including the abuse of specific laws, torture in remand and other forms of verbal and physical abuse, as reported in newspapers and through *Odhikar's* local networks.
- Monitoring 4 Police Stations every year, (4 Police Stations x 3 years =12 Police Stations), which includes the 6 Police Stations already monitored, as a follow-up programme, with regard to the use

of Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance (a law similar to S.54) and the Special Powers Act of 1974.

- Arranging a discussion meeting every year in order to highlight the findings of the investigations and create an awareness of the abuses for the policy makers and implementers. The meeting will invite representatives from concerned government agencies and ministries, member of parliament, major political party, media and civil society including other human rights organizations. Five prominent human rights activist and advocates from south and south-east Asia will be invited to participate in this meeting in order to formulate a comparative study of such police abuse in the region. There will be a separate topic for discussion every year, related to the project activities.

OUTCOMES PLANNED FROM THE OBJECTIVES:

- First hand detailed fact-finding reports
- Improvement in the behavior of the police towards arrested persons, as per the given Code of Conduct
- Awareness raising and advocacy to initiate change and to highlight police abuse and create pressure groups to advocate for a better police system.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

(a) Fact-finding:

One of the main activities under the project was the fact-finding missions of human rights abuses perpetrated particularly by law enforcement agencies. Torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, abuse of some specific laws causing human rights violations, repression against innocent people and application of unnecessary force by law enforcement agencies were the issues Odhikar attempted to bring to light through fact-finding.

For the fact-finding component of the project, Odhikar depended largely on incidents of human rights violations, which have been reported in the newspapers but needed further enquiry to find out the actual abuse faced by the victims, causes and the persons responsible who were mostly from the law enforcing agencies. While media focus on human rights violations are more from journalistic perspective confining within reporting the incident only, Odhikar fact-finding goes deep into the incidents from a socio-legal perspective. Odhikar also received information and help from its human rights defenders living in various parts of the country.

For the fact-finding component, no time frame could actually be determined. Among a number of incidents of police abuse reported in the newspapers, selective incidents were investigated. Nature of severity of harm caused, vulnerability of the victims particularly women and children, nature of abuse inflicted by perpetrators, location of incident, repercussion among the local people etc. were taken into consideration in determining the incidents to be investigated.

The following fact-findings were carried out during the year 2005:

February 2005

- i) Nabi Hossain was injured by Police bullets in Kishorganj
- ii) Two killed by Coastguards and Forest guards in Laskmipur

March 2005

- i) Young man tortured to death by Rapid Action Battalion (RAB)
- ii) Jugantor photojournalist physically harassed by RAB
- iii) Alleged fabricated news about the rape of a young girl by Ansar personnel
- iv) RAB personnel involved in robbery of Tk. 7.8 lakh from a cattle trader

April 2005

- i) Over one hundred workers wounded during police shootout at Savar EPZ
- ii) A child killed by the Indian Border Security Force in Comilla
- iii) Traders shot in Roumari
- iv) Two workers were killed by police in Majhir Ghat, Chittagong
- v) Police tortured a suspect of a murder case in Rajshahi

May 2005

- i) Youth killed in police custody in Homna, Comilla
- iii) Death of a worker in Gazipur
- iv) Death of a young prisoner in Narayanganj

June 2005

- i) Jubo league leader Sumon shot dead by RAB in Dhaka
- vi) Youth found dead in police custody at Brahmanbaria

July 2005

- i) A young businessman on his death-bed due to police torture in Rajshahi
- ii) Masum killed at crossfire by Detective Police
- iii) Death of a businessman caused by police beating in Dhaka
- iv) A youth injured due to RAB torture
- v) Allegation of rape of an indigenous woman by police in Rajshahi
- vi) Police torture of a businessman in Chittagong
- vii) An adolescent girl raped by police in Dhaka

August 2005

- i) Allegation of torture of two brothers in police custody in Rajshahi
- ii) Torture of a political activist by police in Rajshahi
- iii) Allegation against police of killing a political activist

September 2005

- i) Allegation of the involvement of a police officer behind the killing of a college student in Dhaka

October 2005

- i) Mysterious death of a person in police custody in Gaibandha
- ii) Five people killed by Companiganj police in Noakhali

November 2005

- i) Farmer Nando Mohan killed by police in Thakurgaon
- ii) Murder of two young men in Khulna

December 2005

- i) Death of an accused person in police custody in Dhaka
- ii) Indiscriminate police firing on a crowd in Kustia

The follow-up fact-findings that were carried out in 2005 are given below:

Follow-up fact-findings (from incidents that occurred in 2004)

- i) Killing of Piren Snal: Police tendency to avoid responsibility
- ii) Torture of civilians by joint forces in Jhenaidah
- iii) SP's bullet claims two people in Nandail, Mymensingh
- iv) A person tortured to death by RAB in Gazipur
- v) Two youth, trampled to death in Araihasar police station in Narayanganj

Follow-up of the previous fact-findings undertaken in 2005

- i) Young man tortured to death by RAB
- ii) Madrassa teacher tortured to death by RAB in Chittagong
- iii) Beating of journalist Khalil by Airport police and staff
- iv) Death of a person by police torture in Bogra
- v) RAB personnel involved in robbery of Tk 7.8 from a cattle trader in Dhaka
- vi) Harassment of a female jail guard by the DIG prison in Jessore
- vii) Death of a person in police custody in Shailakupa, Jheneidah
- viii) Anwarul Islam Ranju tortured to death by RAB in Kustia
- ix) Jobu league leader Sumon shot dead by RAB in Dhaka

Summary of fact-findings

- In fact-finding any incident of crime, Police sometimes commit excessed which leads to violation of civil rights.
- Police maintain close relations with criminals for receiving a share from the illegal businesses.
- Moral character of some police officers has been found very degraded which leads them to commit crime and deprive people of their rights.
- Local units of national political parties sometimes try to provide shelter to identified criminals.
- Police and criminals have a tendency to influence medical reports and to fabricate those in their favour to cover up their misdeeds.
- Local human rights activist and organizations are not always aware of violations of human rights by police. Their role is not always proactive in protecting victims of violations.
- Common people are conscious and they try to protest any violations of human rights by police.
- Enquiry of violations of rights by police officers is entrusted to other police officers which cannot ensure fair investigation and findings.
- Women and children are specifically vulnerable to police's brutal behaviour.
- Police is sometimes used by some influential people to harass other people.
- In some incidents, allegations against police were exaggerated and not supported by facts.

(b) Police Stations Monitoring

Torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, repression against the innocent people, use of unnecessary force and abuse of legal provision by the law enforcing agencies is a growing phenomenon in Bangladesh. Apparently, arbitrary arrest on the ground of "reasonable suspicion" under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.P.C.), Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance (DMP Ordinance) and the Special Powers Act of 1974 and torture by the police in custody have all turned into common incidents. The law enforcing agencies engaged in the practices of torture are entirely contrary to the universally accepted international human rights instruments like UDHR, ICCPR, CAT and also to the domestic legal provisions and constitutional bindings and guidance.

Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure

Under Section 54 (S54) of the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1898, individuals may be arrested under suspicion of criminal activity without any order from a magistrate or a warrant. According to the section, there are nine specific reasons for which the police may arrest someone under this law. These reasons (summarized from the original) are:

- If the person arrested has been concerned in any cognizable offence or if there has been credible information against him or the police have reasonable suspicion to think so;
- If the person has in his possession any implement of house breaking and cannot give a lawful excuse for doing do;
- If a person has been proclaimed under this or any other Code, or by Government Order, to be an offender;
- If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the person possesses stolen property;
- If the person obstructs a police officer on duty; or if he has or attempts to escape from lawful custody;
- If the person is a deserter from the armed forces of Bangladesh;
- If the person has been concerned in; or if there is credible information of his being so involved in; or there is reasonable suspicion that he concerned in committing any act abroad which would have been a punishable offence in Bangladesh (if committed in this country). He would be detained under custody in Bangladesh under the Fugitive Offenders Act 1881 or under extradition laws.
- If the person is a released convict, he can be arrested if he does not notify the sentencing judge of his change in address or absence from residence;
- If tee arrest of a specific person for a specific crime has been made by another police officer by requisition.

Some persons initially detained under Section 54 are subsequently charged with a crime, while others are released without charge. However, as can be seen, the term “reasonable suspicion” appears in several of the reasons under which a police officer can arrest a person under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Unfortunately, this term is one of the reasons why this section is so misused.

Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance

Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance echoes the provision of section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. However, Section 54 of Cr.P.C. is applied all over Bangladesh but Section 86 of DMP Ordinance is used for arrests in the Dhaka Metropolitan area only. It is also common for persons arrested under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, to find themselves later charged under the Special Powers Act 1974, a repressive law favoured by all the governments, or the Drugs Act or even the Explosives Act. This conversion occurs when a prayer or petition, for detention under these Acts, is submitted to the District Magistrate from the concerned police station, through the Superintendent of Police. The District Magistrate then issues a detention order and sends it for approval to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Special Powers Act 1974

The Special Powers Act of 1974 is deemed by human rights activists and other members of civil society as a repressive law. The use and abuse of this Act in the name of protecting the security of the State has resulted in a steady pattern of human rights violations. The Act provides 'special measures' for the prevention of pre judicial activities, for a speedy trial and punishment for grave offences. Under pre-judicial acts, the law includes acts that are pre judicial to:

- The sovereign and /or state; to the maintenance of friendly relations between other states and Bangladesh;
- To the security of Bangladesh;
- To the safety or maintenance of public order;
- To the peaceful coexistence among different classes and sections of the community;
- To the maintenance of law and order;
- To the security of any section of the public;
- To the economic and financial interests of the State.

There have also been cases where the police have arrested a person under S. 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and then included his name in a criminal case even though his name was not found in the First Information Report (FIR). Thereafter, the unfortunate detainee is charge sheeted.

Thus, both Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance allow police to arrest persons on ground of 'reasonable suspicion' without a warrant or the permission of a Magistrate.

Odhikar also found that, 'police remand' was being used as an excuse to physically torture detained persons. Corrupt police officers used 'remand' as a tool for collecting bribes from the arrested persons. *Odhikar* talked to several remand victims in monitored police stations. They alleged that the police tortured them inhumanly after taking them into remand and they were given no food during their detention under remand.

Who are detained under Section 54, Section 86 and the SPA?

Fact-findings carried out by *Odhikar* since January 2003 have shown that the large majority of persons arrested under Section 54 and Section 86 and under the SPA are from very poor economic backgrounds. They are either homeless persons, rickshaw pullers striving to make ends meet, small-scale vegetable and fruit vendors, street children, destitute women who, being abandoned by their husbands, turn to the streets to try and support their children and youths suspected as terrorists, extortionists and for rival political activities.

Furthermore, during times of unrest, for example, during *hartals*, children are arrested and put in police cells with adults and common criminals, which is in total contravention with the Jail Code and the Children's Act 1974.

One of the reasons why people are randomly arrested under S. 54 or S. 86 or the SPA is police corruption. *Odhikar* police station monitors have learnt of cases where persons had been arrested on the grounds that they could not comply with request of police officers for money and therefore, arrested under section 54 of the Cr.P.C.

One of Odhikar's main activities was following up 'fact finding' of police stations monitoring. Fact-finders carried out by *Odhikar* in cases of police arrest and torture revealed that the police, citing Section 54, had arrested most of the victims. Through the course of various fact-finding missions and investigations, *Odhikar* has learnt that there is a lack of proper and efficient implementation of the existing criminal laws. This is due to several factors: criminalization in the law enforcing agency, poverty and lack of awareness of legal rights. Such misuse of the law not only violates the human rights of the victims that fall under such malpractice, but also their families. The general public needs to be aware of the fact that such violations of the law occur and that immediate legal recourse needs to be taken as soon as the illegal arrest is learnt of.

From the experience of police station monitoring, it has become clear how Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Act and the Special Powers Act can be misused to inflict human rights abuses. Not only does the detainee suffer the loss of liberty; he also has to face humiliation and police torture. The phrase 'with reasonable suspicion' gives the green light to unscrupulous police to misuse and abuse these Sections and contravene all Constitutional guarantees of the rights to life, liberty and equality before the law.

Not much research has been carried regarding the application and implementation of Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Section 86 of the DMP Ordinance by the police. Since *Odhikar* is an organization which is mainly interested in monitoring the condition of the civil and political rights of the citizens of Bangladesh, it feels that there is a need for an in-depth investigation and research into the use and misuse of such laws in different police stations of the country. It believes that a continuous monitoring of various police stations in different areas of the country – both urban and rural- will help expose the misuse of law and highlight the human rights violations such misuse causes.

Methodology:

(i) Thana Monitoring:

In the year 2005, as per specified plan of action, Odhikar monitored Motijheel thana, Mohammadpur thana, Tejgaon thana under the Dhaka Metropolitan City and Fatulla thana under the Narayanganj district.

Odhikar's focus was to monitor the use of Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.P.C) and Section 86 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance. Each month, Odhikar fact-finding officers visited the four targeted police stations five to seven times, in order to monitor the number of people arrested under the said laws and the various reasons why police had picked them up.

Following information were collected during each visit of thana monitoring:

- Number of persons arrested including male, female and children
- Number of arrests under section 54 of Cr.P.C.
- Number of arrests under Section 86 of the DMP Ordinance
- Number of persons under remand
- Number of arrests under specific cases
- Number of arrests under Section 54 of the Cr.P.C. or Section 86 of the DMP Ordinance but subsequently shown arrested in other cases
- Number of arrests under Speedy Trial Act 2002
- Number of arrests under court warrant
- No. of arrested person kept in police custody for more than 24 hours if any
- Living environment and hygiene condition in police custody

- Quality of information records/registrar's maintenance in police stations
- Special treatment arrangements to women and children arrested persons
- Information on complaint/allegation against police officials on duty in police station

(ii) Police Stations under Monitoring:

Odhikar sent one monitor to each of the selected police stations. They monitored arrests and their consequences, under the said laws. The investigators interviewed persons incarcerated under Section 54, Section 86 and the SPA during the course of the investigation, both in the police lockup (when permitted to do so) and upon their release from lock-up or jail, and also interviewed police officers and persons who had experienced such arrests under the laws in the recent past and were freed on bail.

(iii) Documentation and Research:

The researcher at Odhikar completed the legal and archival side of the investigation, in order to prepare this report. A certain amount of documentation was necessary in order to glean any newspaper reports on the misuse of the laws by law enforcement agents. Odhikar has a documentation unit, which collects such information from twelve national dailies.

Summary of findings of police station monitoring

- Large majority of those arrested under section 54 of the Cr.P.C. and section 86 of the DMP Ordinance are from poor economic backgrounds. They are homeless, rickshaw-pullers, small traders, and workers in small industries, vendors, street children, and destitute women.
- The notion of 'suspicion' is a very subjective term and police applies it subjectively to harass people.
- In many of the incidents of arrest, police could not justify the reason for arrest and used the ground of suspicion as reason for arrest.
- Subjective application of the term 'suspicion' has made it a tool for abuse by police.
- Police abuse arrest on suspicion for taking bribe from arrested people to set them free in exchange.
- Sometimes police arrests people under section 54 and implicates them afterwards in other laws.
- Police is not always co-operative in providing information to human rights organizations.
- Police does not always record personal information of arrested people in police station registers.
- The environment of police station custodies are not always healthy and clean.
- Arrested persons are not always provided with food in custody.
- Although there is a legal provision to produce arrested people before court within 24 hours of arrest, police does not do that. Rather police tend to get bribe from arrested people and let them free from police station.
- Police torture on people in remand is a common phenomenon.
- If police is bribed, police does not torture people under remand.
- There are some unknown people found in some police stations who act as mediator between police and relatives of arrested people for release of arrested people in exchange of money.
- In some cases, police behaved well with arrested people.

General Findings from the Police Station Monitoring Exercise

After the High Court Division of the Supreme Court's directive to amend Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the use of this provision has reduced to a extent from the year 2003. However, the use of Section 86 and 100 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ordinance has increased.

It is common for person arrested under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, to find themselves later charged under the Special Powers Act 1974, a repressive law forced by all the regimes, or the Narcotics Control Act or even Explosive Act. This conversion occurs when a prayer or petition, for detention under these Acts, is submitted to the District Magistrate from the concerned police station, through the Superintendent of Police. The District Magistrate then issues a detention order and sends it for approval to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Other laws under which persons are regularly arrested and detained by the police were found to be the Special Powers Act, Section 72, 74 and 76 of the DMP Ordinance and Section 34 of the Police Act.

Section 72 of the DMP Ordinance 1976: If any person is found constructing or repairing any transport vehicle or part of it, except that which has become essential due to an accident, on any road or any public place creating obstacle in plying of vehicles or movement of people or causing disturbance for people living around, that person shall be sentenced to one year imprisonment or fine of Taka two thousand or both and concerned vehicle will be confiscated by government.

Section &4 of the DMP Ordinance 1976: If any person is found on any street or public place or from inside any building or house engaged in following:

- a) Drawing or trying to draw attention by obscene body movement or words for the purpose of prostitution; or
- b) Disturbs or allures any person for prostitution;

that person shall be sentenced to imprisonment for three months or fine of Taka 500 or both.

‘Police Remand’ for interrogation is another instrument used by police as an excuse to physically torture detained persons. For collecting money from arrested persons, corrupt police officers use ‘remand’ as a tool. By talking to several remand victims during monitoring police stations, Odhikar came to know that they were tortured by police inhumanly and were not provided with any food during detention in remand.

Odhikar has found that large majority of arrestees came from poorer segments of society. They are mostly homeless, rickshaw puller, street children, destitute women who, being abandoned by their husbands, turn to the streets to try and keep them and their children survived. Young men suspected as terrorists, extortionists and belonging to various political parties are also regular victim of arbitrary arrest by police.

However, the situation of police stations in the city has improved relatively during Odhikar’s police stations monitoring. Police behaviour towards the common people is gradually changing in few cases, which is obviously a good indication. In every police station a list of instructions provided by the Inspector General of Police was observed in the duty officer’s room mentioning what to do and how to behave with people, but it has not yet been fully practiced or followed.

Apart from the Government initiatives to separate enforcement and investigation activities of police personnel in police stations, it has also approved the recruitment of a good number of new police officers for this purpose. Formation of separate investigation and enforcement units are expected to specify works of police personnel and reduce excessive workload of them in police stations. It is expected that it will also help in improving the service and behavior of police towards common people.

Furthermore, it was showed at a discussion meeting held in October 2005, that the Ministry of Home Affairs was going to establish female based police stations and that in every police station there would be a separate investigation unit for female victims.

(c) Discussion meeting

As part of the project activities, *Odhikar* organized a discussion meeting in October 2005 on the theme **Victim and Witness Protection under National Legal Regime: South Asian Perspective**. After three years of constant monitoring of police station and fact-finding missions into alleged police atrocities and instances of torture, *Odhikar* has confirmed that there is an urgent need to protect victims and witnesses of criminal acts. In order to carry a criminal incident forward to insure justice is done, the statements of victims and witnesses play vital roles. If the victims and/or witnesses and their family members are intimidated by the perpetrator or members of his family, if the police seem inattentive and unsympathetic and insensitive to those who come to them to lodge complaints and GDs, how is justice to be brought. Furthermore, it was found that there is hardly any provision for police protection-except for the rich and politically connected. Bangladesh has no specific law availing protection to victims and witnesses and further research at *Odhikar* has shown that the situation of this group is similar in the rest of South Asia.

Odhikar learnt that although police is violating human rights specially torture in custody, but in very few cases, action is being taken against police. Thus police is enjoying some sort of impunity despite violating human rights. While they should be held accountable and punished for such violations, they remain out of hand of law. This is why the theme was chosen for further discussion and advocacy.

The discussion meeting was aimed at sharing the experience of *Odhikar* on protection of victims and witnesses with civil society actors and policymakers. It was also aimed at getting the existing scenarios on torture and impunity in other South-Asian countries in a comparative perspective. The discussion meeting was held on 01 October 2005 at the BRAC Centre Inn auditorium. Apart from a good number of lawyers, human rights and civil society activists, the key participants were

- Justice Syed J R Mudassir Husain Honorable Chief Justice of Bangladesh
- Justice Tariq Ul Hakim Honorable Judge of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh
- Justice Sharif Uddin Chaklader Honorable Judge of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh
- A.F. Hassan Ariff Honorable Attorney General for Bangladesh
- A.S.M Shahjahan Former Advisor, Caretaker Govt. and former IGP
- Dr. C. R Abrar Professor, Dept. of International Relations, DU
- Dr. Shahid Mohammed Zia Executive Director, Lok Shanj Foundation, Pakistan
- Subodh Raj Pyakurel Chairman, INSEC and Board Member, SAFHR, Nepal
- Prof. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri CARID, Calcutta University, India
- Farhad Mazhar Prominent Writer, UBINIG, Dhaka
- Gene V. George USAID, Bangladesh
- Dr. Asif Nazrul Professor, Department of Law, University of Dhaka
- Syed Nurul Alam Executive Director, South Asia Partnership-SAP
- Maqsoodul haque Cultural Activist and Columnist

In Bangladesh where organised crime seems to more and more threatening national security. The issues of protection of criminal procedure participants from criminal trespass are of particular importance. Finding of truth with regard to criminal case becomes problematic due to the fact that witnesses and victims fearing violence over them and their relatives as well as direct or implied threats avoid participation in investigation and consideration of cases.

At the international level, victims' rights have been enlisted in the declaration of basic principles of justice for victims of crime and abuse of power. Currently, neither India, Bangladesh, Nepal or Sri Lanka have a distinct law, policy, guidelines or programs to protect victims and witnesses before, during or after the trial.

2. Ratification of the Statute of International Criminal Court by Bangladesh: An Advocacy and Campaign Initiative

PROJECT GOAL/OBJECTIVES:

Bangladesh is the first South Asian country to have expressed interest in the International Criminal Court by signing the Rome Statute in 1999. Since then, civil societies have been making an effort to try to make people and concerned policymakers aware of the Rome Statute. Many campaign initiatives have been taken place and Odhikar was one of the first organisations to play an active role from the very beginning of the campaign.

Project Goal:

Campaign for the Government of Bangladesh to prioritise and ratify the final text of the Rome Statute seeking to establish the International Criminal Court, of which it has remained a signatory since 1999.

Specific Objectives:

- To do advocacy with policymakers for ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court;
- To do awareness campaign on the International Criminal Court;
- To do campaign for implementation of the ICC Statute after ratification (once it is ratified);
- To do campaign for bringing relevant changes in the domestic legal regime for implementation of the ICC Statute;
- Awareness campaigns on the ICC for developing a broader constituency in support of ratification off the ICC Statute by Bangladesh;
- Research for bringing relevant changes in the domestic legal regime for implementation of the ICC Statute.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

(a) Advocacy workshop:

During 2004-2005 Odhikar organised four advocacy workshops. Of four workshops, two were held in Dhaka, one each in Chittagong and Rajshahi.

Two workshops were held during the project period. The workshops were aimed at generating awareness on the International Criminal Court among NGOs, lawyers, students and members of civil society. Grassroots level human rights activists from all over the country participated in the workshops. The workshops were divided into several sessions. After the inaugural session, the first session was on the History of the emergence of the International Criminal Court, Summary of the ICC Statute and Ratification by Bangladesh; the second session discussed specific themes. The theme of the first workshop was victims' forum and protection of women's rights through ICC and the theme of the second workshop was victim and witness protection under ICC Statute. Papers were presented on both the themes. The third working session of both the workshops consisted of a general thematic discussion. The

discussions were very lively and invited people participated spontaneously to know about the issues, to give their opinion and recommendations. Materials that were distributed in both the workshops included ICC Statute, list of countries that ratified and signed the ICC Statute, Status of US Bilateral Immunity Agreements, List of Signatures and Ratification of the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ICC, Summary of the Rome Statute in Bangla, A paper prepared by Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin of ANICC on Bangladesh ratification issue, thematic papers, a poster, bag, pen and writing pad.

(b) Regional Conference:

Two regional conferences were organised by Odhikar in the year 2004 and 2005. These conferences brought human rights activists and ICC advocates mainly from the South Asian region, FORUM-AISA and Asian Network for the ICC. These were aimed at reviewing respective country ICC campaigns and strategising regional campaign initiatives.

The South Asian Regional discussion meeting was basically aimed at bringing ICC advocates from the South Asian region to review activities of research, campaign and ratification advocacy, to share experiences and to further strategize the ICC campaign for the South Asian region. ICC advocates from human rights organizations from Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, host Bangladesh and Brussels based Convenor of Asian Network for the International Criminal Court (ANICC) participated in the conference. Nepal could not attend the conference due to their emergency situation, but their country paper was presented in the conference. The conference was inaugurated by the Law minister of Bangladesh, Mr. Moudud Ahmed. Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Mr. David Sproule, and Senior Advocate of Bangladesh Supreme Court, T.H.Khan (Judge of International Tribunal on Rwanda), were present as special guests. In the inaugural session, there was a presentation made by Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin, Convenor of the Asian Network for the International Criminal Court (ANICC) on an overview of the ICC campaign in a global and South Asian perspective. The inaugural session was followed by working sessions on experience sharing through country paper presentation, discussion and a strategic planning session. Key civil society people and members of Bangladesh Coalition for the International Criminal Court actively participated in the discussions.

(c) Lobbying Meetings:

Members of the Bangladesh Coalition for the International Criminal Court (BCICC) and Odhikar have met Members of Parliaments, the Law Commission and politicians in appointed meetings and on the sidelines of workshops. They are given materials and documents on ICC for awareness and lobbying for ratification.

Members of Bangladesh Coalition for International Criminal Court (BCICC) and Odhikar met members of parliaments, Law Commission and politicians in set-up meetings and on the sidelines of workshops. They were given materials and documents on ICC. A position paper on ratification prepared by Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin, Convener of Asian Network for ICC (ANICC), was given to them and ratification of the ICC Statute by Bangladesh was discussed with them. A total of nine such meetings were held during the project period and these meetings covered Parliamentary members, members of the Law Commission and politicians.

(d) Articles and write-ups:

Odhikar has arrangements with Law and Human Rights pages of two local English dailies, *The Daily Star* and *Bangladesh Today*, for publication of write-ups on ICC. Thematic papers on ICC were published in these newspapers. Other Bangla and English dailies also published news items on ICC events. Clippings of these publications are attached.

(e) Poster Campaign:

A poster was designed and developed under project assistance. The poster contains the message of ratification and the international crimes that are tried by ICC. The poster was distributed through workshops and through regular distribution of Odhikar materials. Odhikar also displayed and disseminated the poster to the human rights fair on December 10, 2004, and sent some posters to the International ICC network.

Documentation of Human Rights Violations in Bangladesh

Odhikar obtains information of human rights violations by scanning twelve newspapers on a daily basis. These are: *The Daily Start, New Age, Bangladesh Today, Bhorer kagoj, The Daily Janakantha, Amar Desh, The Daily Inqilab, The Daily Jugantor, The Daily Ittefaq, Prothom Alo, Manabzamin and Amader shomoy*. Odhikar has a documentation unit that keeps the organisation updated with human rights abuses. These are then gathered for fact-finding purposes (alongside information gained from organizational sources and contacts). The documentation unit then completes separate tables for each month in order to determine the rise and fall of incidents. This is then used to prepare charts and have statistics at hand to disseminate to the media and other NGOs, and for any external requests.

The human rights scenario of Bangladesh of 2005

Incidents of bomb attacks by the religious militants were the much-talked issues of year 2005. Serious bomb attacks in 63 districts of the country on August 17, killing of two judges. Death of policemen and lawyers in bomb attacks on courts in Gazipur and Chittagong were also the major incidents. Sixty-two people were killed and 983 were injured in bomb and grenade attack last year. Of them, 30 were killed and 347 were injured in the attacks of religious extremists alone. During this time, some 881 suspects were arrested for their alleged involvement in grenade and bomb attacks across the country.

A total of 196 cases have been filed in connection with the incidents of countrywide bomb attacks on August 17. Charge-sheets have been submitted in 96 cases, while 102 cases are under investigation. A total of 642 suspects have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the August 17 and subsequent incidents of bomb attacks. Of the arrested 478 are the charge-sheeted accused. These information are from the report on human rights situation of the country, which has been prepared by Odhikar on the basis of reports published in leading national new paper and reports of the fact finding missions of Odhikar.

Last year, a total 310 people were killed, 8997 people were injured, 1216 people were arrested, and 93 people were kidnapped in connection to human rights violation related with politics. Among them in hill tracts 25 people were killed, 71 people were injured, 81 people were kidnapped, 2 were rapped, and 35 people were arrested as a result of human rights violation.

In the year 2005 from 1st January to 30th December, 396 people were killed in whole country in the hand of law enforcement agencies. Of them, 111 people were killed by Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), 258 people were killed while they were in police custody, 4 people were killed by Cheetah and Cobra (special police forces) and 23 people by other forces. It is important to note that, among the 396, who were killed by law enforcement agencies, as many as 107 were killed in the crossfire of RAB, 212 people were killed in the crossfire of police and 4 were killed in the crossfire of Cheetah and Cobra and 17 were killed by other forces, this means as many as 340 people were killed in crossfire. On the other hand, 6 people died in the police station and 76 died in jail.

Deaths in the hands of law enforcement agencies:

This year a large number of deaths in so-called crossfire and police custody were observed. From Odhikar's documentation shows that different law enforcing agencies killed a total of 396 people. Among them, members of the Rapid Action Battalion killed 111 and 258 were killed by the police. Again, a total of 340 persons were reportedly killed in incidents of 'cross fire' alone.

No. of Persons reportedly killed by Law Enforcing Agencies (January-December 2005)

Month (s)	By RAB	By Police	By Cheetah-Cobra	By Others	Total
January	14	41	3	0	58
February	2	30	0	2	34
March	3	19	0	1	23
April	3	28	0	0	31
May	19	33	0	0	52
June	11	27	0	0	38
July	6	16	0	2	24
August	10	15	0	0	25
September	12	15	0	15	42
October	14	12	1	1	28
November	12	13	0	2	27
December	5	9	0	0	14
Total	111	258	4	23	396

No. of Persons reportedly killed in 'Cross fire'. (January - December 2005)

Name	With RAB	With Police	With Cheetah-Cobra	Others	Total
January	13	39	3	0	55
February	2	28	0	0	30
March	2	19	0	1	22
April	1	24	0	0	25
May	19	26	0	0	45
June	11	21	0	0	32
July	6	13	0	0	19
August	10	10	0	0	20
September	12	11	0	15	38
October	14	6	1	1	22
November	12	12	0	0	24
December	5	3	0	0	8
Total	107	212	4	17	340

Incidents of Rape in 2005:

Month (s)	Total number of victims	Killed after being raped	Committed suicide after being raped
January	59	14	0
February	47	9	0
March	70	11	1
April	74	11	3
May	105	24	1
June	94	9	1
July	104	12	1
August	97	7	4
September	95	11	2
October	48	3	0
November	70	11	0
December	44	4	1
Total	907	126	14

Incidents of Rape by Law enforcing agencies in 2005:

Sl. No.	Name	Age	Area	Profession	Identity	Date of occurrence	Reference
1	Teen age girl	15	Dhaka	Domestic assistant	Nayek Nurul Islam, Police	28/7/05	Janakantha 30/7/05
2	House wife	...	Rajshahi	House wife	Samsul, Sub Inspector of Police	27/7/05	Ajker Kajog 31/7/05
3	Teen age girl	Dhaka	Domestic assistant	Md. Ujjal, Sub Inspector of RAB	31/05/05	New Age 22/08/05

Human Rights violation in relation to politics in the year 2005:

Month(s)	Injured	Killed	Arrested	Kidnapped
January	701	45	304	1
February	879	31	213	2
March	650	22	63	16
April	635	27	30	28
May	558	25	151	14
June	520	31	53	1
July	860	20	40	6
August	904	19	40	8
September	860	21	37	0
October	1005	21	60	0
November	682	19	200	15
December	743	29	25	2
Total	8997	310	1216	93

Human Rights Violations in Chittagong Hill Tracts in 2005:

Month (s)	Injured	Killed	Arrested	Kidnapped	Missing	Raped
January	4	4	0	0	0	0
February	0	0	0	0	0	0
March	23	2	0	16	0	1
April	7	3	0	24	0	0
May	9	0	18	14	0	0
June	24	4	3	1	0	0
July	3	1	8	6	0	0
August	1	3	2	7	0	0
September	0	0	0	0	0	0
October	0	0	4	0	0	0
November	0	1	0	13	0	1
December	0	7	0	0	0	0
Total	71	25	35	81	0	2

Incidents of Attack on Journalists in 2005:

Month (s)	Injured	Killed	Arrested	Kidnapped	Assaulted	Threats	Attacked	Case filed
January	8	0	0	0	11	3	4	8
February	24	1	5	0	0	36	2	5
March	4	0	0	0	3	16	0	9
April	6	0	0	0	2	7	1	4
May	17	0	2	1	3	14	0	5
June	3	0	0	0	1	17	0	3
July	32	0	0	1	7	37	0	32
August	11	0	0	1	3	20	2	20
September	15	0	2	1	10	28	0	25
October	4	0	1	0	8	14	5	11
November	5	1	0	0	4	14	1	5
December	13	0	1	0	1	43	0	3
Total	142	2	11	4	53	249	15	130

Violence against Children

Month (s)	Injured	Killed	Rape	Committed Suicide	Kidnapped	Acid Victims	Arrested	Trafficking	Missing	Total
January	10	35	26	5	14	3	2	6	8	109
February	9	28	12	4	15	1	7	5	8	89
March	8	23	30	4	18	3	0	8	12	106
April	16	13	28	4	22	4	0	8	4	99
May	10	34	38	2	17	5	1	12	7	126
June	4	26	26	2	14	1	1	6	8	88
July	21	36	30	3	27	3	2	2	11	135
August	14	29	47	7	23	2	0	5	7	134
September	8	16	27	1	15	3	0	0	5	75
October	12	24	14	1	15	5	0	31	2	104
November	7	25	15	2	8	3	1	9	6	76
December	11	19	26	1	17	4	5	4	7	94
Total	130	308	319	36	205	37	19	96	85	1235

Dowry related violence in 2005:

Month (s)	Killed	Suicide	Torture	Victims of Acid	Divorce	Total dowry related violence
January	20	0	6	4	0	30
February	12	0	20	1	0	33
March	14	3	5	2	0	24
April	13	2	5	0	0	20
May	19	1	9	1	0	30
June	31	2	7	0	0	40
July	29	2	15	2	0	48
August	25	2	11	1	0	39
September	26	5	14	1	0	46
October	15	1	9	1	0	26
November	15	1	12	0	0	28
December	8	0	10	0	0	18
Total	227	19	123	13	0	382

Incidents of Acid Attack in 2005:

Month (s)	Women	Man	Children	Total
January	5	0	3	8
February	9	4	1	14
March	4	8	3	15
April	5	2	4	11
May	15	4	5	24
June	9	7	1	17
July	11	8	3	22
August	11	4	2	17
September	11	7	3	21
October	10	6	5	21
November	11	2	3	16
December	3	3	4	10
Total	104	55	37	196

Death in Police and Jail Custody in 2005:

Month (s)	Jail Custody	Police Custody
January	3	0
February	4	0
March	4	0
April	9	0
May	11	1
June	8	1
July	6	0
August	7	2
September	7	0
October	5	1
November	7	0
December	5	1
Total	76	6

Bomb attacks

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It is important to note that a total of 196 cases have been filed in connection with the incidents of country wide bomb attacks on August 17. Charge sheets have been submitted in 96 cases, while 102 cases are under investigation. A total of 642 suspects have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the August 17 and subsequent incidents of bomb attacks. Of the arrested 478 are the charge-sheeted accuseds. This information are from the report on human rights situation of the country, which has been prepared by

Odhikar on the basis of reports published in leading national new paper and reports of the fact finding missions of Odhikar.

Meetings, Seminars & Workshops organized by Odhikar

In the year 2004-2005 Odhikar organised the following programmes:

- I) It organised a discussion meeting on the occasion of the “**United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture**” on 26 June 2005 at the Odhikar office.
- II) In collaboration with the Academy for Educational Development (AED) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), it organised a discussion meeting on “**Criminal Responsibility for Torture: South Asian perspective**” on 01 October 2005 at BRAC Centre INN auditorium, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka.
- III) With Bangladesh Coalition for International Criminal Court (BCICC), in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) of the Government of Canada, it organised an advocacy workshop on the **International Criminal Court** on November 25, 2004 at BRAC Centre INN.
- IV) With the Bangladesh Coalition for International Criminal Court (BCICC), in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) of the Government of Canada, it organised an advocacy workshop on the **International Criminal Court** on December 23, 2004 at BRAC Centre INN.

Publications

Odhikar publishes its research, fact-findings and monthly and annual reports on the state of human rights in Bangladesh, bulletins on specific subject books, and reports in print media format. The following are Odhikar’s list of publications:

- *Murder, Mayhem, Land and the State*
- *Breaking the Cycle of Impunity*
- *Women and Children in Disadvantaged Situations*
- *Abuse of Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure*
- *Reasonable Suspicion Vs Unreasonable Impunity*
- *Newsletters on the electoral process of the October 2001 National Elections.*
- *Newsletters on the rights of children in Bangladesh.*
- *Our Children In Jail*
- *Manobadhikar O Police: Prekshit Bangladesh*
- *Media, Democracy and Human Rights*
- *Police Reform in Bangladesh*
- *Freedom of Religion*
- *Human Rights and Police Custody: Dhaka Metropolitan Police*
- *Report 2003: Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations*
- *Report 2004: Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations*
- *Criminal Responsibility of Torture: South Asia Perspective*

Publications in 2005

- *Campaign for the International Criminal Court in Bangladesh*
- *Report 2005: Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations*

Ongoing programs and future activities

Odhikar's plan of action for year 2006 is as follows:

Project One

Project Title:	Investigation, Research and Publication of Human Rights Violations
Supported by:	Academy for Educational Development (AED) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Project period:	Ongoing since 2003
Project Aim:	To highlight the violation of civil and political rights through fact-finding and research and to monitor the activities of law enforcement agencies in order to help contribute towards the struggle for good governance.
Objectives:	<p>(i) To publish and dissemination of detailed first hand fact finding report.</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) To improve the behaviour of police towards arrested persons.</p> <hr/> <p>(iii) To increase awareness and advocacy to initiate change and to highlight police abuse and create pressure groups to advocate for a better police system.</p>
Activities:	<p>(i) Fact-finding: Odhikar focuses mainly on human rights abuses perpetrated by law enforcement personnel and covers cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, repression against innocent people, unnecessary use of force by law enforcement personnel, abuse of specific laws and acts of torture. Odhikar mainly investigates human rights abuses reported in the media and follows these up from a deeper, socio-legal perspective. A number of Odhikar's reports have been published in national newspapers.</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) Thana monitoring: Fact-finders monitor specific thanas five times a month and examine the abuse of specific laws, reasons for arrest, as well as the prison environment. Odhikar conducts follow-up fact finding of thana monitoring to investigate the consequences of (usually unlawful) arrest.</p> <hr/> <p>(iii) Documentation and Research: The researcher of Odhikar completes the archival and legal side of the fact-finding report in order to prepare an a complete report on the human rights abuse question. Odhikar's documentation unit collects newspaper clippings of human rights abuses to be monitored from twelve national dailies.</p>

Project Two

Project Title:	Democratic Elections Motivation and Orientation Support
Supported by:	European Public Law Centre
Project period:	April 2006 – February 2007 (10 Months)
Project Aim:	The project aims at the enhancement of civil society’s awareness on citizens’ participation in the decision making process, and on the relevance of democratic dialogue between citizens and public administrators. Civic awareness is an important factor in conducting elections in a free, fair and impartial manner.
Objectives:	<p>(i) To consolidate free and fair elections in the country, enabling the electorate in targeted areas to make independent, informed decisions at the ballot box.</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) To strengthen the role of vulnerable groups and their access to the electoral process.</p> <hr/> <p>(iii) To raise civil society’s awareness on the importance of free election taking into account specific issues, such as the importance of improving the participation of ethnic minorities in political life and the enhancement of women’s role in democratic institutions.</p> <hr/> <p>(iv) To promote message of anti-violence, tolerance, dialogue and fairness of opportunity.</p>
Activities:	<p>(i) Seminar/Conference: A conference will be organised to bring together stakeholders to discuss the democratic process. Odhikar is member of the consortium of the European Public Law centre under this project supported by the Delegation of the European Commission in Bangladesh. Odhikar will organise a final conference on political institutions in progress and latest democratic achievements as an advocacy tool for raising civic awareness in relation to the democratic process.</p>

Project Three

Project Title:	Election Violence Education and Resolution (EVER)
Supported by:	The Asia Foundation/DFID
Project period:	September 2006 – February 2007 (6 Months)
Project Aim:	The EVER project brings together civil society organisations and other stakeholders to identify, monitor, and mitigate election related violence. While much has been done to mitigate ethnic, religious or political conflicts, efforts to monitor and or mitigate election-related violence are often not informed by best practices of conflict mitigation, and conflict mitigation

	<p>techniques do not offer the election-process specific tools necessary to address election violence. The EVER project bridges this gap as it examines and addresses violence during the election process as a unique form of conflict and in its implementation thus far has explored the roles that an array of stakeholders play or can play in monitoring and mitigating election violence, including civil society, political parties, election management bodies, and law enforcement agencies.</p> <p>In Bangladesh, the project will focus on monitoring election violence and issuing reports detailing incidents of election violence to key stakeholders and the public, in order to raise awareness and deter violence.</p>
Objectives:	<p>(i) To monitor and regularly report on incidents of election related violence and potential areas of politically motivated conflict as relates to the electoral process;</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) To enable a core group of stakeholders to coordinate responses to reported incidents of violence and potential for violence through monitoring and reporting that relate to political conflict and security during the electoral process;</p> <hr/> <p>(iii) To gauge the impact of electoral and political violence on elections through targeted surveys of political party, civil society, security personnel, and electoral officials at a local level;</p> <hr/> <p>(iv) To raise awareness of election violence among all stakeholders as an unique form of conflict and promote peaceful elections;</p> <hr/> <p>(v) To enable stakeholders to carry on EVER methodology and mitigation efforts through future election cycles that will contribute to long-term reduction of election violence.</p>
Activities:	<p>(i) Monitoring Electoral Violence: Odhikar’s EVER team will consist of a program coordinator and staff headquartered in Dhaka, divisional coordinators for each division and 45 EVER monitors based in select constituencies. While focused specifically on election related violence, the EVER project work will be coordinated with the broader efforts of the Election Working Group.</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) Analyze and Data Entry: After verifying the incidents with number of sources in each constituency, EVER monitors send the report to the Divisional Coordinator. DCs will scrutinize the reports gathered from field level and input data in a spreadsheet.</p> <hr/> <p>(ii) Analyze and Releasing Report: Program Coordinator and Program Analyst will prepare analytic report release it to the public.</p>

Odhikar Staff: 2005

Designation	Total	Full time	Part time
Director/Office in Charge	01	01	-
Researcher	02	02	-
Documentation Officer	01	01	-
Accountant	01	01	-
Investigator	03	03	-
Office Assistant	01	01	-
Volunteers/Interns	05	-	05
Total	14	9	05

Interns

Elena Ahmed from England assisted Odhikar as an intern from October – December 2005.