

2 April 2007

**Press Release
Odhikar**

79 killed by law enforcers. 37 killed by BSF from 1 January to 31 March, 2007

During the period of three months from 01 January to 31 March 2007, as many as **79** persons were reported killed by the law enforcement agencies. Of them, **46** were killed by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), **18** by police, **7** by the army, **5** by joint forces, **2** by navy and **1** by officers of the Department of Narcotics Control. It may be noted that out of **79** people, who were killed by law enforcement agencies from 1 January to 31 March, 2007, **50** were killed in 'Crossfire'. Among the crossfire victims, **44** were killed by RAB, **5** by police and **1** by joint forces.

Out of the **79** victims killed, **29** were killed in various ways other than crossfire by law enforcement agencies. Among them **4** was reportedly killed by army torture, **8** were allegedly tortured to death by police, **2** by joint force personnel, **2** by navy personnel and **1** by officers of the Department of Narcotics Control. **6** died in hospital allegedly after being tortured by the law enforcement agencies. Among them, **2** by RAB, **2** by Police, **1** by army personnel and **1** by joint forces. Besides this, **3** were reported shot by Police. **One** Person was arrested by joint forces and later died allegedly in the police station. **One** allegedly died while trying to escape from the army van which was carrying him. **One** reportedly jumped off a six storied building and died while in the custody of the joint.

Among the **79** persons who were killed, **7** were from the BNP, **4** from the Awami League, **7** from Biplobi Communist Party, **1** from New Biplobi Communist Party, **3** from Purbo Banglar Communist Party, **4** from Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Jano Juddho), **4** from Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Red Flag), **4** from Sarbohara Party, **3** were from Sromojibi Mukti Andolan, **2** from Gono Muktifouz, **3** from Gangchil Bahini, **1** from Haji Bahini and **1** was from the Masim Bahini. **One** person was a Freedom Fighter, **2** were cultivators, **1** was a police informer (source), **1** an indigenous leader, **2** were alleged muggers, **17** were alleged criminals, **1** an alleged gambler, **1** alleged drug peddler, **1** under trial prisoner of Dhaka Central Jail, **1** a prisoner of Faridpur Jail and **1** was a suspected arms dealer. Again, **2** were bus drivers, **3** were alleged dacoits and **1** person's professional identity could not be identified.

Between 1 January- 31 March a total of 27 persons died in jail custody and **2** RAB personnel were brutally killed by miscreants.

From 1 January to 31 March 2007 a total of **1,26,968** persons were reported arrested across the country. It is noted that in Bangladesh, there are **11** central jails and **55** district jails and their total capacity is only **27,227**. Moreover, there have been **33** persons reportedly killed and **1357** injured due to political violence in last three months.

The report covering the human rights situation all over the country also shows that **6** journalists were injured, **8** arrested, **9** assaulted, **32** threatened. **10** cases have been filed against journalists and 1 journalist's house was attacked during last three months.

Since 1 January to 31 March 2007 a total of **144** women were reportedly victims of human rights violations due to dowry demands or were raped or were victim to acid violence.

Among them, a total of **62** women were reportedly victims of dowry –related violence. Of them, **43** were killed, **15** were tortured and **4** committed suicide.

A total of **59** women were reportedly victims of rape. Among them **29** women were the victims of gang rape and 12 women were killed after being raped.

During this period, **220** children were reportedly victims of human rights violations. Of them, a total of **80** children were killed, **33** were injured, **9** were allegedly abducted, **9** committed suicide, **2** were arrested, **26** went missing, **53** girl children were raped – of which **11** were the victims of gang rape and **3** were killed after being raped

Therefore, a total of **39** persons including **8** children, **23** women and **8** men were victims of acid attack across the country in this period.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) allegedly killed **37** Bangladeshi during the period of 1 January to 31 March 2007, and **31** were injured, **4** arrested, **4** went missing, **27** were abducted and **2** incidents of looting by BSF has been reported.

During 1 January to 31 March 2007, a total **833** persons were killed throughout the country.

Odhikar expresses its concern regarding the arrests made under the Special Powers Act of 1974. It is also concerned about the practice of detaining people without charges, which is a violation of human rights. It is also gravely concerned that slum eviction drives are rendering thousands of poor people shelter less without offering them any housing alternatives.

It is important to note that Bangladesh acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights and Economic Social and Cultural Rights on 6 September 2000 and 5 October 1998 respectively.

This report has been revealed from the routine scanning of 11 national dailies and fact-finding reports by Odhikar, a human rights organisation of Bangladesh.