

- [BANGLADESH: Adilur's release carries comprehensive message for civil society](#)



BANGLADESH: Adilur's release carries comprehensive message for civil society

October 11, 2013

Mr. Adilur Rahman Khan, globally known to have critiqued the incumbent government of Bangladesh against its human rights abuses, has been released from prison today, October 11, 2013, after 62 days of prolonged arbitrary detention.

It was back in August 10 that officers from the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrived at Adilur's Dhaka residence and took him in custody.

Adilur, a practicing lawyer of the Supreme Court, who served as Deputy Attorney General for Bangladesh, is the Secretary of *Odhikar*, one of the prominent human rights organisations in the country. The Detective Branch Police arrested him on the basis of two General Dairy entries lodged with the Gulshan police under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, and Section 57 of the Information and Communications Technology Act, 2006, for publishing a fact-finding report. The report covers the alleged murder of 61 demonstrators of *Hefazat-E-Islam* on May 6, 2013, in what was a heavy-handed crackdown by security forces and law-enforcement agencies at Motijheel in Dhaka.

On August 11, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka sent Adilur in police remand for five days, which was declared illegal by a High Court Bench on August 12.

Apart from arresting and detaining Adilur, on 11 August, at around 8 p.m., the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police raided *Odhikar's* office, seizing documents and computers. Once the government virtually shut down the human rights organisation, using various forms of harassment, the country's Anti-Corruption Commission also suddenly became remarkably pro-active in checking *Odhikar's* financial reports.

Adilur's release on bail is an outcome of a challenging struggle shouldered by the activists of *Odhikar*, human rights defenders, professionals, members of the civil society, friends in the international community, and his own family. The High Court, hearing a writ petition, granted bail to Adilur on October 8. The Court ordered the release of Adilur and asking that its order be served to the prison authorities by special messenger. Prior to the High Court's bail order, the bail-petitions of Adilur were rejected by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka and the Cyber Crimes Tribunal on three occasions.

The Attorney General left no stone unturned to prolong the period of Adilur's detention. On October 9, the Office of the Attorney General challenged the High Court's bail order before the Bench of the Chamber Judge of the Supreme Court. The Attorney General, accompanied by his senior colleagues, requested the Chamber Judge's Bench to stay the High Court's order regarding Adilur's release. The Court passed 'no order' after hearing the governmental plea.

The release of Adilur has not removed the threats against human rights activism itself, and, or Mr. Elan, who is being chased by the police following a warrant of arrest issued by the Cyber Crimes Tribunal. The Government of Bangladesh established this Tribunal after arresting Adilur for trying him and his colleagues under the Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006. They have amended this law making 'non-cognizable' and 'bailable' offences 'cognizable' and 'bailable', increasing the maximum punishment from ten to 14 years imprisonment. Adil and Elan represent the first prey of the Information and Communication Technology Act, 2006, and the Cyber Crimes Tribunal in Bangladesh. A chilling message has already been sent to the civil society activists by the authorities of Bangladesh through their actions against *Odhikar* for challenging the State's alleged human rights abuses.

Those who have actively contributed to the release of Adilur should be inspired; consistent and peaceful efforts do not go to waste, and such invaluable efforts incrementally, and ultimately, subdue the evil actions of an authoritarian regime. The struggles of establishing justice requires hard work, uprightness, and unity amongst the wider community.

The Asian Human Rights Commission urges all human rights defenders and members of civil society to stay alert and work together to fight tyrannical misrule in countries like Bangladesh, where silencing the voices of whistle-blowers is unfortunately routine, and in progress.

For further details, in Hong Kong, please contact: Mr. Md. Ashrafuzzaman; +852-60732807 (telephone) or write to: zaman@ahrc.asia.

Document Type :	Statement
Document ID :	AHRC-STM-184-2013
Countries :	Bangladesh http://www.humanrights.asia/countries/bangladesh
Issues :	Torture http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/torture Administration of justice http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/administration-of-justice Arbitrary arrest and detention http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/arbitrary-arrest-and-detention Right to life http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/right-to-life Right to redress http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/right-to-redress Right to remedy http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/right-to-remedy Rule of law http://www.humanrights.asia/issues/rule-of-law