



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

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Press Release **Bangladesh Human Rights Situation 2021** **Annual Human Rights Monitoring Report of HRSS.**

Although Bangladesh has achieved a lot of economic prosperity and significant positive achievements in the last 50 years since independence, there has been no promising progress in the overall human rights situation including rule of law, democracy and people's right to vote, freedom of expression, social security, and women's rights. The overall human rights situation in Bangladesh was worrying and frustrating despite the lockdown for almost half of 2021 due to the 2nd wave of the Corona pandemic. Human rights are being violated in Bangladesh in spite of its constitutional obligations and international laws and treaties.

Reviewing the annual human rights situation in 2021, this year also saw extra-judicial killings by law enforcement, torture in the custody, extra-judicial activities of members of the law enforcement agencies, disappearances after abductions, and mass beatings as in previous years. In particular, in March 2021, on the occasion of the arrival of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of Independence Day, 14 people (Hefazot claimed 17 people) were extrajudicially killed by law enforcement agencies in different places including Dhaka, Chittagong, and Brammanbaria. However, the paramount concern of this year is the widespread restriction on freedom of expression through misapplication of controversial sections of the Digital Security Act as well as prosecution and arrest of dissidents. Prothom Alo journalist Rozina Islam was sent to jail on May 17 after she was harassed and tortured in the Secretariat office while performing her professional duties.

Another concerning issue in 2021 is the attacks, torture, and violence against the minority community. On October 13, attacks on temples and places of worship and communal violence took place in different parts of the country over the placement of the Quran (Muslim's religious book) in a puja mandapa in Comilla. Violence against women is another matter of grave concern this year. Incidents of rape, gang rape, child rape, post-rape killings, dowry killings and torture, sexual harassment, and child marriage have also increased alarmingly amid Corona epidemic.

The overall human rights situation of the country has reached a critical juncture through severe political violence, attacks and arrests of journalists indiscriminately, the killing and torture of innocent Bangladeshis by the BSF at the border, and widespread electoral violence. This information has come up in the annual human rights monitoring report based on the news published in different media and information of HRSS's local representatives.

According to HRSS data collected from different newspapers till now in 2021: a total of 82 persons were reportedly extra-judicially killed in the name of 'crossfire/ gunfights/infights'.



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Meanwhile, a total of 07 persons have been ‘disappeared’ by the law enforcement agencies in different incidents.

In the mean time, in 2021, a total of 1833 females were raped. Among them, 786 victims were adult whereas alarmingly 1047 were children under the age of 18. It’s a grave concern that 296 have been victim of gang-raped and 52 were brutally killed after being raped. Approximately, 159 incidents of dowry-related violence were reported, where 42 were killed, 113 women physically abused and 04 committed suicide over dowry demand. In 2021, 21 incidents of acid throwing have been occurred where 04 were killed and 24 injured. It is also alarming that in a total of 305 violent incidents against children from January to December 2021, 111 lost their lives and 250 were critically injured.

It has been reported by HRSS that, a journalist was killed, 127 were injured, 52 threatened, 20 arrested and 34 were assaulted in nearly 173 incidents during the year of 2021. Meanwhile, 189 people have been arrested and 221 cases filed under Digital security act 2018. HRSS has also observed the incidents of attacks on minorities in 2021, where at least 98 temples and 35 houses were partially or fully destroyed. Meanwhile, 03 minority member was killed and 59 injured in a total of 85 incidents. Moreover, at least 82 people were killed, 4352 people injured and bullet hit 194 persons in political violence, whereas around 48 people were killed and 85 persons injured in public lynching.

On the other hand, According to HRSS, roughly 19 Bangladeshi citizens have been killed, 10 injured, and 30 persons were arrested by BSF (Indian Border Security Force) in a total of 38 incidents.

It has also been reported that, in a total of 174 incidents of inhuman torture and shooting by law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) happened where 2488 people were injured, 325 hit by bullet and 89 people tortured in 2021. In the meantime, in 2021, 143 people were killed and 5401 injured in 644 incidents of electoral violence. Similarly, 18 workers were killed, 201 injured and 64 shot dead in 47 incidents of labor violence this year.

HRSS is deeply concerned about the degradation of human rights condition in the country. It urges all human rights organizations as well as common citizens to raise their voice to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh.

Sincerely,

Ijajul Islam
Executive Director
Human Rights Support Society (HRSS)