



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

Ref: *hrss/2023/ka/18*

Reg. No: *S-12473/2016*

Date: **09.12.2023**

Press Release

Human Rights Observation Report of Bangladesh (January to November'23)

Every year on December 10, International Human Rights Day is being celebrated with great solemnity all over the world. This year the theme of Human Rights Day is “Freedom, Equality and Justice for All”. Although Bangladesh is committed to protecting human rights as per constitutional obligations and international law, the human rights situation in Bangladesh in the last 11 months from January to November 2023 was alarming. Despite many positive achievements under the current government, the deterioration of the human rights situation in important areas such as rule of law, democracy, voting rights, freedom of expression, right of assembly, social security and women's rights was noticeable.

Violations of civil and political rights have been observed in the country throughout this year. Incidents of obstruction of peaceful gatherings, false cases, mass arrests, political arrests, illegal behavior of law enforcement agencies are disturbing the people of the country. Notably, journalists have faced attacks and arrests. Innocent Bangladeshis at the border have suffered various losses including killing and torture at the hands of the Border Security Force (BSF).

The human rights situation further deteriorated in the latter part of 2023. Widespread anarchy and conflict have been observed especially ahead of the National parliamentary elections. Overzealous activities of law enforcement agencies, particularly targeting movements of opposition political parties, have led to increased human rights abuses. A grim picture emerges of the government's concerted efforts to suppress opposition gatherings, suppressing dissent through searches, mobile phone checks and mass arrests. On October 28, various clashes took place around the rally of the opposition parties and the subsequent agitation, resulting in the death of many people including law enforcement officials, journalists, transport workers, political activists. In addition, there have been numerous cases and arrests of opposition party leaders throughout the year, highlighting a systematic effort to suppress opposition voices. Attacks on journalists and enforcement of cyber security laws have further undermined freedom of expression. Multidimensional human rights challenges have been



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

noted, particularly towards the end of the year, including assassinations, mass arrests, post-election schedule violence, attacks on opposition leaders' homes, vandalism, arrests of family members and extortion of money from arrested individuals and families.

The speedy disposal of political cases and convicting dead and missing persons has created doubt around the impartiality of the judiciary system. The prevalence of one-party political culture and the similarity of the behavior of administrative and law enforcement agencies to those of the ruling party have raised concerns. Repressive measures have reached alarming levels, resulting in increased abductions, extrajudicial killings, and torture of opposition movements.

Garment workers' struggle for fair wages adds another dimension to the human rights crisis. Unfortunately, the workers' movement faced repression by law enforcement and government worker. Where massive casualties and loss of life occur.

This information has come out in the human rights monitoring report of the last eleven months of 2023 based on the news published in various media of Bangladesh and information from HRSS's information investigation unit and local representatives.

Political Violence and Arrest:

According to HRSS first eleven months report'23, at least 82 people were killed and 8150 people injured in a total of 807 incidents of political violence.

In the meantime, around 8263 persons including 8024 BNP and Jamaat leaders and activists were victim of political arrested by LEAs. During the same period, in 433 cases against opposition leaders and activists named 13808 persons, and 58189 others were accused as unidentified defendants. In addition, there have been incidents of obstruction of 355 meetings and gatherings of opposition parties by law enforcement agencies and government party leaders and activists. Meanwhile, 3259 people were injured in the clash with them and 5784 people were arrested at assembly oriented.

Attack on Journalists:



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

According to data collected by HRSS from January to November'23, a total of 275 journalists were victims of various atrocities such as killing, torture, threat, arrest and harassment. Among them 2 journalists were killed, 174 journalists were injured, 17 threatened, 09 arrested and 82 were assaulted in nearly 168 incidents.

Extra-Judicial Killing:

According to collected data from prominent national dailies, victim families and HRSS investigation unit, a total of 33 people were reportedly extra-judicially killed in the first 11 months of 2023. Out of them, 07 were killed in the name of 'crossfire/gunfights', 07 were tortured to death, 14 shot to death and 05 died in the custody in a total of 31 incidents. At the same time, about 70 persons reportedly died in prison.

Enforced Disappearance:

According to collected data from prominent national dailies, victim families and HRSS investigation unit, a total of 28 persons have 'disappeared' by the LEAs (i.e., remained missing for at least 72 hours) in 23 incidents. Out of them, 19 were shown arrested, 03 were released and the remaining 06 are still unknown. Moreover, in Bangladesh there were 10 alleged cases of illegal detentions in the first 11 months of 2023. Among them 04 people were shown arrested later and 6 were released after a certain period of time.

Attack on Minorities:

HRSS has also observed the incidents of attacks on minorities in the first eleven months of 2023, where at least 17 temples, 31 idols and 126 houses were partially or fully destroyed as well as 99 were injured in a total of 25 incidents. In March, 01 person killed and at least 60 injured in attack on Ahmadiyya community in Panchgarh. In this attack, at least 101 houses and 30 businesses were attacked, vandalized and set on fire.

Human rights violations by Indian BSF:

According to a first eleven months report of HRSS, roughly 23 Bangladeshi citizens have been killed, 20 injured, and 07 persons arrested by BSF (Indian Border Security Force) in a total of 45 incidents.



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

Election Violence:

It has also been reported that between January and November 2023, at least 04 people died and approximately 537 people were injured in a total of 69 incidents of election-related violence.

Labor Rights Violation:

During the first eleven months of 2023, 36 laborers including 03 garments workers killed by LEAs and also the worker leader Shohidul Islam in June in Gazipur was killed and 345 injured in a total of 183 incidents. It has also been reported that 09 housemaids were killed and other 14 were injured in a total of 23 incidents. In the meantime, 137 labors were died in their workplace for unhealthy environment and lack of personnel protective equipment.

Digital/Cyber Security Act and Freedom of Expression:

From January to November'23, 60 people were arrested, 188 accused and 58 cases were filed in the Digital /Cyber Security Act.

Violence against Women:

According to the HRSS report, a total of 2259 female and girls were victim of violence in the first eleven months of 2023. Among them, 942 were raped whereas alarmingly 535 (56%) were children under the age of 18. It's a grave concern that 177 (19%) girls and women have been victim of gang-raped, among them 40 women along with 26 girls were brutally killed after being raped and 7 raped victims committed suicide. Meanwhile, about 291 women were killed, 96 injured and 111 committed suicide in the family feud-related violence. Besides, 68 women were killed, 06 committed suicide and 58 women were physically abused over dowry demand. Moreover, a total of 683 female including 376 girls were reportedly victims of attempt to rape and sexual harassment. Furthermore, 07 girls and women were injured and 02 were killed in acid violence.



HUMAN RIGHTS SUPPORT SOCIETY (HRSS)

D-3, # 3rd floor, Plot # 2, Nur-Jehan Tower, 2nd Link Road, Bangla Motor, Dhaka-1000,
Bangladesh. E-mail: hrssbd14@gmail.com, Web: www.hrssbd.org

Violence against Children:

It is also alarming that a total of 2078 children were reportedly victim of torture in the first eleven months of 2023, where 481 children lost their lives and 1597 were physically & mentally tortured and critically injured.

HRSS is deeply concerned about the degradation of human rights conditions in the country. It urges all national and international human rights organizations, civil society, journalists, social leaders, political parties and activists as well as general citizens to raise their voices to protect and promote human rights in Bangladesh.

Public Lynching:

Unexpectedly, during the first eleven months of 2023, around 71 people were killed and 86 were injured in 109 incidents of public lynching.

With Thanks

Ijajul Islam

Executive Director

Human Rights Support Society (HRSS)

Email: hrssbd14@gmail.com