

June 6, 2010

Concern about the safety and life of Mahmudur Rahman

Mahmudur Rahman, the Acting Editor of the Bengali Daily Amar Desh, was arrested under sections 419, 420 and 500 of the Penal Code under the Tejgaon Industrial Area Police Station Case No. 1(6)2010 and again under sections 143, 342, 332, 353, 186, 506, 114 of the Penal Code under the Tejgaon Police Station Case No 2(6)2010 on June 2, 2010.

Mahmudur Rahman got bail in the first case but in the second case, which was filed after his arrest, he was not granted bail and sent to prison. However, today on June 6, 2010, a third case has been filed against him, Case No.5 (6)2010 at the Kotwali Police Station. He was charged for obstructing government officials in their function, while he was already in custody. The prosecution prayed for seven days remand. On top of this, according to newspaper reports, the government is preparing a sedation case against him. The chain of events is very alarming.

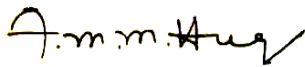
It is to be noted that Mahmudur Rahman has been physically attacked a couple of times. Heavy stones and bricks have been thrown at his car in Bangladesh and he was also attacked with a sharp object during his visit to London, which could have fatally injured him. Given this history the repeated attempts by the government to take him to remand is of grave concern to us.

Odhikar has always fought against custodial torture and death. Despite the fact that the government has made repeated promises to the international community regarding upholding human rights, gross violations of human rights have not abated in the country. In this context, Odhikar is deeply concerned about the life and safety of Mahmudur Rahman. We therefore, appeal to all the human rights defenders to write to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to ensure the safety of Mahmudur Rahman and to stop all attempts to take him into remand, against the fundamental principles of human rights and international norms.

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