

URGENT ACTION

HASNAT KARIM APPEARED IN COURT ON 4 AUGUST

Hasnat Karim, who was in the restaurant in Dhaka that was attacked on 1 July, was brought by the Bangladesh police to the Metropolitan Magistrates Court on 4 August, after being held incommunicado for weeks without being brought before a judge. He has been remanded in custody but is still being denied access to a lawyer.

Hasnat Karim is a dual UK-Bangladeshi national and businessman. Together with his wife and two children, he was in Dhaka's Holey Artisan Bakery on 1 July, when gunmen attacked and killed more than 20 people. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the family was taken into custody by the police for questioning on 2 July, and all except Hasnat Karim were released on 3 July.

Since then, despite repeated requests for information about his whereabouts, the police refused to provide Hasnat Karim's family or their legal representation with any information, including the reasons for him being held and if he had been moved to a different place of detention. The family were not permitted to see him except for a short visit on 13 July, after which they were kept in the dark about his whereabouts.

On 4 August, Hasnat Karim was presented by the police at the Metropolitan Magistrates Court where they sought to keep him in remand custody for ten days under Section 54 of the Bangladesh Code of Criminal Procedure - which allows police to detain someone who is suspected of a crime without formally charging them - as a suspect involved in the attack on the Holey Artisan Bakery. The court granted the police permission to keep Hasnat Karim for eight days in remand while they continue their investigations. On 13 August Hasnat Karim was formally arrested as a suspect in the attack and the remand period was extended for another eight days.

From the moment he was taken for questioning on 2 July to the present time, Hasnat Karim has had no access to a lawyer. Furthermore, on 13 August Bangladesh's Law Minister Anisul Huq publically warned lawyers not to take up cases defending those accused of terrorism. Bangladeshi authorities have issued conflicting public statements on Hasnat Karim's whereabouts since being taken into custody, at times denying that he was being held and at other times admitting that he was being questioned.

Please write immediately in Bangla, English or your own language:

- Urging the Bangladeshi authorities to ensure that Hasnat Karim has immediate access to his family, a lawyer of his choice and to any medical attention he may require;
- Calling on them to ensure Hasnat Karim has adequate time and facilities to communicate in confidence with his lawyer.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 SEPTEMBER 2016 TO:

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister's Office Old Sangshad
Bhaban, Tejgaon 1215
Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 9133722
Email: info@pmo.gov.bd
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Inspector General of Police A K M
Shahidul Hoque
Police Headquarters 6 Phoenix Road,
Fulbaria 1000 Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 9563362
Email: ig@police.gov.bd
Salutation: Dear Inspector General

And copies to:
State Minister
Ministry of Home Affairs
Bangladesh Secretariat, Building-8 (1st
& 3rd Floor) Dhaka, Bangladesh
Fax: +880 2 9573711
Email: stateminister@mha.gov.bd

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 163/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA13/4420/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On the evening of 1 July, gunmen stormed the Holey Artisan Bakery restaurant in the Gulshan area of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. The attackers killed 20 hostages during the siege that lasted the whole night, including 18 foreigners and two Bangladeshis. According to news reports, at least 13 other hostages survived the attack.

In the past three years, violent groups in Bangladesh have targeted and killed scores of secular bloggers, activists, academics and members of religious minorities for their writings and activities seen as “insulting Islam.” In 2015 two foreigners were also killed in targeted attacks claimed by violent groups. So far, no one has been brought to justice for these killings except in the case of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider who was killed in 2013. Amnesty International has repeatedly called on the Bangladeshi authorities to ensure that those suspected to be responsible are held to account in fair trials without recourse to the death penalty and to end the climate of impunity around these attacks (see “*One year since secular blogger Ananta Bijoy Das was killed and still no justice*”, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/4021/2016/en/>). It is crucial that Bangladesh does not sacrifice human rights in the name of national security, and that the rights of any suspects – including fair trial guarantees – are respected.

Name: Hasnat Karim

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 163/16 Index: ASA 13/4614/2016 Issue Date: 19 August 2016