In Solidarity with Adilur Rahman Khan and Odhikar

The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) honours the important work of Adilur Rahman Khan, a member of FORUM-ASIA’s Executive Committee and Secretary of Odhikar, a human rights organisation in Bangladesh. FORUM-ASIA stands in solidarity with Adilur and Odhikar, recognising the challenges they have faced in the recent past for addressing alleged violations of human rights.

In August 2013, Adilur Rahman Khan was picked up by the police without a warrant of arrest and detained. At the time, no information was provided to Adilur or his family on the grounds for his unlawful arrest or where he was being taken. Adilur was detained for a period of two months on spurious charges under Bangladesh’s draconian Information and Communication Technology Act in relation to a report published by Odhikar on alleged killings by Bangladesh security forces in May 2013. Despite Adilur’s subsequent release, Odhikar continues to face open intimidation and blatant government attempts to hinder its work. Odhikar has been denied permissions by the State to carry out some of its human rights projects and was unable to pay its staff. Adilur and Odhikar have since constantly faced harassment and intimidation from state security forces. Adilur’s case is not an isolated one, other human rights defenders in Bangladesh continue to function in an environment of fear and intimidation.

FORUM-ASIA has championed the campaign for the release of Adilur and has been working in partnership with partners towards drawing attention to his incarceration and lobbying for his eventual release.

Adilur and Odhikar, have worked tirelessly to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Bangladesh. Odhikar has called for accountability for abuses like enforced or involuntary disappearances and extrajudicial killings. Honouring this work, Adilur Rahman has been bestowed with several awards and recognitions recently.

About FORUM-ASIA:

FORUM-ASIA is a membership-based organisation with forty-seven members in sixteen countries across Asia working to promote and protect all human rights, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organisations and defenders in Asia.

FORUM-ASIA has been at the forefront of promoting the role and protection of human rights defenders (HRDs). Through its work, it aims to reduce occurrence of threats, intimidation and attacks against HRDs in Asia; foster an enabling environment for Asian HRDs to carry out their legitimate work freely; and develop the next generation of HRDs in Asia equipped with leadership and capacity for strategic advocacy actions. This extends to advocating for greater recognition of the vital role and rights of HRDs; providing urgent assistance and protection to HRDs at risk; increasing public awareness on the situation faced by HRDs; facilitating joint strategies and action plans for effective and innovative responses to the protection needs of HRDs in Asia and enhancing the institutionalization of Asian HRDs’ own protection capacity towards a secure work environment.