

**Prominent Jurist: Bangla Government Not Protecting Human Rights**  
**by Anis Ahmed**  
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A leading Bangladeshi jurist says his country's government is not fulfilling its constitutional obligations to protect the human rights of its citizens.

Kamal Hossain, an architect of Bangladesh's Constitution, told VOA "It's the constitutional duty of a state to ensure protection of the rights which are recognized: right to life, right to bodily security, right to have protection of law. These are absolutely expressly guaranteed by the constitution and impose a duty on the state to take effective actions to protect them and where there is a violation, where there is an infringement, then to take corrective actions, including actions against those who are found through proper inquiry not to have acted in accordance with law."

Hossain, who served as a U.N. Special Rapporteur in Afghanistan, said the human rights commission in Bangladesh has been asking the government to take action against the violators of human rights and, more importantly, those actions must be seen by the public. With the increasing numbers of disappearances and abductions in Bangladesh, allegedly by security forces, questions are being raised on the control of the Bangladesh government on its own agencies.

He said that even though these issues are being raised by more people, no satisfactory inquiry has been forthcoming.

Attacks against journalists covering issues of politics and corruption have also become a major issue.

Madeline Earp, the Senior Asia Researcher at Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said they are very concerned about the rate of attacks on journalists in Bangladesh. She said the attacks have a number of different origins. For example, she said the recent machete attacks on the staff of bdnews24 came from criminal sources.

Earp alleges that in other cases it has been the result of, in fact, from law enforcing agencies. "The fact that journalists are coming under attack from all sides is worrying," she said.

Toufique Khalidi, the Chief Editor of bdnews24.com, said although he thinks the attacks on his journalists were not politically motivated, he believes police have been behaving badly. Police are not trained to behave properly with members of the public.

The U.S. government recently denounced the Bangladesh government over killings and torture by security forces and abuses that they are responsible for the disappearance of several people. Citing Dhaka-based rights groups Ain o Shalish Kendra and Odhikar, Human Rights Watch says the disappearance of at least 22 people was documented in 2012 alone, with more than 50 people since 2010.

The government of Bangladesh, through its embassy in Washington, refused to comment for this report.