

9 November 2017

## **Bangladesh: Disappearance of human rights defender Dr. Mubashar Hasan**

On 7 November 2017, human rights defender and university professor **Dr. Mubashar Hasan** went missing in Dhaka after finishing work at North South University. He was last heard from by relatives in the afternoon and did not return home that night. His phone had been switched off since 7:00 pm that day.

[Dr. Mubashar Hasan](#) is a human rights defender and Assistant Professor of Political Science in North South University, Dhaka. As a scholar he has conducted several research projects, written articles, and presented papers, both at home and abroad, on the issues of democracy, terrorism and the rise of violent religious extremism. The human rights defender also founded **Alochonaa.com**, an interactive online platform promoting democracy, pluralism and multiculturalism in Bangladesh. Dr. Mubashar Hasan had previously worked as a journalist and as a media campaign strategist for Oxfam in Bangladesh and Pakistan. He has also supported the Government's Access to Information project as a consultant.

On 7 November 2017, at around 7:00 am, Dr. Mubashar Hasan left home and reached his workplace in Bashundhara at 8:00 am. He last talked to his father around 4:00 pm over the phone and said that he would return home after attending a meeting at the UN Country Office. The human rights defender was seen to leave the UN Country Office at around 6:30 pm, however when his father called him back around 7:00 pm, he found that his mobile phone was switched off. By tracking his phone, police learned that he had been near IDB Bhaban (a computer store) and Lions Eye Hospital at Agargaon at around 6:41pm. His family filed a report in Khilgaon police station at 2:30 am on Wednesday 8 November 2017 and also reported to RAB 3, a type of rapid response unit, at 9:00 am that morning.

In September 2017, Dr. Mubashar Hasan was invited by the US State Department to give a talk on terrorism at a seminar in the US. He reportedly became very concerned over his personal security after a man, identifying himself as a student, went to his house on 25 October 2017 and looked for him. He was not at home at the time. After the incident, he had CCTV cameras installed at his residence.

Front Line Defenders expresses grave concern at the disappearance of Dr. Mubashar Hasan. Given his security concerns, it is believed that the disappearance may be related to his work on terrorism, extremism and human rights.

### **Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Bangladesh to:**

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the disappearance of human rights defender Dr. Mubashar Hasan, with a view to ensuring his protection and release, publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;

2. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Bangladesh are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.