

Bangladesh: A school teacher was arrested for having left in the school library a copy of a book by Taslima Nasreen

Tuesday 17 January 2012, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 12 January 2012).

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12 January, 2012

Press Release

We, the undersigned strongly protest the arrest of Mr. Yunus Ali, the Head Teacher of KC Technical and Business Management College of Pirojpur, on 4 January, 2012. Mr. Ali was arrested or having allegedly kept a copy of writer Taslima Nasreen's novel "Lajja" ("Shame") in the college library. This arrest is a clear breach of the right to freedom of speech and shows the presence of a broad range of communal and generally reactionary forces in our society.

We believe that the banning of books clearly violates the right to freedom of thought and expression, which constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic and pluralistic society during the information age of the 21st century and is enshrined in the Constitution of Bangladesh. Dissenting ideas and opinions should be faced through a healthy debate, not censorship and arrest. A state's weakness, intolerance and imprudence are revealed when a literary work is banned in this manner.

Only a tolerant, secular and democratic atmosphere will ensure maximum participation of everyone in public life, enrich our culture and maintain the spirit of the liberation war. On this basis, we demand that all charges against Head Teacher Mr. Yunus Ali be immediately dropped.

Signed by:

1. Sultana Kamal, Executive Director, Ain O Salish Kendro
2. Hameeda Hossain, Chairperson, Human Rights Activist
3. Khushi Kabir, Coordinator, Nijera Kori
4. M. Zafar Iqbal, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology
5. Anu Mohammad, Jahangirnagar University
6. Gitiara Nasreen, Dhaka University
7. Sonia Amin, Dhaka University
8. Ferdousi Priyobhashini, Human Rights Activist
9. Sara Hossain, Advocate, Supreme Court
10. Dina Siddiqi, Hunter College, New York
11. Meghna Guhathakurta, Research Initiatives Bangladesh
12. Bina D' Costa, The Graduate Institute, Geneva
13. Shapan Adnan, Independent Scholar
14. Zakir Kibria, Solidarity Workshop

15. Faustina Pereira, Advocate, Supreme Court
 16. Robaet Ferdous, Dhaka University
 17. Asif Saleh
 18. Jyoti Rahman, Editor, Drishtipat Writers' Collective
 19. Sultana Begum, Human Rights Activist
 20. Khodeja Sultana, Human Rights Activist
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