



## Global Human Rights Defence

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate Release  
Thursday, April 28, 2016**

### **BANGLADESH: We Demand Justice for the brutal killings of civil society members including LGBT rights activists**

The month of April witnessed vicious killings of civil society members in Bangladesh. The killings are a harrowing indication of the authorities' failure in protecting individuals who are exercising their right to freedom of expression and engaging in peaceful activism. Xulhaz Mannan, the founder of the first LGBT magazine in Bangladesh, and his friend, Mahbub Tonoy were the latest to be murdered in the killing spree. The slaughter of LGBT rights activists underscored the mounting violence faced by those promoting human right and equality. The violent attacks against civil society members included the following:

- On April 7, four masked men attacked Nazimuddin Samad, 28. They hacked him with machetes before shooting him dead. Samad was a student activist who had organized secular campaigning network on social media.
- On April 23, men attacked Rezaul Karim Siddique, 58, a university professor, with machetes as he walked to the bus station in the city of Rajshahi. Islamic State claimed to be behind the brutal killing.
- On April 25, Xulhaz Mannan, 35, the founder of Roopbaan, Bangladesh's first LGBT magazine, and his friend Tanay Mojumdar were hacked to death in Mannan's apartment by a group of attackers posed as couriers to gain access to the building.

### **GHRD Calls for Action**

GHRD is outraged by the scale and ferocity of the pervasive violent attacks against members of the civil society. The authorities fail to investigate the killings properly, which continuously reinforces widespread impunity for the perpetrators. Therefore, GHRD calls on the Bangladeshi authorities to:

- Launch an immediate and proper investigation for killings of all civil society members and strongly condemn these killings;
- Bring those who are responsible for the killings of Xulhan Mannaz, Tanay Mojumdar, Rezaul Karim Siddique, Nazimuddin Samad and secular bloggers to justice in adherence to fair trials based on international standards;
- Ensure effective protection of people who are exercising their right to freedom of expression and engaging in peaceful activism.

For more information on recent developments, please contact:

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