

RAB's terror in Bangladesh



Comments 4



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Rapid Action Battalion [RAB], the most notorious Para military forces in Bangladesh, which is known for its atrocities through extra judicial killing, abduction, rape and collecting ransom, has finally shown its nasty fang with Weekly Blitz editor, Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury.

Internationally known award winning [recipient of PEN USA Freedom to Write Award in 2005; AJC Moral Courage Award in 2006; Monaco Media Award in 2007 and Key to Englewood City and Honorary Citizenship - USA in 2007] anti Jihadist journalist Shoaib Choudhury was kidnapped by a heavily armed gang of RAB led by Captain Shafiq on Tuesday evening.

When RAB stormed the Weekly Blitz office, they locked the editor including other employees of the newspaper and its sister concerns inside a room, seizing all cell phones and not allowing any communication, friends or legal counsel.

Almost after an hour and a half, members of the armed men took Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury and another senior member of the newspaper, Mahboob Ar Rahman with them while they looted cash and other valuables from the newspaper office. On arriving at the ground floor of the building, where Weekly Blitz office is located, RAB men blindfolded Mr. Choudhury. Before leaving Weekly Blitz office with the editor and other journalist, RAB's officer reportedly known to be Major Swapan, who is the Deputy Director of RAB-3 passed extremely offensive remarks on journalists and newspapers. Captain Shafiq also abused and humiliated Weekly Blitz editor and other members of the newspaper.

Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury and Mahboob Ar Rahman were taken to RAB-3 office and were detained there for hours. RAB men verbally abused Choudhury during these hours, repeatedly calling him a "Zionist spy and agent of the Jews". They used expletives to refer to journalists against whom RAB has a record of harassing, and the United States Congress, which passed a resolution in Shoaib's support. The verbal assault, which included numerous threats, continued for another three hours until someone RAB described as a "high government official" telephoned and ordered them to release him."

It is also learnt from the Weekly Blitz editor that RAB men demanded heavy ransom from him while Captain Shafiq told him [the editor] that he [Shafiq] is a notorious man, who has killed 29 people in the name of 'encounter', a regular practice of RAB for killing people. Shafiq and Shaidul Islam alias Swapan asked Mr. Choudhury to work as 'source' for RAB. When Weekly Blitz editor said, it is not his job to work as any source or spy for any organization, RAB men threatened that, they would do the same thing with him in future.

The matter was immediately notified with the Director General of Rapid Action Battalion and other senior officials of the government. But, there is no action yet taken against the RAB team till filling this report.

Meanwhile, Weekly Blitz editor Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury has sent letters to the Chief Advisor, Army Chief and other officials in Bangladesh seeking immediate investigation and necessary actions against the culprits of RAB-3 for such notoriety.

On condition of anonymity, a highly placed source within Rapid Action Battalion told Weekly Blitz that, many officials of the RAB-3 unit are greatly involved in series of criminal activities, including collecting ransom. They maintain close links with some criminal gangs as well in either making money or trapping innocent people and finally end up in extracting money. It is further learnt that, inside RAB-3 compound, most of the interrogation rooms [which are openly seen] are equipped with torturing apparatuses and many of the RAB-3 men are accused of rapid females during interrogation.

It may be further mentioned here that, since its creation, RAB has so far killed more than one thousand people in the name of encounter. More than eighty-six females had already been raped in RAB custody.

By a correspondent in Dhaka

editor

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