

Written statement of Press Conference

5<sup>th</sup> August 2015

**Brutal Killing of Children: Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh<sup>1</sup> expresses grave concern**

Dear Journalists,

Another brutal killing has taken place while the grief of Rajon's Killings is yet to fade out. Reportedly on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015 Rakib, a 12 years working child has been brutally killed in Khulna by his employer and fellow workers. A high-pressure air pump nozzle was inserted into his rectum and his body was filled with air. Several parts of Rakib's body, including the abdomen, swelled at that time. Rakib faced this brutality only because he had left his old garage job and joined elsewhere. Local people have caught and handed over the perpetrators to police.

Children are considered as the future of the nation. If we fail to provide a safe and secured life to our children, this statement will end up as mere a rhetoric. Children in this country are growing up in a cruel environment with fear and violence which is reflected in recent news reports. While we all are still haunted with the brutal killing of Rajon, yet news of rape, gang rape and killing after rape are coming out everyday. This gives us serious reminder to rethink about the existing system we are offering to protect our children.

Dear Journalist Friends

We are deeply shocked, heavily concerned and outraged with these incidents. Seven children have been killed in seven days from 29 July to 4 August 2015. According to the documentation of Bangladesh Shisu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), Since January this year 56 Children have been killed and 96 have been raped. We urge you to continue your reporting with regular follow up to these incidents. Your role is very important to hold the administration accountable and at the same time to aware people about these incidents and the consequences. We will remain by your side and would like to work together.

Local people in many occasions caught the perpetrators which we think is a positive sign. But we would like to see rapid action been taken against those perpetrators and they are brought to book with exemplary punishment. We are also raising our grave concern for the reluctant attitude of the administration and prolonged procedure that impede access to justice for the victims.

Although, in the face of public outcry the government has promised for speedy trial in Rajon's case we have not seen that any step has been taken so far to that end. As it has been reported that few such cases have been compromised with money, we fear that Rajon and Rakib's case might face the same fate. We demand that the government will provide regular follow up and detail information starting from the postmortem till the end of these two cases.

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<sup>1</sup> Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh (CRACB) is the coalition of ten national and international organizations<sup>1</sup> who are working for upholding child's rights. The ten member organizations of the coalition are (in alphabetical order): ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB), Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Shisu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), Child Rights Governance Assembly (CRGA), Education and Development Foundation- educo, National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF), Plan International Bangladesh (PIB), Save the Children in Bangladesh (SCiB), Terre des Hommes-Netherlands (TdH-NL) and World Vision Bangladesh (WVB)

We also demand that the government would include these two cases in speedy trial and ensure exemplary punishment and propose to form a monitoring committee coordinated by National Human Rights Commission and headed by a High Court Judge for regular monitoring and sharing information with media. We hope that the local administration will carry out adequate awareness raising activities on atrocities against children and the law enforcement agencies will remain on alert to stop such activities.

We would like to remind that Government of Bangladesh is obligated to fulfill its commitments at national and international level to protect children. Children Act 2013 has given much importance on child protection. We appreciate government's commitment for zero tolerance but at the same time we urge the government to revisit the existing protection mechanism considering the happening of recent incidents. We do hope that the Government will immediately undertake new measures and delegate responsibility to the field administration and law enforcing agencies for the effective execution of those measures. We also feel that it is equally important to make aware and sensitize people to ensure the safety, security and rights of the children. In order to ensure a congenial atmosphere for children it is crucial that government and people take responsible action.

Annex: Recent incidents of brutality against children- Seven killed in seven days

Date	Newspaper	Geographic location	Nature incident	Age
4 <sup>th</sup> August 2015	Prothom Alo	Dhaka Medical college	Child dead body in a box	9
3 <sup>rd</sup> August 2015	Ittefaq	Noakhali	Ekram tortured for the allegation of stealing	10
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2015	Jonokantho	Noakhali	Torture of children and adolescent	5
2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2015	Jonokantho	Madaripur	Torture of children and adolescent	18
1 <sup>st</sup> August 2015	Jonokantho	Coxesbazar	Torture of children	Age not mentioned
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2015	Jonokantho	Maymensing	Torture of children	Age not mentioned
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2015	Prothom Alo	Narayegong	Torture of children	13