



BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2021 TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION

Each year during Banned Books Week, the American Library Association (ALA) calls attention to books that have been challenged in US Libraries. At the same time Amnesty International activists and groups draw attention to people around the world who have been imprisoned, threatened, or murdered because of what they wrote or published or because of their work in the publishing or media industries.

Banned Books Week 2021 will spotlight six cases of people whose rights are under attack because of their work. The human rights of authors, journalists, bloggers, filmmakers, poets, novelists, photojournalists, publishers, musicians and more continue to be violated globally, and your help is needed to demand justice!

This toolkit will provide you with information on this year's cases as well as ways that you can take action with us. Take a look at the opportunities listed in the toolkit and consider how you can get involved in your community.



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SCAN THIS QR CODE TO
VISIT AIUSA'S BANNED
BOOKS LANDING PAGE



1. MEET THE CASES



AHMED KABIR KISHORE

BANGLADESH

CARTOONIST

Ahmed Kabir Kishore was arrested and detained, along with writer Mushtaq Ahmed, for posting satirical cartoons on Facebook, as well as comments about the Bangladeshi government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mushtaq Ahmed died in custody and Kishore was tortured and is still facing charges. Hundreds of others, including musicians, students, photojournalists, and others are facing charges for what they have posted online under the Digital Securities Act.



Use AIUSA's online action to email the Bangladeshi government and demand charges are dropped against Ahmed Kabir Kishore. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWAhmed>

5

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





JIMMY LAI

HONG KONG

PUBLISHER



Jimmy Lai is the founder of Apple Daily, which is the only pro-democracy print paper in Hong Kong. Lai was arrested in August 2020. Less than a year later, the Apple Daily was shut down, Lai is currently serving a twenty-month term at Stanley Prison.



Use AIUSA's online action to email the Hong Kong government and demand they release Jimmy Lai and protect freedom of the press. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWJimmyLai>

6

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL





GOLROKH EBRAHIMI IRAEE

IRAN

FICTION WRITER



In 2015 Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee was sentenced to six years in prison for writing a fictional story about the practice of stoning. Her sentence was reduced and she was subsequently released, only to be convicted again in 2019 and sentenced to an additional three years, seven months.



Use AIUSA's online action to email the Iranian government and demand the immediate and unconditional release of Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWGolrokh>

7

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





JA'AFAR JA'AFAR

NIGERIA

JOURNALIST



Ja'afar Ja'afar is a Nigerian journalist and editor of the Daily Nigerian, an online publication. Ja'afar published videos allegedly showing a serving governor receiving bribes from contractors. This resulted in threats to his life and family which made him flee from Nigeria.



Use AIUSA's online action to email the Nigerian government and demand the trumped up charges against Ja'afar Ja'afar are dropped. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWJaafar>

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





ELENA MILASHINA

RUSSIA

JOURNALIST



Elena Milashina is an award winning investigative journalist and human rights defender whose work has focused on Chechnya. Elena is at risk of retaliation, death threats and physical violence. She was the target of a death threat from the Head of the Chechen Republic in 2020 and was physically attacked by a mob in Grozny, the Chechen capital. Additionally, she has been the target of smear campaigns for her reporting.



Use AIUSA's online action to urge the Russian government to investigate the threats and violence against Elena. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWElena>

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**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





AHNAF JAZEEM

SRI LANKA

POET



The Sri Lankan poet and teacher Ahnaf Jazeem has been arbitrarily detained for over a year. He was arrested on May 16, 2020 under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, in connection to a Tamil-language collection of poems called Navarasam, as well as other unsubstantiated claims under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. He has been arbitrarily detained for over a year.



Use AIUSA's online action to urge the Sri Lankan government to free Ahnaf Jazeem immediately and repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Scan the QR Code or click the link below.

<https://bit.ly/BBWAhnaf>

10

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



2. GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

Are you part of an Amnesty group or taking action as an individual? In this section, you will find recommendations for actions and events that individuals and groups can join, organize and host.

1

JOIN OUR LAUNCH EVENT: PAGE NOT FOUND

On September 21, 2021, Amnesty International USA will be hosting a special virtual event, Page Not Found: Censorship & Human Rights in the 21st Century. The event will include guest speakers from the American Library Association, the International Federation of Library Associations, journalists and cartoonists discussing freedom of expression, censorship, and actions for this year's cases.

Invite your group and libraries and booksellers in your area to join this important discussion of literature, media, and freedom of expression. RSVP here: <https://bit.ly/BBWEvent>

2

HOST AN EVENT WITH YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

Connect with your local library to see if they already have a virtual Banned Books Week event planned. Their focus on informing the public of banned books and censorship, paired with Amnesty International's emphasis on protecting the rights of writers around the world is a powerful combination!

Know of local booksellers or Little Free Libraries in your area? Include them in Banned Books Week! Share a copy of our toolkit, talk with them about hosting a joint event, or ask for them to hang up one of Amnesty's Banned Books Week flyers or add Amnesty's Banned Books Week bookmarks to their displays or counters.

You can order Banned Books Week bookmarks here:
www.amnestyusa.org/order-your-banned-books-week-bookmarks



3

BANNED BOOK READ-ALOUD EVENT

A read aloud event is a creative way to raise awareness on the issues at the heart of Banned Books Week, and it's as easy to host in a virtual setting as it is in person. Things to think about when planning a read aloud event include:

- What readings, currently or formerly banned, could be featured that would resonate with your community?
- Who could you invite to read them? (Are there any local celebrities who might feel inspired to raise awareness for freedom of expression?)
- Consider having a host or MC to open and close the event, and to help the event flow smoothly from reader to reader.
- Explore other fun, creative activities that can be woven into the event. Could community members or kids share original writing about human rights? Could music or videos create a dynamic experience?

4

HOST A LETTER-WRITING EVENT

By writing to the decisionmakers for each of these cases, we have a chance to make a difference in the lives of threatened and imprisoned writers and artists around the world and show them that the world is watching!

Organize a letter-writing party during Banned Books Week with you Amnesty group or members of your community. [You can find an Amnesty Group in your community here.](#)

During your event, take the online actions and write solidarity messages to journalists in Central America. Let AIUSA know what you have planned by posting your event on the Amnesty Events Calendar: www.amnestyusa.org/take-action/events



3. LIBRARY AND BOOKSTORE ACTIONS

Are you representing a library or bookstore? In this section, you will find recommendations for actions and events that libraries and bookstores can host and join.

1

ADD HUMAN RIGHTS TO YOUR BANNED BOOKS DISPLAY

You probably already know that a great way to raise awareness about Banned Books Week is to set up a book display. With Amnesty International's materials, you can also inspire members of your community to take action for human rights!

Here are a few tips to add human rights to your 2021 Banned Books Week display, whether it is online or in person:

- Include books by authors whose human rights have been violated because of their writing. You can use [Amnesty International's 2021 Banned Books List](#) to find titles available in English; also on our landing page: <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW2021>
- Use the printable case sheets at the start of this toolkit to include information about cases Amnesty is featuring this year and encourage your community to take action to support these writers, journalists and artists.
- This toolkit also includes printable flyer and bookmarks that you can add to your display or in a window so people passing by can take action too.
- You can also order bookmarks from AIUSA by filling out the Banned Books Week bookmark order form at: www.amnestyusa.org/order-your-banned-books-week-bookmarks/

Post your display on social media, and be sure to tag @AmnestyUSA!



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HOST A LETTER-WRITING EVENT

By writing to the decisionmakers for each of these cases, we have a chance to make a difference in the lives of threatened and imprisoned writers and artists around the world and show them that the world is watching!

[Partner with an AIUSA group](#) to organize a letter-writing party during Banned Books week to honor freedom of expression and to support people who are being silenced, or host your own event.

During your event, take the online actions and write solidarity messages to journalists in Central America. Let AIUSA know what you have planned by posting your event on the Amnesty Events Calendar: www.amnestyusa.org/take-action/events



4

JOIN OUR LAUNCH EVENT: PAGE NOT FOUND

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Invite your group and libraries and booksellers in your area to join this important discussion of literature, media, and freedom of expression. RSVP here: <https://bit.ly/BBWEvent>

5

ADD HUMAN RIGHTS TO YOUR LITTLE FREE LIBRARY

To raise awareness about Banned Books Week and inspire community members to take action for human rights, you can display the flyer in your Little Free Library window and put bookmarks in each of the books. Both have QR codes that take you to the [Banned Books Week website](#) so folks can take action!

You can print the Amnesty materials at the end of this toolkit or order bookmarks from AIUSA here: www.amnestyusa.org/order-your-banned-books-week-bookmarks

Invite other Little Free Librarians to participate with you! Share the Banned Books website with them on social media, invite your community to attend Page Not Found and encourage them to put bookmarks in their Little Free Library too!



6

HOST AN EVENT WITH AN AMNESTY GROUP

Find out if there's an AIUSA group near you by searching here: www.amnestyusa.org/take-action/find-a-group.

If there is a group in your area, you can email the group coordinator to ask if they have a Banned Books Week event planned, or if they'd like to plan one together.

As you plan, we recommend you think about the following questions:

- What kind of event will be most engaging and accessible for community members? (Take a look at our recommendations for read alouds and letter-writing.)
- What accessibility considerations should you make for your community members to fully participate?
- Will community members be comfortable attending an in-person event, or is a virtual event a better fit?
- What virtual platforms are most accessible in your community and does someone on your team feel confident being the tech lead?
- Who do you hope will attend and what time of day or day of the week will work best for your community?
- Will you need to provide options for children and younger community members?
- Are there other groups, businesses or community members who might be good partners for this event?
- Where can you publicize this event? (Examples include local and student newspapers, community message boards, social media, host websites, etc.)
- How will you collect RSVPs? (Eventbrite has free tools!)
- What is your ideal number of attendees? Remember the rule of twos! To reach your participation goal, you want twice as many people to RSVP as you hope will attend the event and you have to reach out to twice as many people as you'd like to have RSVP.

Email communitynetworks@aiusa.org for support!



4. SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

Are you looking for ways to take action online?
In this section, you will find resources for social
media and samples to help you draft your perfect
post.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIONS

We encourage everyone to use social media to amplify your activism for Banned Books Week and freedom of expression. Spread the word about your events and actions, raise awareness about the way freedoms and human rights are challenged every day, and recruit community members to take action!

DOWNLOAD GRAPHICS

You can post these graphics, designed by Amnesty International USA:
<https://bit.ly/BBWsocial>

SAMPLE POSTS

September 26 – October 2nd is #BannedBooksWeek! Will you take action with @AmnestyUSA and support freedom of expression? Learn more at <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW>

Freedom of expression is under threat around the world. Join @AmnestyUSA during #BannedBooksWeek to fight for human rights defenders! Take action at <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW>

Join me and @AmnestyUSA on Sept 21 at Page Not Found, a #BannedBooksWeek launch event to defend free speech <https://bit.ly/BBWEvent>

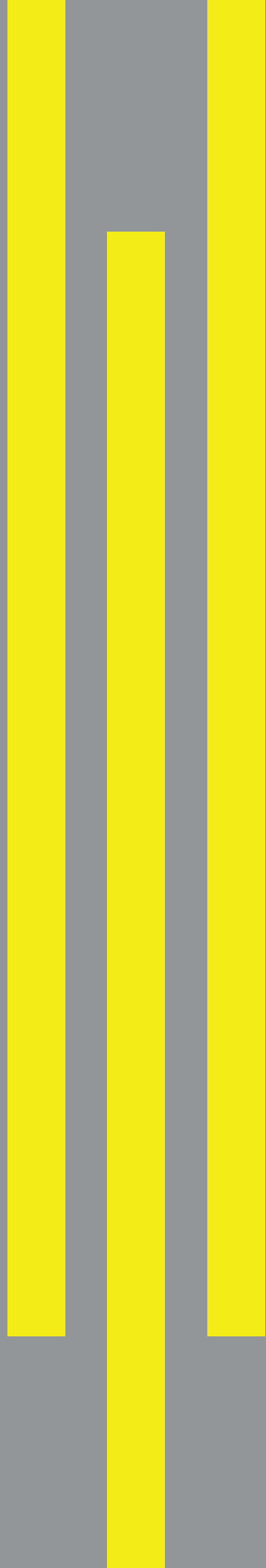
Defend free speech with @AmnestyUSA this #BannedBooksWeek – visit <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW> to take action today!

Imagine getting arrested, imprisoned or sentenced to death because of a photo you took, a story you wrote, or something you tweeted. Take action for #BannedBooksWeek <https://bit.ly/AIUSABBW>



5.

PRINTABLE RESOURCES





BANNED

BANNED

BANNED

BANNED

BANNED

BOOKS

BOOKS

BOOKS

BOOKS

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2021

2021

2021

2021

2021

9/26 - 10/2

9/26 - 10/2

9/26 - 10/2

9/26 - 10/2

9/26 - 10/2

*Freedom of Expression is
a Human Right*

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amnestytusa.org/banned-books-2021

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MEET THE CASES

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AHMED KABIR KISHORE
BANGLADESH // CARTOONIST
TORTURED & FACING CHARGES

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TORTURED & FACING CHARGES

AHMED KABIR KISHORE
BANGLADESH // CARTOONIST
TORTURED & FACING CHARGES

JIMMY LAI
HONG KONG // PUBLISHER
PAPER CLOSED & IMPRISONED

JIMMY LAI
HONG KONG // PUBLISHER
PAPER CLOSED & IMPRISONED

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GOLROKH EBRAHIMI IRAEE
IRAN // AUTHOR
ARRESTED TWICE & IMPRISONED

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GOLROKH EBRAHIMI IRAEE
IRAN // AUTHOR
ARRESTED TWICE & IMPRISONED

JAA'AFAR JA'AFAR
NIGERIA // JOURNALIST
THREATENED & FORCED TO FLEE

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THREATENED & FORCED TO FLEE

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JAA'AFAR JA'AFAR
NIGERIA // JOURNALIST
THREATENED & FORCED TO FLEE

ELENA MILASHINA
RUSSIA // JOURNALIST
THREATENED & TARGETED

ELENA MILASHINA
RUSSIA // JOURNALIST
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THREATENED & TARGETED

ELENA MILASHINA
RUSSIA // JOURNALIST
THREATENED & TARGETED

AHNAF JAZEEM
SRI LANKA // POET & TEACHER
ARRESTED & DETAINED

AHNAF JAZEEM
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AHNAF JAZEEM
SRI LANKA // POET & TEACHER
ARRESTED & DETAINED

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BANNED BOOKS WEEK 2021

Each year during Banned Books Week, Amnesty International draws attention to people around the world who have been imprisoned, threatened, or murdered because of their writing, art or other published work. In solidarity with the American Library Association and organizations around the world, Amnesty activists work to fight challenges to freedom of expression.

09/26 - 10/02



**JIMMY
LAI
PUBLISHER
HONG KONG**

**ELENA
MILASHINA
JOURNALIST
RUSSIA**



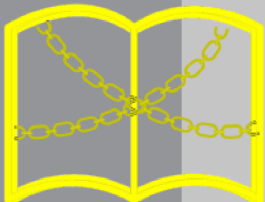
**GOLROKH
EBRAHIMI
IRAEI
WRITER
IRAN**

**AHMED
KABIR
KISHORE
CARTOONIST
BANGLADESH**



**AHNAF
JAZEEM
POET
SRI LANKA**

**JA'AFAR
JA'AFAR
JOURNALIST
NIGERIA**



SCAN TO TAKE ACTION



amnestyusa.org/banned-books-2021

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