

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

We, the undersigned, are gravely concerned about the allegations of torture of **cartoonist Ahmed Kabir Kishore** and **writer Mushtaq Ahmed** who had been held in pretrial detention for nine months since May 2020 for posting satirical cartoons and comments critical of the government on social media. Mushtaq Ahmed died in prison on 25 February 2021. A week later, on 4 March, Ahmed Kabir Kishore was released on bail for six months only. The cartoonist told Amnesty International that they both were tortured while in custody of one or more state security agencies before their arrest was officially recorded on 5 May 2021.



In addition to no longer being able to hear in his right ear, Ahmed Kabir Kishore also has difficulty walking due to pain in his left knee and ankle which shows the urgent need of proper medical attention. Charged under Bangladesh's draconian Digital Security Act, **Ahmed Kabir Kishore and nine others could face up to 10 years in prison solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression.** Drawing cartoons and posting criticisms online aren't crimes. Under international human rights law including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bangladesh is a state party, "the value placed upon uninhibited expression is particularly high". No one should have to die solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

We urge you to immediately and **unconditionally drop all charges against Ahmed Kabir Kishore and all those accused or detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression;** promptly, impartially, independently and transparently **investigate the death in prison of Mushtaq Ahmed,** allegation of torture of Ahmed Kabir Kishore and **bring the perpetrators to justice;** and **repeal the Digital Security Act** unless it can be amended in line with international human rights law.

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To: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Email: mission.washington@mofa.gov.bd Subject: Drop all charges against Ahmed Kabir Kishore
Return print copies to: Amnesty International USA / Northeast Regional Office / 89 South Street / Suite LL01 / Boston, MA 02111

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our **concern about employees of Apple Daily** who have been targeted in relation to the National Security Law enacted on June 30, 2020 and the measures taken that forced the **closure of the newspaper**. Amnesty International believes that Apple Daily and its employees were targeted due to the newspaper's criticism of the Chinese and Hong Kong governments. **Such writings are an expression of press freedom and even if critical of the government are permissible under international human rights law and standards and must not be criminalized.**



Authorities accused the newspaper of “colluding with foreign forces to endanger national security” by publishing articles related to foreign countries imposing sanctions on Chinese and Hong Kong government officials. The National Security Law’s expansive definition of “national security” lacks clarity and legal predictability and has been **used arbitrarily as a pretext to restrict the rights to freedom of the press, expression, peaceful assembly and association**, as well as to repress dissent and political opposition.

We therefore call on you to:

1. **Drop all charges** against and release those who are prosecuted solely **for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression**, or other human rights, and end the practice of bringing such charges in future;
2. **Stop using politically motivated prosecutions** and other legal procedures **against peaceful protesters** and others **to silence critical voices** and deter people from participation in the public sphere;
3. Review and **amend all laws and regulations**, and **end all related measures**, that **violate the exercise of human rights** and ensure that any legal provisions aimed at protecting national security or created in the name of counterterrorism are clearly and narrowly defined and **conform to international human rights law and standards**.

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Email To: Secretary of Justice Teresa Cheng Yeuk-wah **Email:** sjo@doj.gov.hk **Subject:** Protect Freedom of the Press in Hong Kong
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Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee is serving a prison sentence for writing an unpublished story about the practice of stoning. She was convicted on charges including “insulting Islamic sanctities”. She was later convicted and sentenced for her peaceful activities protesting prison conditions, on charges of “insulting the Supreme Leader” and “spreading propaganda against the system.” She is a prisoner of conscience and should be immediately and unconditionally released.



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Email To: Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ejei **Email:** Majidravanchi@mfa.gov.ir **Subject:** Freedom for writer Golrokh Ebrahimi Iraee

Return print copies to: Amnesty International USA / Northeast Regional Office / 89 South Street / Suite LL01 / Boston, MA 02111

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

We, the undersigned, are writing to you on behalf of Amnesty International to express our concern for **Ja'afar Ja'afar, a Nigerian journalist and editor of *Daily Nigerian***, an online publication.

Ja'afar is facing **fresh charges in a civil suit brought against him by the governor of Kano state**, Abdullahi Ganduje in the Writ of Summons dated 15 July 2021 (No CU/1598/2021) at an Abuja High Court.

Earlier, the governor had brought trumped-up charges of defamation of character, slander and libel against Ja'afar for publishing two videos on 14 and 15 October 2018.

The videos allegedly show the governor receiving bribes from contractors. For **four years, Ja'afar has continued to face harassment and death threats so much that he fled Nigeria**. We are aware that on 6 July 2021, the state high court in Kano ordered Gov. Abdullahi Ganduje to pay the sum of N800,000 to Ja'afar Ja'afar, and his company, Daily Nigerian for expenses incurred in the court case.

The **continuous persecution of Ja'afar Ja'afar violates his right to freedom of expression** as guaranteed by Nigeria's constitution and as set out in the UN Declaration on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals, Groups and Institutions to Promote and Promote Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. **As a journalist, Ja'afar Ja'afar should not be harassed for demanding accountability.**

As you are aware, Amnesty International is a global movement of over ten million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. **Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other International Human Rights standards.**

We urge you to ensure that the charges against Ja'afar Ja'afar are dropped.



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Email To: Abubakar Malami SAN, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice

Email Address: info@justice.gov.ng

Subject: Withdraw Trumped-up Charges Against Jaafar Jaafar

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

We, the undersigned, are writing to express our grave concern regarding the safety and well-being of *Novaya Gazeta* journalist **Elena Milashina**. On April 13, 2020, the **Head of Chechnya Ramzan Kadyrov** posted a **death threat aimed at Elena Milashina** on Instagram. The threat was in reaction to her article, published in *Novaya Gazeta* on April 12, 2020 regarding the authorities' response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Chechnya. Ramzan Kadyrov accused *Novaya Gazeta* and its journalists of being "puppets of the West" and directly appealed to the Presidential administration and the Federal Security Service (FSB) "to stop those non-humans who are writing and provoking our people." He further alluded that unless they do it, someone in Chechnya would have to commit a crime to **silence the journalist**.



On March 15, 2021, *Novaya Gazeta* published another of Ms. Milashina's article that sheds light on unlawful arrests, torture, and extrajudicial executions of civilians carried out by Chechnya's Second Special Patrol Regiment personnel. In response to the article, top Chechen officials started a defamation and intimidation campaign against Ms Milashina and *Novaya Gazeta*.

This is not the first time that threats and attacks against human rights defenders and journalists in Russia are being neglected by the authorities. This is a **violation of Russia's international human rights obligations to protect human rights defenders and journalists and to promote freedom of expression** which leads to further impunity for these crimes.

We call on you to publicly condemn the threats against Elena Milashina and take meaningful steps to ensure that this does not happen again and that Elena Milashina is safe; and to uphold the right of journalists to investigate and report on the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the right to freedom of expression and information.

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Email To: Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin **Email:** rusembusa@mid.ru **Subject:** Stand with Russian Journalist Elena Milashina

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

We, the undersigned, are deeply worried about the situation of **Sri Lankan poet and teacher Ahnaf Jazeem**, who has been **detained without charge since May 16, 2020** by the authorities. It is distressing to know that a year has passed, and no credible evidence of wrongdoing has been presented before a court. The draconian **Prevention of Terrorism Act**, under which Ahnaf was arrested, **allows authorities to arbitrarily detain individuals for up to 18 months without charge or trial**.

We find it alarming that he has been **denied due process and fair trial rights, including unrestricted access to his lawyers and his family**.

Ahnaf's legal counsel states that he has been coerced to make false confessions while under interrogation and has been made to sign documents written in a language he does not understand. These are all clear violations of rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Sri Lanka and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Sri Lanka is a state party.

Furthermore, we are concerned that he has been detained under **squalid conditions that may amount to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment**, which has led to the deterioration of his health. Ahnaf's family is concerned about his health and safety, a fear heightened by his restricted access to lawyers and family members and not knowing when this ordeal might come to an end.

We urge you to **immediately release Ahnaf Jazeem** or, if there is sufficient evidence of criminal wrongdoing, promptly charge him with a recognizable offense, in accordance with international standards. **Pending release or charge**, We call on you to **ensure that his fair trial rights are guaranteed**. We also call on the Sri Lankan government to **repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which does not meet international human rights standards, and immediately end its use**.



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