



1 April 2018

**Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) concern about disappearance of Advocate Rothish-Chandra Bhowmik Babu Sona and urges the authorities to immediately rescue him.**

On March 30, 2018, at around 6 am, Advocate Rathish Chandra Bhowmik Babu Sona departed his home and there is no information regarding his whereabouts after that time. His mobile phone was also switched off. The local police administration, the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) and RAB are separately investigating the incident and trying to rescue Rothish Chandra Bhaumik. However, no progress has been made so far.

It is known from the published news that the prosecutor Rothish Bhaumik was appointed as one of the lawyers prosecuting those accused for the murder Japanese citizen Kunio Hosi and the Mazar Khadem, Rahmat Ali, , the Judgment of both the cases was given a few days ago. At the same time, he testified as one of the witnesses in the war crimes trial of ATM Azharul Islam case, in the International Crimes Tribunal. He is a member of BLAST's Rangpur Unit management committee, witness to the war crimes tribunal, Special Prosecutor of Rangpur District Court, and a human rights activist. According to his family and his colleagues in various social movements, since the judgments in these two cases, he was threatened over his mobile phone several times and was concerned about this. Quoting the leaders of the family and local socio-cultural organizations, the newspaper further said that the local administration did not take any effective action even after the threats to Advocate Rathish Chandra Bhowmick's life.

Advocate ZI Khan Panna, member of the BLAST Board of Trustees and Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court Bangladesh, said that, *"It is the responsibility of the law enforcing agencies to find out the missing Advocate Rothish Chandra Bhowmick and reunite him with his family, without any delay. Therefore, the law enforcement agencies are requested to take swift and effective action to rescue him."*

BLAST is deeply concerned about the disappearance of Advocate Rothish-Chandra Bhowmik and the subsequent failure of the authorities to rescue him despite the passing of three days since his disappearance. BLAST demands the safe return of Mr. Bhowmik to his family without any delay, along with bringing those involved in his disappearance under the law.

Advocate Rothish Chandra Bhowmik Babu Sona is the son of a freedom fighter, witness to the war crimes tribunal and one of the organizers and human rights activists of the progressive movement of Rangpur. The incident of his disappearance is alarming, and is a punishable offense a violation of the state's commitment to safeguarding all of its citizens.

BLAST is deeply shocked at this incident and is demanding the return of Mr. Bhowmik to his family as well ensuring their safety without any delay, along with bringing those involved in the disappearance to justice by carrying out a swift trial and handing out an appropriate and exemplary sentence.

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