



Banglar

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MASUM's Statement on deporting of 60 accused persons to Bangladesh

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MASUM condemns the incident of deporting 60 labourers working as rag-pickers and manual scavengers in the outskirts of Bangaluru of Karnataka into Bangladesh today without maintaining proper legal procedure. The BJP government of Karnataka has apprehended these persons with the allegation of illegal immigration on 27 October, 2019 and detained them in a government run shelter home in Bangaluru for 26 days. The group consisting of 29 male, 22 females and 9 children are now being deported to Bangladesh through the Bongaon border in North 24 Parganas. Though we thank the Karnataka government for not putting any criminal charges against these accused persons, yet the question of pursuing proper legal procedures while conducting repatriation sustains. MASUM perceives this as an autocratic executive decision that goes against the Article 21 of the Indian Constitution stating the right to life. Under the circumstances, several valid questions arise on the event that is listed under -

- How did the accused persons get into the country crossing the international border and work in Karnataka?
- Where is the judicial order for their repatriation?
- Was due and fair process maintained in court?
- How were the accused identified as Bangladeshi nationals?
- Was the Bangladeshi government intimated about the repatriation?
- Why are the accused not being handed over to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' India office?
- Is this a camouflage process of NRC initiated by BJP-led Karnataka Government and duly supported by TMC-led West Bengal Government?

India does not have a domestic law on the matter of refugees as it didn't sign the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, which has 140 signatories. In West Bengal, the Bangladeshi nationals apprehended under Foreigners' Act, 1946 are treated as criminals by the police and even judiciary in most of the cases and sent to jail custody. For decades, MASUM is battling against the phenomenon demanding proper legal initiatives for the victims and their proper repatriation.

Through this statement, we put forward our protest on the event of deporting the accused persons to Bangladesh without proper legal intervention. We stand for fair and transparent government actions through preservation of International Law in order to protect the Human Rights situation of the country.

(Kirity Roy)

Secretary

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