

URGENT ACTION

ALL 28 MEN SUSPECTED OF BEING GAY RELEASED

The five remaining men still being held on bail, of the 28 who were arrested at a social event outside of Dhaka, were released on 21 July 2017. Initially suspected of being held on suspicion of breaching the prohibition of ‘carnal intercourse against the order of nature’ under Section 377 of the Penal Code, all 28 were charged under the Narcotics Control Act 1990.

Of the 28 men who were arrested on 19 May 2017 during a social event on in Kerinaganj, a town south of the capital Dhaka, 23 were granted bail during different court hearings in June while the final five were released on 21 July 2017.

Though the individuals were detained on suspicion of violating the Narcotics Control Act 1990, Amnesty International believes that the arrests were due to the fact that the gathering was known to be frequented by gay men. Harassment of LGBTI people by security forces is common in Bangladesh, and many LGBTI people have told Amnesty International that they are extremely hesitant to approach the police. Far from being offered protection, those who have reported abuses say that they are often harassed by police, told to be “less provocative” and even threatened with arrests and criminal charges for “unnatural offences” under Section 377 of the Penal Code.

No definitive information has been provided about whether there have been any conditions attached to the bail, however the men are deemed to be no longer in imminent danger. Amnesty International will continue monitoring the situation, and respond accordingly if there were to be any developments.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.

This is the second update of UA 112/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa13/6499/2017/en/>

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