

**Case File: The State vs. Arif Rahman**

**Case No: 2025/CR/015**

**Jurisdiction: Dhaka District Court**

**Filed On: March 25, 2025**

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## **1. Case Summary**

Journalist **Arif Rahman**, a senior investigative reporter at **Daily Truth**, was arrested under mysterious circumstances following the publication of an exposé on government corruption. His disappearance, detention, and subsequent trial have raised serious concerns about due process, legal fairness, and human rights violations.

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## **2. Background & Events**

### **The Exposé and Sudden Repercussions**

On **February 20, 2025**, Arif Rahman published a detailed report in **Daily Truth**, revealing widespread corruption within the **Bangladesh Public Procurement Authority (BPPA)**. The article accused high-ranking officials of awarding multi-million-dollar contracts to **companies owned by their family members**, bypassing competitive bidding processes.

The report sparked **public outrage**, with opposition leaders demanding an independent investigation. However, instead of addressing the allegations, authorities turned their attention to **Arif Rahman himself**.

### **Unexplained Disappearance**

- **February 21, 2025 (1:45 AM)** – Arif Rahman was last seen **leaving his office** in Karwan Bazar, Dhaka. CCTV footage captured **four masked men** forcibly taking him into an unmarked van. His phone was found near the location, **smashed and broken**.
- **February 22, 2025** – His family **filed a missing persons report**, but law enforcement **refused to acknowledge** his disappearance.
- **February 23, 2025** – A **government press release** stated that he had been **detained under the Digital Security Act (2018)** for spreading “false and misleading information aimed at destabilizing national interests.”

### **Secret Detention & Allegations of Mistreatment**

For more than **a week**, Arif remained in **undisclosed custody**. During this period, his family and legal representatives were **denied access** to him. Witnesses later reported that he was being held at a **secret intelligence facility**.

On **March 1, 2025**, he was brought to court for the first time, appearing **visibly weak** with **bruises on his face and arms**. His defense lawyer was **not allowed to present arguments**, and the prosecution claimed that he had confessed to **anti-state activities**.

The court **denied bail** and **sentenced him to seven years in prison**, despite:

- Lack of any **formal charge sheet** being presented.
- No **proper investigation** into the claims against him.
- The defense's demand for **forensic verification** of the alleged confession.

### **Eyewitness Reports & Leaked Information**

A month later, a **former detainee** who was released from the same facility revealed disturbing details:

- Arif Rahman was kept in **solitary confinement** in a **windowless room**.
- He was subjected to **repeated interrogations**, pressured to **retract his article** and admit to "fabricating stories."
- He was allegedly **deprived of sleep and food**, leading to **severe physical and mental stress**.

Meanwhile, **independent forensic experts** later discovered that the **video confession aired on state media** had **clear signs of digital manipulation**, suggesting that **his statements had been edited or coerced**.

### **Growing National and International Outrage**

- Several **human rights organizations** condemned the trial, calling it a **sham**.
- Local journalists staged protests, demanding **his release and protection of press freedom**.
- **International news agencies** reported that Bangladesh was increasingly using legal loopholes to **silence dissenting voices**.

### **Legal Battle and Ongoing Investigation**

Arif Rahman's family and legal team have since filed an appeal to the **Bangladesh Supreme Court**, citing **unlawful detention, coerced confessions, and procedural violations**.

As of **March 25, 2025**, the case remains **under review**, and new evidence continues to surface, questioning the legality of his imprisonment and the motivations behind his arrest.

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## **3. Conclusion**

This case has highlighted **critical concerns regarding legal transparency, press freedom, and fair trial procedures**. It remains to be seen how the **judiciary and the government** will respond to growing pressure from legal experts, human rights activists, and the international community.

The outcome of this case may set a precedent for **how investigative journalism and government accountability** are treated in Bangladesh moving forward.