

Statement: Shuddhashar Condemns Attack on Salman Rushdie

Sunday 14 August 2022, by [Shuddhashar](#) (Date first published: 12 August 2022).

It is with horror and anger that we express our strongest condemnation of the vicious attack on Salman Rushdie in New York.

Rushdie has lived most of his life under the threat of assassination. For his novel, *The Satanic Verses*, the Ayotollah Khomeini issued a fatwa against him in 1989, calling for his assassination. Publishers and translators of Rushdie's book have been attacked and some killed, including Hitoshi Igarashi, a Japanese translator. Publisher William Nygaard, advisor and friend to Shuddhashar, survived a firearm attack in 1993 in Oslo for his role in having the book published in Norwegian.

While living under constant threat and with a bounty of \$2.8 million on his head, Rushdie has been a strong and fearless advocate for freedom of expression. He has worked to protect writers at risk, having served as president of PEN, an international literary and human rights organization, and is outspoken about the importance of freedom of expression.

Also attacked today was Henry Reese, co-founder of the Pittsburgh nonprofit City of Asylum, a residency program for writers in exile. City of Asylum is the U.S. hub for the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN), the organization that aided Shuddhashar's publisher in receiving shelter after he was attacked by radical Islamists who attempted to stop his progressive publications. Reese and Rushdie were meeting at a public event at the famous literary center, Chautauqua Institute, to discuss the United States' role in providing asylum to threatened writers.

For such a strong defender of free speech to be attacked in United States, a country that has historically been a beacon of free speech through its legal protections sends a chill throughout the globe. Although an attack can happen anywhere in the world, it is nonetheless especially disturbing when this public figure, renowned for his many publications and after years of hiding and living under threat, is attacked in a country whose values center on freedom.

Salman Rushdie attended the PEN Literary Gala dinner in 2016, when Shuddhashar received the Jeri Laber International Freedom to Publish Award, after publisher Ahmedur Chowdhury survived the attempted assassination. The award recognizes book publishers outside the United States "who have demonstrated courage in the face of political persecution," according to the AAP website. Jeri Laber is the founder of the international Human Rights Watch.

This is an attack that cuts us deeply and personally. It is a reminder that our work must continue regardless of threats and fear. We must continue to write. We must express, critique, and learn through the written word. It is essential that we defend these rights to freedom of speech and thought.

Shuddhashar

P.S.

- Free Voice. August 12, 2022:
<https://shuddhashar.com/shuddhashar-condemns-attack-on-salman-rushdie/>
- Shuddhashar (শুদ্ধশার) was established in 1990 at the advent of the little magazine movement in Bangladesh as an independent magazine and periodical of anti-establishment writing, working towards a broader socio-cultural movement.