



Mahfuzur Rahman was allegedly tortured for three months and four days after he disappeared and Noyon was interrogated in DB police custody for seven days

Fact finding Report Odhikar

Mahfuzur Rahman (32) is the son of Abu Bokor Siddiq and Motiful Begum from Shampur village of Gaibandha district. At around 12.30 pm on February 18, 2012, Mahfuzur Rahman was allegedly arrested by Dhaka Detective Branch of Police (DB) and his whereabouts unknown. Nur Mohammad Noyon, nephew of Mahfuzur, was also confined and interrogated for seven days after he came to Dhaka in search of Mahfuzur, his family alleged.

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission into the matter. During this they interviewed:

- Mahfuzur Rahman, the victim
- Relatives of Mahfuzur Rahman
- Nur Mohammad, nephew of Mahfuzur Rahman and
- Members of law enforcement agencies.

Mahfuzur Rahman (32), the victim

The fact finding officer went to Dhaka Central Jail to talk with Mahfuzur Rahman. Mahfuzur Rahman told Odhikar that at around 12.30 pm on February 18, 2012, he was sleeping in his house, when 5/6 people entered his room and dragged him out. Mahfuzur asked them about the complaint against him. However, they did not reply and asked the family members to contact the Gaibandha District Police Station. When Mahfuzur tried to protest, they hurt him. One of them identified themselves as the DB¹ police and wanted to take him with them forcefully. They threatened to burn the house when Mahfuzur's mother and wife tried to obstruct them. They took him to the DB police office in a white microbus which was waiting at a distance. He was blindfolded and kept in an air conditioned room on the first floor. He was not given proper food or a chance to sleep properly. He was confined in that room for one month and 26 days and was beaten. A police named Mehedi beat him and told him to say that he was arrested on 21 May 2012, if and when asked. On May 22, 2012, he was sent to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court. He came to know from a police man that he was arrested in a

¹ Detective Branch

theft case under New Market Police Station. On June 5 2012, his lawyer managed his bail but Mahfuzur was again arrested from the jail gate in another theft case under Dhanmondi Police Station. Since then, he has been in Dhaka Central Jail. He informed that his family did not know anything about his whereabouts for three months and four days, from his arrest on February 18, 2012.

Motiful Begum (50), Mother of Mahfuzur Rahman

Motiful Begum told Odhikar that at around 12.30 pm on February 18, 2012, 8/10 people came to their house and identified themselves as DB police. They took Mahfuzur with them forcefully in front of her and told her to contact the Gaibandha District Police Station. She went to the police station at 1.30 pm and asked about her son's whereabouts to the Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI), Nowshad. However, ASI Nowshad informed that Mahfuzur was not brought to the police station and DB police took him to Dhaka. He suggested that she contact Dhaka DB office. Then she went to the DB Police Office at Minto Road with Mahfuzur's wife and a nephew at around 10.30 pm. She talked with the officer at the gate and asked about Mahfuzur. He asked for the name and designation of the officer who arrested Mahfuzur. She called ASI Nowshad for the name and he gave Motiful the mobile number (01711206430) of Sub Inspector (SI) Shubroto Kumar. At around 10.30 am on February 19, 2012, she called SI Kumar. He said that he was ill and asked her to call back the next day. Motiful Begum called him back next day at around 10 am and when she said who she was, the SI just said 'wrong number' and cut the line. She said she was unable to call him on his cell thereafter.

On May 22, 2012, her son was sent to jail after being arrested in a theft case under New Market Police Station. The case number is: 17 and dated: 29/12/11. On May 5, 2012, he was released on bail but again arrested from the jail gate in another theft case under Dhanmondi Police Station. The case number is: 12 and dated: 16/7/11. She found the number of the Associate Commissioner of the Detective Police Branch, Saiful Islam on a paper related to the case and called him. AC Saiful Islam forbids her to try to get her son released within one or two months. He also threatened her saying that if she tried to do so then they would involve Mahfuzur in a more serious case.

Mosammat Iti Begum (19), Wife of Mahfuzur Rahman

Iti Begum told Odhikar that at around 12.30 pm on February 18, 2012, two men forcefully entered her room and asked about Mahfuzur. Then 8/10 more people entered her room and dragged her husband out. They also took two mobile phones with them. They threatened to shoot her when she asked for the reason they were there. They also threatened her saying that they would burn the house if she tried to stop them. They forced Mahfuzur into a microbus.

She informed that she went to Gaibandha District Police Station and Dhaka DB Office to search Mahfuzur but the officers did not cooperate.

Nur Mohammad Noyon (28), Nephew of Mahfuzur Rahman

Nur Mohammad Noyon told Odhikar that on February 18, 2012, DB police arrested his uncle Mahfuzur and took him with them. The officers asked them to contact the Gaibandha District Police Station. On the same day, he went to Dhaka with Mahfuzur's mother and wife. They stayed at the home of Mahfuzur's sister at East Goran, Khilgaon. At around 3.30 am on February 21, 2012, around 7/8 people came and searched the house thoroughly. Then they handcuffed him and took him to the DB Office at Minto Road. There Sub Inspector (SI) Shubrata Kumar, SI Hakim and Manik with two more people interrogated him about Mahfuzur. He was handcuffed to a window grille for around 10 hours everyday for few days, he claimed. He was not given enough food. DB police told him that they would release him on the condition that he did not disclose what happened to him inside the DB office. When he agreed to their condition, they released him taking the 350 taka that was with him, at around 10.30 pm on February 29, 2012.

Aklima (33), elder sister of Mahfuzur Rahman

Aklima told Odhikar that her mother informed her over phone about the news of Mahfuzur's arrest by DB police on February 18, 2012. That night her mother, Mahfuzur's wife and one of her nephew came to her house from Shampur, Gaibandha. At around 3.30 am on February 21, 2012, around 7/8 people forcefully entered her house and identified themselves as DB Police. They searched through everything in the house. Then they handcuffed Noyon and took him away, along with two mobile phones, one digital camera and photos of Mahfuzur taken from a drawer.

ASI Nowshad, District Police Station

ASI Nowshad told Odhikar that on February 18, 2012, a team of 10 DB police came to Gaibandha from Dhaka. They arrested a person named Mahfuzur Rahman from Shampur village in his presence. After arresting Mahfuzur they took him to Dhaka. ASI Nowshad refused to name the officers or disclose the reason for arresting Mahfuzur.

Afjal Hossain, Officer-in-Charge (OC), District Police Station, Gaibandha

OC Afjal Hossain told Odhikar that a team of 10 DB police came from Dhaka and asked him to give a police officer with them from his police station. He ordered ASI Nowshad to go with them. Later on, he came to know that they arrested someone named Mahfuzur from Shampur village.

When the fact finding officer asked for the names of the officers who came to arrest Mahfuzur, OC Afjal said that in this kind of situation they would only assist the officers and refused to give any more information.

SI Shubrata Kumar, Detective Branch Police, Dhaka

When the fact finding officer called SI Shubrata Kumar and gave his identity, he said 'wrong number' and cut the line.

Sub Police Commissioner, Mohammad Monirul Islam, BPM, PPM, DB South, Minto Road, Dhaka

Mohammad Moniru Islam refused to talk about the arrest of Mahfuzur Rahman.

Odhikar's statement:

Odhikar demands justice for the torture on Mahfuzur and also for confining Noyon in the DB office for 7 days. Moreover, Odhikar requests the National Human Rights Commission to perform its duty regarding this matter.

-End of Report-