



## **BDR Officers Abdul Hannan and Krishnapada Pal Shot and Killed by BSF at Chapainawabganj**

### **Fact-finding Report**

### **Odhikar**

On the night of July 17, 2008, a speedboat and an engine-run boat of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) crossed the border near Roghunathpur of Shibganj, Chapainawabganj, one and a half kilometres into Bangladesh on the Padma river shared by Bangladesh and India. At around 11.45 pm, when a patrol boat of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR)<sup>1</sup> tried to enclose the Indian intruders, the speedboat managed to escape and a BSF officer fired from the engine-run boat towards the BDR officers. BDR officers Abdul Hannan and Krishnapada Pal were killed as a result of the shootings.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission into the incident. During the fact-finding, Odhikar spoke with:

- Witnesses to the incident
- Concerned BDR authorities
- The Doctor who had performed the post-mortem into the deceased's bodies.

#### Md. Ziaul Huq alias Fakir, Witness

Ziaul Huq alias Fakir told Odhikar that at around 11.30 pm on July 17, 2008, after seeing a BSF boat and speedboat enter one and a half kilometres into Bangladesh territory along the Padma river near the Roghunathpur river landing, he and a few others from his village informed the matter to the Roghunathpur Border Outpost which is popularly known as Roghunathpur BOP, the nearby border outpost of BDR. They were told that the BDR was taking necessary steps. After this they returned to the river landing. Fakir went on to say that at around 11.45, the BSF speedboat escaped after seeing the BDR patrol boat. However, the other BSF boat remained and according to Fakir it carried one BSF officer and several civilians. When the BDR patrol boat approached the BSF boat and told it to

<sup>1</sup> BDR is the border-guarding force of Bangladesh.

stop, the BSF officer immediately opened fire on the BDR officers. Due to the firing, Habildar<sup>2</sup> Hannan and Lance Nayek<sup>3</sup> Krishnapada of the BDR were killed. Fakir stated that the two remaining BDR officers on the BDR boat retreated with Hannan and Krishnapada and roughly one hour after this incident a group of extra BDR officers arrived at the place of the incident. However by then, the BSF officer and his accompanying civilians had got off their boat, walked along the bank and crossed over to India.

Major Abu Hasan, Operation Officer, 39 Rifles Battalion, Chapainawabganj

Major Abu Hasan said that at around 11.45 pm on July 17, 2008, some local residents of Roghunathpur came to Roghunathpur BOP and informed that several BSF officers on a speedboat and an engine-run boat had entered one and a half kilometres into Bangladesh approaching the Roghunathpur river landing crossing border pillar 10, sub-pillar 5 near the border outpost which was beside the Padma river. After receiving this information, the Roghunathpur BOP informed the BDR officers on the patrolling BDR boat to go to the place of the incident. It was then that a patrol team of four officers led by Habildar Md. Abdul Hannan set off from the Lakshmipur *Char*<sup>4</sup> to the place of the incident. The BDR patrol team could hear the sound of a speedboat at the Roghunathpur river landing. The speedboat quickly crossed over to India seeing the approaching BDR patrol boat. As the BDR boat approached the river landing, the BDR officers saw a large boat which appeared different from the traditional boats of Bangladesh. As the BDR patrol boat got closer to the large boat, the BDR officers turned off the engine of their boat in order to speak with persons on that boat. This was when the BDR officers saw one BSF officer and several civilians on the boat. Just then the BSF officer opened fire on the patrol team and Habildar Md. Abdul Hannan and Lance Nayek Krishnapada Pal were killed. The remaining two BDR officers also opened fire in self-defense. During the firing the BSF officer fell down onto the platform of the boat which caused the BDR officers to assume that he had been killed. BDR officer Hasan then said that the two BDR officers on the boat went off with the BDR officers Hannan and Krishnapada. They learned later on that the BSF officer had not been killed and had got off his boat and escaped into India with the assistance of the civilians on

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<sup>2</sup> Habildar is a non-commissioned post in the Bangladesh Rifles.

<sup>3</sup> Lance Nayek is a non-commissioned post in the Bangladesh Rifles.

<sup>4</sup> A strip of sandy land rising out of a river bed.

his boat. In response to a particular question, Major Hasan stated that the BSF officers who had crossed the border and entered into Bangladesh territory belonged to the Nimtita Camp of Battalion No. 108 of the BSF.

The Indian High Commission in Bangladesh denied the incident of two BDR officers being killed and stated in their press release that the incident took place between the BSF and smugglers. While commenting on the Indian High Commission's press release, Major Hasan expressed his grief stating that it was a very unfortunate attitude on the part of the Indian authority. Following the denial of the incident by the BSF, the following day on July 18, 2008, during a Flag Meeting between the BDR and the BSF near the border pillar 4/4S, the BDR authorities proposed a joint investigation of the incident. The BSF authorities in response said that they would inform the BDR authorities of their opinion regarding the proposal of joint investigation. However, ultimately, the BSF did not follow that up. Major Hasan suggested that if the joint Indo-Bangladesh Guidelines 1975 for border guarding forces of both the countries were followed, such unwanted incidents could be avoided.

Md. Tajuddin, Doctor who had performed the post-mortem of Krishnapada and Hannan

Describing Habildar Hannan's body, Doctor Md. Tajuddin told Odhikar that it showed signs of two bullet wounds. One of the bullets entered the left side of his chest and the other bullet entered through the deltoid muscle of his shoulders.

Regarding the state of Krishnapada Pal's body, he stated that two bullets in close proximity had entered the calf muscle of Krishnapada's left leg and exited through the joint at the knee. The bullets caused the bones of the deceased's left knee joint to break and the popliteal artery to tear. Doctor Tajuddin stated that Krishnapada had died due to profuse blood loss. He commented that had Krishnapada been given proper medical treatment within the right time, he could have been saved.

**-The End of Report-**