



Sayedur Rahman Sayeed Killed in a ‘Gunfight’ with RAB and Police at Alamdanga, Chuadanga

Fact Finding Report Odhikar

On May 8, 2009, Sayeedur Rahman Sayeed (28) from the village of Khashkorra in Alamdanga, Chuadanga was arrested by Police Officers of the Islamic University Police Station, Kushtia, at Ujangram Bazaar. He was handed over to the authorities of the RAB-6 Camp. On the same day it was alleged by the family members of Sayeed that at 2.45 am on May 9, 2009, RAB and the Police Officers of the Alamdanga Police Station took him to Shukur Ali’s family graveyard at the eastern end of the village of Khashkorra, Khashkorra Union, where they shot and killed him.

Odhikar engaged in a fact finding relating to the incident. During the fact finding, Odhikar spoke with:

- Relatives of Sayeedur Rahman Sayeed (Sayeed)
- Eye witnesses
- The doctor at the hospital and the person who washed Sayeed’s body
- Members of the law enforcement agencies and representatives of the local government

Mosammat Bilkis Khatun (22), Wife of Sayeedur Rahman Sayeed

Mosammat Bilkis Khatun told Odhikar that at 4.00 pm on May 8, 2009, she came to know from her brother-in-law Shafayet, that Police Officers of the Islamic University Police Station had arrested her husband Sayeedur Rahman Sayeed from a bus along the Ujangram Bazaar Road and transferred him to the RAB Officers of the Chuadanga RAB-6 Camp. Hearing the news, Bilkis, Shafayet and other relatives and senior members of the locality went to Solaiman Huq Joardar Selun, Parliament Member from Chuadanga (Chuadanga-2) requesting him to arrange for Sayeed’s release. Mr. Selun inquired at the RAB-6 Camp and reassured Bilkis and her companions and told them to return home. At 5.30 am on May 9, 2009, when Bilkis telephoned Shafayet, for news, he informed her that at 2.45 am, Sayeed had been killed in ‘crossfire’. Hearing the news, Bilkis left for the village of Khashkorra from her paternal home at the village of Horishpur, Horinakundu. She finally got the opportunity to see her husband’s body after it was brought home at 4.00 pm after the completion of the post mortem at the Chuadanga General Hospital. According to Bilkis, there were signs of torture on various parts of her husband’s body. Bilkis stated further that her husband was a political activist of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, BNP. She alleged that the RAB and Police were now spreading false information that Bilkis’s husband was a member of the Purbo Banglar Communist Party (ML Janajuddho) ¹. Bilkis alleged that due to ideological differences in party politics, the members of the ruling party² had conspired with the RAB and police and killed her husband. She demanded justice for her husband’s killing.

¹ An underground political party.

² Meaning the Bangladesh Awami League.

Shafayet Hossain (25), brother of Sayeed

Shafayet Hossain told Odhikar that at 4.00 pm on May 8, 2009, his brother-in-law Saidur Rahman contacted him by cell phone and told him that 6-7 plain clothed police officers of the Islamic University Police Station had arrested Sayeed from a bus at the Ujangram Bazaar and transferred him to the Chuadanga RAB-6 Camp. Upon hearing the news, Shafayet took several other members from his locality and local Awami League leaders and went to inquire at the RAB-6 Camp of Chuadanga. Having confirmed that Sayeed was in the custody of the RAB, they then went to the home of Solaiman Huq Joardar Selun, Parliament Member (MP) from Chuadanga-2, at Kobori Road in Chuadanga town. MP Selun assured Shafayet and those who had accompanied him, that Sayeed would be handed over to the Court from RAB custody. Hearing this, Shafayet returned home at 10.00 pm. At 3.00 am on May 9, 2009, Shafayet heard 18-20 rounds of bullets being fired from the eastern end of Khashkorra. Many of the residents of the locality were awakened by the sound of firing and came out of their homes.

At 3.30 am, Shafayet's brother-in-law Saidur, from Purbopara, informed him through cell phone that Sayeed had been killed in 'crossfire'. After hearing this news, Shafayet came out of his house to see RAB and police officers in two white micro-buses, one pick-up and an alamshadhu³ taking a body towards the Alamdanga Police Station, along the adjacent road. At 8.00 am, Shafayet set off for the Alamdanga Polices Station with his grandfather Robiul, uncle and other relatives. At 9.00 am, Shafayet saw his brother's body lying on an alamshadhu at the Police Station premises. He said that the police officers sent the body to the hospital from there. At 2.30 pm in the afternoon, the post mortem of the body was complete. Shafayet returned home with the body at 4.00 pm and the burial was performed at 6.00 pm. Shafayet demanded justice for his brother's killing.

Mosammat Shahina Khatun (26), Sayeed;s Sister

Mosammat Shahina Khatun told Odhikar that, 3-4 years ago, a shopkeeper named Montu was killed in a clash between two groups in her locality. Sayeed had been named as a accused person in the murder case that followed. Out of fear of arrest, Sayeed absconded, and became a conductor of a bus on the Kushtia-Chuadanga route. Shahina stated that she had heard from a relative of hers that Sayeed was arrested by police officers in plain clothed from the Islamic University Police Station when Sayeed's bus stopped at the Ujangram Bazaar on May 8, 2009. According to Shahina, her brother was shot and killed on May 9, 2009. She demanded justice for her brother's killing.

Billal Hossain, Member, Ward Number 4, Khashkorra Union Parshad

Billal Hossain told Odhikar that he was a Member of Ward Number 4 and also General Secretary of the Khashkorra Union Awami League. At 4.30 pm on May 8, 2009, Vice-President of the Kheshkorra bazaar committee and Sayeed's uncle Mijanur Rahman , brother Shafayet, grandfather Rabiul and several others approached him to inform him of Sayeed's arrest. He was also told that Sayeed was in the custody of Chuadanga RAB-6. Hearing the news, Billal, Siddiq Master, college teacher Abdul Hannan, Moajjem Hossain, Anwar Master, Vice-President of the Union Awami League and other senior members of the locality, all went to Parliament Member Solaiman Huq Joardar Selun and requested him to prevent RAB from shooting Sayeed and

³ Alamshadhu is local transport vehicle. It runs on a small motor.

arrange for his transfer to the Court. Selun assured them that if Sayeed was in the custody of RAB he would ensure his transfer to the Court. On the basis of this assurance, they returned home. On May 9, 2009, Billal heard from various members of the locality that Sayeed had been killed in 'crossfire'.

Bisharod Ali (58), eye witness to the incident, East Khashkorra Village

Bisharod Ali told Odhikar that on the night of May 9, 2009, he was engaged in boiling paddy with his wife and other relatives. At 2.30 am, he saw RAB and 25-30 plain clothed armed men walking along the road in front of his house heading towards the east. Under the moonlight, Bisharod recalled clearly seeing the men walk 50 yards ahead and take position inside the family graveyard of Shukur Ali, which was along the bank of a pond. A few minutes later, he heard the cries of a man. In the midst of all this, Bisharod overheard a police officer saying, "Get up ... get in front" and a single gun shot fired, after which the cries came to an end. This was followed by 18-20 rounds of shots being fired. After a while, two RAB officers and 4-5 police officers came to his house and summoned him and some of his neighbours to the place of the incident. The police officers pointed a flashlight towards a dead body lying on the ground and asked him if he could identify the body. Although Bisharod failed to identify the body, most of the other neighbours successfully identified it as being Sayeed, the elder son of the late Nazrul Islam from the village of Khashkorra. During this time, the police officers showed them a firearm that looked like a pistol that was lying beside the body along with a considerable amount of bullet casings and three small containers that were wrapped in red tape, all in a plastic bag. One of the police officers mentioned that Sayeed and his accomplices were holding a secret meeting. The officer also said that as they were passing by, Sayeed and his accomplices opened fire on them. The Police Officers were thus forced to fire back. Although his accomplices were able to escape, Sayeed died. After saying all these things, the Police Officers took the signatures of all civilians present on a white sheet of paper. At 3.30 am, after putting Sayeed's body on an alamshadhu which was parked on the adjacent road, the RAB and police officers left the scene in two micro-buses and a pick-up for the Alamdanga Police Station. Bisharod alleged that the so called 'gun fight' which came out in the news describing Sayeed's death was false. In addition to this, Bisharod claimed that there were no similarities between the photo that was printed of the retrieved firearms, bullets and explosives in the Daily Mathabhanga⁴ and what they were shown before at the place of the incident. Bisharod went on to say that his house was only 50 yards away from the place of the incident in the north-east direction. He claimed that no such 'gun fight' had taken place and that the police and RAB had staged the whole incident.

Nojir Hossain Mondol (74), Eye witness at the place of the incident

Nojir Hossain told Odhikar that at 2.45 am on May 9, 2009, he heard quite a few gun shots being fired from the north-east corner of his house along the bank of a pond. The gun shots caused everyone in his house to wake up from their sleep. After the gun shots came to an end, several people introduced themselves as RAB and police officers and took Nojir, all his family members and his other neighbours to the place of the incident. Nojir saw a body lying on the ground. There was a pistol, several bullet casings and three red tape wrapped containers beside the body. One of the police officers showed him the body and told him that the body was of Sayeed, a criminal and an extortionist, who was also the son of the late Nazrul Islam from the village of

⁴ The Daily Mathabhanga: The local Bangla language newspaper.

Khashkorra. The police officer stated further that a secret meeting between Sayeed and his accomplices were being held at the place. Although Sayeed's accomplice was able to escape, Sayeed died in the gun fight. Following this, one of the police officers took the signatures of 8-10 of Nojir's neighbours on a white sheet of paper. Nojir Hossain Mondol went on to say that at 3.30 am, the RAB and police officers picked up the dead body and placed it on a alamshadhu that was parked on the road and left the scene for the Alamdanga Police Station in two micro-buses and one pick-up.

Kazi Jalal Uddin, Officer-in-Charge, Alamdanga Police Station

Kazi Jalal Uddin told Odhikar that at 2.45 am on May 9, 2009, Sayeed, a criminal and member of ML Janajuddha of the Purbo Banglar Communist Party was holding a meeting with his accomplices at a locality in Khashkorra. On the basis of secret information, RAB and police officers conducted a raid which resulted in a gun fight with the terrorist gang. Although Sayeed's accomplices were able to escape, Sayeed was shot and killed. He informed that the police had been on the look out to arrest Sayeed for a long time. According to Kazi, there were 5 cases filed against Sayeed at the Alamdanga Police Station and one at the Horinakundu Police Station.

Sub Inspector (SI) Mostafizur Rahman, Investigation Officer, Alamdanga Police Station

Sub Inspector Mostafizur Rahman told Odhikar that in the incident relating to the gun fight on May 9, 2009, SI Md. Tajul Islam of the Alamdanga Police Station had filed two cases against Sayeed as a Plaintiff. Tajul Islam was investigating the two cases. Mostafizur refused to make any comments because both the cases were under investigation.

Saiful Islam, ASP Circle, Chuadanga

Saiful Islam, Additional Superintendent of police, told Odhikar that on May 9, 2009, Sayeed, who was killed a gun fight with the RAB and police at the village of Khashkorra, Alamdanga, was an absconding accused in several cases. He also stated that Sayeed had emerged as a criminal in his locality. It was in this light that Sayeed died while the Officers of the law enforcement agencies were carrying out their duties.

MM Shafikur Rahman, Camp Commander, RAB-6, Chuadanga

MM Shafikur Rahman told Odhikar that at 2.45 am on May 9, 2009, RAB and police officers conducted a raid at the eastern end of the village of Khashkorra where Sayeed and his accomplices were holding a meeting. Realising the presence of the RAB and police, Sayeed and his accomplices opened fire and flung explosives towards them. In self defence, the RAB and police officers opened fire and as a result, Sayeed died. Shafikur advised the Odhikar representative to gather the details of the incident from the various daily news papers.

Doctor Abdul Latif, Resident Medical Officer, Chuadanga General Hospital

Doctor Abdul Latif told Odhikar that at 12.30 pm on May 9, 2009, the Police of the Alamdanga Police Station brought the dead body of a man named Sayeed, and he performed the Post Mortem. He refused to tell the Odhikar representative anything further regarding the matter.

Md. Alamgir Hossain (27), the man who washed Sayeed's body

Md. Alamgir Hossain told Odhikar that at 4.00 pm on May 9, 2009, he washed Sayeed's body with the help of his neighbour Ajijul Huq (45). He stated that Sayeed had on a blood stained checked shirt, a white vest and black trousers. There were two bullet wounds on the body, one on the left side of his chest and another above his waist. There were also broken bones on the area above his right heel and left elbow along with wounds all over his body.

-The End-