



Allegation of the police torturing Parvez Zakaria on bail at the Joydevpur Police Station, Gazipur

Fact Finding Report Odhikar

At 11.00 am on October 30, 2009, Parvez Zakaria (25) from the Uttor Chayabithi (crematorium) locality of 154/17 Gazipur Sadar Upazilla went to the Alam Auto Engineering Works at the old bus stand in Shibbari to fix his Laguna van. It has been alleged that three police officers from the Joydevpur Police Station arrested Parvez and tortured him at the station after blindfolding and gagging mouth and tying his hands.

Odhikar engaged in a fact finding of the incident and spoke with-

- The victim Parvez Zakaria
- Eye-witnesses
- Concerned members of the law enforcement agencies.



Picture: Parvez Zakaria

Parvez Zakaria (25), the torture victim

Parvez Zakaria told Odhikar that he used to drive a Laguna van and was engaged in the fisheries business too. His father Sub Inspector (SI) Fayekuzzaman was currently employed at the Narayanganj District Court. On October 9, 2009, Parvez married Sanjena Huq Chadni (18), daughter of Shamsul Huq from E/147, Uttor Chayabithi. The local youth would regularly visit a person locally known as 'Sharif's Ma' who used to live beside Chadni's house with the alleged objective of engaging in immoral activities with her. Parvez stated that the people of his community had tried and failed to get rid of 'Sharif's Ma' from the locality. During the evenings two men would regularly visit her and engage in anti-social activities. Parvez had angered those two men by telling them not to come to their locality again and also to refrain from such kind of activities. He was unaware that those two men were PSI's (Probationer Police Officer) of the Joydevpur Police Station.

Parvez went on to say that Sajjad Hossain Lalon, a nephew¹ of Delwar, R1 (Reserve One) of the Gazipur Police Line, was in love with Chadni. Lalon was angered by Parvez and Chadni's marriage. In fact a false case was also filed against Parvez at the police station. Not being able to wed Chadni, Lalon, out of vengeance, took two other men on board to take revenge on Parvez. Parvez recalled that the Officer in Charge (OC) of the Joydevpur Police Station and the two other men had even attended his wedding ceremony. At 11.00 am on October 30, 2009, Parvez took his Laguna van (registered Chit-Metro-Cha-02-0679) to the Alam Auto Engineering Works at the old bus stand of Shibbari for repair. He was accompanied by his wife Chadni and his neighbor Md. Abdul Aziz (26). Parvez dropped Chadni off at the hair salon on the way. Parking his car in front of the workshop on the road, he took a seat inside it. Soon after, he was approached by two men who asked him if his name was Parvez. When he replied in the affirmative, the men told him that they were police officers and that he needed to come with them to the police station. Parvez also told the men that his father was also a police officer stationed at Narayanganj. He reminded them that they had attended his wedding. Parvez informed his father SI Fayekuzzaman about his being taken to the police station. The two men eventually took him by CNG scooter (three-wheeler) and headed for the Joydevpur Police Station. At the station, Parvez was locked up in a room on the second floor.

Showing Odhikar's representative the wounds of torture on his body, Parvez recalled that a third person brought a cane and the three men together began to beat him. They handcuffed him because Parvez was moving his hands to defend himself. Parvez was gagged and his legs were tied up with a *gamcha* (cotton towel) after which he was again beaten. In course of the beatings, three canes were broken on him. Afterwards an iron rod was used to hit Parvez's legs. Long pins were inserted into each toe. Parvez was thrown to the ground after which two of the men stood on his thighs and beat him further. Parvez alleged that at one point he was given electric shocks on his hands and legs. Later on he learned that the three persons who tortured him were Probationer Sub Inspector (PSI) Sanwar Hossain, Tarikujjaman and Shamim. At 1.00 pm, Parvez's father and younger brother Tanjin Zakaria (21) arrived at the police station. After meeting the OC, they took Parvez home. Afterwards he was admitted to the Gazipur Sadar Hospital. When there was no improvement in his condition, Parvez was transferred to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

SI Fayekuzzaman, Parvez's father

SI Fayekuzzaman told Odhikar that he was employed at the Narayanganj District Court. He stated that there had been a love affair between Sajjad Hossain Lalon, nephew of Delwar, R1 of the Gazipur Police Line and Sanjena Huq Chadni, daughter of Shamsul Huq of E/147, Uttor Chayabithi. Lalon was aggrieved at Parvez and Chadni's marriage on October 9, 2009. Three previous false cases had been filed against Parvez due to arguments that took place regarding this issue in the past. Parvez was out on bail in those cases. At 11.30 am on October 30, 2009, Parvez called him over the phone to inform that

¹ Lalon was from the Bhaluka Upazilla of Myemensingh. He was known in the Chayabithi locality of Gazipur as the nephew of Delwar, the R1 of the Gazipur Police Line. He was also known to exercise his superior position as the R1's nephew. R1 Delwar however told Odhikar that he did not have any nephew called Lalon.

two plain clothed men wanted to take him to the police station. When SI Fayekuzzaman spoke with one of the men over the phone the man introduced himself as PSI Sanwar. When he asked why Parvez was being taken to the police station, PSI Sanwar told him that he wished to have a word with Parvez at the station. He informed PSI Sanwar further that one of Parvez's wedding programmes was due to be held that day. In turn PSI Sanwar assured him that Parvez would be returned home after their conversation. After 10 minutes when SI Fayekuzzaman tried to contact his son, the phone rang quite a few times but no one answered. Soon after, he found the phone switched off. Some time later, SI Fayekuzzaman got a call from his wife who informed that she was told by someone about Parvez being severely beaten at the Police Station. Hearing this he set off for the Station at 12.30 pm taking his younger son Tanjin with him. When he informed the OC and Duty Officer of the police station about his son's presence at the Station they claimed to have no knowledge of it. Soon after, SI Fayekuzzaman began to search every single room of the police station for Parvez. After searching in vain, Fayekuzzaman was about to leave the police station when a paint merchant informed him that three police officers had tied up someone in a room on the second floor and was beating him. Hearing this he went up to a room on the second floor whose door was closed. The SI could hear sounds of beatings from inside the room. Fayekuzzaman pushed the door open to see Parvez handcuffed from behind and his mouth and legs tied up. One of the police officers was still in the process of beating him. Seeing his son's state, Fayekuzzaman ran to the OC's room to inform him of what had happened. The OC in turn ordered the three police officers to bring Parvez to his office. Assuring Fayekuzzaman that the persons responsible for Parvez's condition would be brought to justice, he urged that Parvez be given immediate medical treatment. At 1.30 pm, Fayekuzzaman brought Parvez back home. Parvez was taken to the Surgery Unit of the Gazipur Sadar Hospital in the evening. As his condition deteriorated the doctors at the Gazipur Sadar Hospital decided to send him to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on October 31, 2009. SI Fayekuzzaman informed further that his wife Parvin Zaman filed an application to the Police Super of Gazipur seeking justice for the torture of their son.

When Odhikar contacted SI Fayekuzzaman on December 28, 2009, he said that there was no subsequent administrative action following his wife's application to the Police Super. Rather the accused parties had been trying to strike a compromise regarding the incident. Seeing no progress after Pavin Zaman's application, SI Fayekuzzaman's brother-in-law Md. Shahnewaz filed a complaint addressed to the Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner of Gazipur, Minister for Home Affairs and the Home Secretary on 8/12/2009. Fayekuzzaman went on to say that if the police took no steps by the end of January 2010, he would file a case regarding the incident before the Court.

Mrs. Parvin Zaman (36), Parvez's mother

Mrs. Parvin Zaman told Odhikar that October 30, 2009 was the date set for one of the post-wedding ceremonies of her son Parvez. At 11.00 am on that day, Parvez took his wife Chadni to the salon on his Laguna van after which he went to the Alam Auto Engineering Works at the old bus stand of Shibbari to repair his van. There, two plain clothed police officers took Parvez to the Joydevpur Police Station. Parvin's husband got an opportunity to speak with Parvez over the phone. Later on she learned from another

person that Parvez was being beaten at the police station. Parvin then sent her husband to the Station who later returned home with Parvez at 1.30 pm. Parvez was admitted to the Gazipur Sadar Hospital for treatment. On November 1, 2009 Parvin filed an application to the Police Super of Gazipur for the injustice done to Parvez, detailing how he had been tortured. The application was registered as number 2429. Parvin informed that Parvez's treatment was still ongoing. The electric shocks and beatings that were inflicted on him had caused Parvez to suffer from mental disorders. He was often unable to recognise people and tended to talk nonsense in front of others. In addition, the police had also been threatening to force an amicable solution on to them as regards the problem.

When Odhikar contacted Mrs. Parvin on December 28, 2009, she stated that the flesh under Parvez's nails, where the police had inserted pins, was beginning to rot. The electric shocks inflicted on her son had resulted in him losing his mental balance. His incoherent rambling continued.

Md. Abdul Aziz (26), Eye-witness

Md. Abdul Aziz told Odhikar that at 11.00 am on October 30, 2009, he accompanied Parvez to the Alam Auto Engineerings Works at the old bus stand of Shibbari to repair his Laguna van. At the auto works, Aziz was conversing with Anwar, the driver of another Laguna van. When the car mechanic began to repair Parvez's van, two men approached Parvez and began to talk with him. Parvez told the men to talk to his father over the phone and after saying so called up his father and handed them the mobile phone. After speaking with Parvez's father they took him to the police station, stating that they were from the station. Afterwards, Aziz informed Parvez's family of the incident.

Anwar Hossain (27), Eye-witness

Anwar Hossain told Odhikar that at 11.00 am on October 30, 2009, he was at Alam's workshop at Shibbari repairing his Laguna van. Parvez, from Uttor Chayabithi, who was an acquaintance, was at the workshop repairing his Laguna van. Parvez was seated at the back seat of his van, when he was approached by two men who wanted to have a word with him. Parvez got down from the van and began to speak with the two men. Anwar stood close to Parvez as he was talking to the two men, and understood that the two men were members of the police. At one point during their conversation, the two men took Parvez in a CNG scooter and headed towards the police station.

Md. Alam Khan (38), Eye-witness, proprietor of Alam Garage

Md. Alam Khan told Odhikar that at 11.00 am on October 30, 2009, Parvez arrived at his shop to repair his Laguna van. Parvez parked his van in front of the Owners Association Office, beside the auto works. A few minutes later, Alam heard that Parvez had been taken away by police officers. At around 1.30 pm, Alam learnt that Parvez's father had arranged for his son's release from the police station and had brought him home.

PSI Sanwar, Joydevpur Police Station, Gazipur

PSI Sanwar told Odhikar that a few days earlier when he had gone to the crematorium locality, Parvez and some others forcibly took away his mobile phone and money. They also locked him up in a room for a long time. He stated that Parvez threatened to cut off

his hands if he refused to hand over his mobile phone. When Sanwar told Parvez that he belonged to the Police Force and what he was doing was wrong, Parvez brought a copy of the Quran and made him swear that he would never tell anyone about the incident or ever file a General Diary at the police station. At 11.00 am on October 30, 2009 when Sanwar was passing along the Shibbari road, he saw Parvez at the Laguna van. He went up to Parvez to ask him how he was doing and if he was able to recognise him or not. Although Parvez initially could not recognise Sanwar he was soon able to recollect that he had taken Sanwar's mobile phone and had also made him swear secrecy regarding the incident. When Sanwar asked Parvez to return his mobile, he said, 'Sir, please don't hurt me. I'll give you back your mobile phone'. Sanwar then took Parvez to the police station and kept him seated inside a room on the second floor of the station. He told Parvez to make a phone call to the person who would bring his mobile phone to the police station. When Parvez refused to do so, Sanwar slapped him several times. Apart from this, Sanwar claimed that Parvez was not assaulted or tortured. Afterwards, Parvez's father came to the police station and took him away. Sanwar regretfully stated that Parvez's mother had filed a complaint addressed to the Police Super stating that her son had been tortured by Sanwar. When Sanwar tried to amicably solve the problem with Parvez's family, they demanded an amount of Taka 15 lac.

SI Delwar, Second Officer, Joydevpur Police Station, Gazipur

SI Delwar told Odhikar that Parvez's mother had submitted an application to the Police Super stating that PSI Sanwar had brought her son Parvez to the Joydevpur Police Station on October 30, 2009 without any valid reason and had beaten him in his office room. The Police Super has entrusted the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the police station with the investigation of the alleged incident. The investigation is still ongoing. SI Delwar informed further that Parvez Jakaria alias Prince Mahmud Parvez was an accused in four separate cases, namely:

1. Joydevpur Police Station; Case No. 23(1)09; Sections: 143/323/341/324/326/307/379 of the Penal Code 1860; C.S. No. 581, Dated: 05/07/2009.
2. Joydevpur Police Station; Case No. 52(9)08; Sections 143/323/324/379/506 of the Penal Code 1860; C.S. No. 55, Dated: 03/02/2009
3. Joydevpur Police Station; Case No. 55(8)08; Sections 143/323/324/379 of the Penal Code 1860; C.S. No. 867, Dated: 03/09/2008.
4. Joydevpur Police Station; Case No. 55(6)02; Sections: 341/385/307/325/323/379 of the Penal Code 1860; C.S. No. 523, Dated 31/07/2002.

SI Delwar informed that all four cases were at the trial stage.

Abdur Rashid, Officer-in-Charge, Joydevpur Police Station, Gazipur

Abdur Rashid told Odhikar that when he was given the responsibility to investigate the alleged torture of Parvez, he directed SI Saidur Rahman to start the investigation. He stated that Parvez was not arrested by the three PSIs. They had merely summoned Parvez to the police station to ask him about a mobile phone. Parvez had utilised his position as the son of a police officer and had thoroughly irritated his community by misusing his father's administrative power. He also stated that there were four ongoing cases against Parvez at the police station.

SI Saidur Rahman, Investigation Officer of the allegation, Joydevpur Police Station, Gazipur

SI Saidur Rahman told Odhikar that the OC had entrusted him with the responsibility of investigating the allegations brought by Parvez's mother. He refused to provide any details because the investigation process was still going on.

S M Mahfuzul Huq Nuruzzaman, Police Super, Gazipur

S M Mahfuzul Huq Nuruzzaman refused to talk to Odhikar on the issue.

-The end-