



## A Man Shot Dead by Police at Mirpur in Kushtia

### Fact-finding Report

#### Odhikar

According to the witnesses, in the afternoon on April 18, Abbas (40) was picked up from Alamdanga by the police of the Uslampur Police Camp under the Alamdanga Police Station. Abbas's family alleged that he was shot and killed by the police from the Mirpur Police Station of Kushtia district at night on the same day. Alamdanga Police Station stated that they were not aware of the arrest of Abbas. On the other hand, the Mirpur Police Station stated that Abbas was a member of criminal gang and was killed in crossfire during a gunfight between the police and the miscreants.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission into the incident on the basis of the allegation made by the family. While carrying out the mission, Odhikar spoke with:

- The family and relatives of the deceased
- Witnesses to the incident
- Law enforcement agents
- A doctor who conducted the post-mortem and a man who assisted the doctors in the post-mortem.

#### **Monoara (32), wife of the deceased Abbas**

Monoara informed Odhikar that they had been living in Dhaka for several months. She said that on April 17, 2008, an acquaintance of her husband

named Badal<sup>1</sup> called her husband over the telephone several times between 9.00 am and 4.00 pm, asking him to go to Kushtia. She said that when she asked her Abbas as to why Badal had asked him to go to Kushtia, he told her that Badal and he would discuss certain issues. The deceased's wife said that her husband left Dhaka for Kushtia towards the evening on April 17, 2008. On April 18, 2008 at around 9.00 am Abbas informed her over telephone that he was then at Alamdanga in Chuadanga district and would return to Dhaka at that night. However, at around 4.30 pm, Badal telephoned her and informed that Abbas had been arrested by Sub-Inspector (SI) Shamsul from the Uslampur Police Camp under the Alamdanga Police Station. At around 11.30 pm, some of their relatives from Mirpur in Kushtia asked her over the telephone to go to Kushtia. Monoara alleged that Abbas had been killed in the police custody and demanded that those who were involved in the killing be brought to justice.

**Shamser Ali (42), witness to the arrest of Abbas by police, Atharokhada, Alamdanga, Chuadanga**

During his conversation with Odhikar, Shamser Ali informed that Abbas was staying at his residence after he reached Chuadanga in the early morning on April 18, 2008. Shamser said that at around 3.45 pm, SI Shamsul Islam from the Uslampur Police Camp under the Alamdanga Police Station, accompanied by another man in plain clothes who also introduced himself as a police officer, came to their house and picked Abbas on a motor cycle. While taking Abbas away, they told them that they would talk with him on some issues and then they would release him but Abbas never returned since they took him away. Shamser continued by saying that the following morning

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<sup>1</sup> Badal could not be interviewed as he was unavailable at his residence during the fact-finding mission.  
Odhikar fact-finding report/ Kushtia/Abbas/18 April 2008/Pg 2

on April 19, he came to know from various people as well as from a local newspaper that Abbas had been killed in crossfire.

**Fazlur Rahman (60), a retired teacher of Kathabhanga High School, and witness to the arrest, Kathabhanga, Alamdanga, Chuadanga**

While talking with Odhikar Fazlur Rahman said that there was a meeting of Community Policing Forum in the yard of Kathabhanga High School. He said that when the meeting was almost over, SI Shamsul brought Abbas who was from the Kakiladah village under the Sadarpur Union Parishad<sup>2</sup> of Mirpur Upazila<sup>3</sup> in Kushtia on a motor cycle and made him stand on the yard of Kathabhanga High School. He remembered that Abbas's hands were tied up at that time. He said that he knew Abbas from before. Fazlur said that SI Shamsul took another police officer who was in the school yard with him and left the place on his motor cycle with Abbas sitting in the place between them, heading towards Chuadanga. He said that he came to know from the local newspapers the following day that Abbas was killed in an encounter with the police while committing a robbery.

**Gaffar (50), a member of Hardi Union Parishad and witness to the arrest, Alamdanga, Chuadanga**

Gaffar, who is popularly known as Gaffar Member, said that when he reached near the Kathabhanga School on his way back home in the afternoon on April 18, 2008, he saw a large crowd in the school yard. He said that a large number of people gathered there at a meeting of Community Policing Forum. There he saw a man, whose hands were tied up, was made to sit on a motor cycle at a certain place in the School yard. When he asked Fazlur if he knew

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<sup>2</sup> Union Parishad is the lowest level of the local government in Bangladesh.

<sup>3</sup> Upazila is an administrative unit under a district.

the tied up man on the motor cycle, Fazlur informed him that the man was called Abbas who hailed from Kakiladah in Kushtia. Gaffar stated that some time later SI Shamsul took a police officer along with him from the Forum meeting in the School yard and left the place on his motor cycle with Abbas sitting between them, heading towards Chuadanga. Gaffar finished his talks with Odhikar by saying that he came to know the following day that Abbas had been killed in crossfire.

**Tahmina Khatun (40), sister-in-law of the deceased Abbas, Kakiladah, Mirpur, Kushtia**

Tahmina told Odhikar that she was informed by Abbas's wife, Monoara on April 18, 2008 that Abbas had been arrested by the police from the Alamdanga Police Station. She said that after she received the news, she contacted various people but no body could give her any information about arrest of Abbas. Tahmina continued by saying that she contacted the Alamdanga Police Station and the Mirpur Police Station but they told her that they had not arrested any body named Abbas.

Tahmina said that she suddenly heard gunshots at around 11.30 pm. She told Odhikar that she went near the Kakiladah graveyard and found the dead body of Abbas surrounded by a large number of police officers from the Kakiladah Police Camp and the Mirpur Police Station, led by S M Quamruzzaman, the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the Mirpur Police Station. She continued by saying that the police later took the body to the Mirpur Police Station.

**Ismayil Hossain (80), father of the deceased Abbas, Kakiladah, Mirpur, Kushtia**

Abbas's father informed Odhikar that Abbas started staying in Dhaka to avoid conflict with some people in his village home. However, he mentioned, that he could not save his life. He alleged that the police had killed his son. He demanded that those who were involved in the killing of his son be brought to justice.

**Statement of the person who assisted in the post-mortem at the Kushtia General Hospital**

The person who assisted in the post-mortem wished to remain unnamed and informed Odhikar that there were wounds on various places of Abbas's body. He said that he found one bullet wound on his head and two more on his back. He went on to say that Abbas's knee also bore a wound but it could not be confirmed whether it was created by bullet.

**Doctor Motaharul Islam, the doctor who conducted the post-mortem into Abbas's body**

During his conversation with Odhikar, Doctor Motaharul Islam refused to disclose anything about the post-mortem examination.

**Taslim Ali (55), the man who washed Abbas's body for funeral**

Taslim informed Odhikar that Abbas's body bore wounds at various places. He said that his skull was blown out as bullet hit at the back of his head. He went on to say that he found Abbas's left leg and right hand broken.

**Kazi Jalal Uddin, OC, Alamdanga Police Station**

While talking with Odhikar, Kazi Jalal Uddin, the OC, said that he knew nothing about the arrest of Abbas by SI Shamsul Islam.

### **S M Quamruzzaman, OC, Mirpur Police Station**

OC Quamruzzaman refused to comment on the incident. He referred to the newspaper reports as representing their statement. Odhikar found a report in a local newspaper, which mentioned about the Mirpur Police as saying that after the Mirpur Police received a tip off saying that Abbas was holding a secret meeting with his criminal gang beside Kakiladah graveyard at around 11.00 pm on April 18, 2008, a force from the Mirpur Police Station led by SI Atiar, following an order of the OC, conducted an operation to arrest them. When the force reached there, the criminal gang opened fire at the police, prompting them to retaliate. The report also said that Abbas was arrested and found seriously injured in the encounter and was declared dead when he was taken to a local hospital though other members managed to escape. He informed Odhikar that there were several cases filed against Abbas with the Mirpur Police Station.

### **SI Ibad Ali, Mirpur Police Station, Kushtia**

SI Ibad Ali informed Odhikar that two cases were filed against Abbas with the Mirpur Police Station regarding the incident of April 18, 2008.

Case No. 1, date: April 19, 2008. The case was filed under the section 19(A) of Arms Act and section 26 of the Penal Code.

Case No. 2, date: April 19, 2008. The case was filed under the sections 399/402/302/34/26 of the Penal Code.

## **The End of Report**