

A young boy died after being tortured by BSF in the Thakurpur Border at Damurhuda, Chuadanga

Fact-Finding Report Odhikar

Name of the victim : Hasnat Halsham Inu

Age : 15

Address : District: Chuadanga, Thana/ Upazila: Damurhuda, Union: Kuralgachi, Village: Sakolia.

Border/Pillar (Bangladesh) : Thakurpur Border, Pillar no: 87

Border/ Pillar (India) : Malopara Camp in Rangarputta

Date of occurrence : 21 January 2010



Photo: Hasnat Halsham Inu

On 21 January 2010, Hasnat Halsham Inu, a 15-year-old boy, was tortured by the BSF at the Thakurpur border in Chuadanga district of Bangladesh. Hasnat and his family lived in the Sakolia village which is located next to the Ichamoti River and makes up the border between India and Bangladesh.

On the fateful day, at 2.00 in the afternoon, Hasnat was looking after the family ducks along the canal as he did everyday. He crossed the shallow river in order to fetch some of the ducks that had swum over to the Indian side. One detective official of the BSF spotted him and he was arrested as soon as he was on the other side of the river. An hour later, upon his release, he crawled back to the Bangladesh side of the river. His father saw him lying on the bank and carried him home. He had no visible injuries or bruises, but was suffering from excruciating pain and was very weak. That afternoon at 4.00 he was brought to a local doctor in the Kapasdanga Hospital. On 22 January 2010, he was admitted to the Chuadanga District Hospital where he stayed for 12 days. During his time in hospital, he revealed the torture inflicted on him when he was detained for an hour in the BSF camp. He was beaten with bamboo sticks on his feet, hip and loin. Soldiers wearing boots stamped on his chest and lower abdomen. His arms were pulled in different directions and he was dragged on the ground in that condition until he collided with a tree stump. He was referred to Dhaka medical Collage as his condition was deteriorating. On 2 February 2010, he was brought to Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission into the incident on 13 February 2010. During the fact-finding mission, Odhikar spoke with:

- The family of Hasnat Halsham Inu
- Eye-witnesses
- Local residents
- Concerned members of the BDR

Momin Halsham (22), Brother of Hasnat Halsham Inu

Momin Halsham, the brother of the victim Hasnat Halsham Inu, informed Odhikar about the capture and torture of his brother which later caused his death. According to Momin, on the day of incident Hasnat was looking after their family ducks, when they crossed the shallow river dividing Bangladesh and India. When Hasnat swam across the shallow river to retrieve the ducks, one BSF official (according to the BDR, a detective) saw him and apprehended him as soon as he was on land. Hasnat was freed after an hour and crawled back to Bangladesh and collapsed on the bank. Since the home stead of the family is near the bank of the river, his father spotted Hasnat lying there. Hasnat was brought back home and around 4.00 pm afternoon he was carried to a local doctor in the Kapasdanga Hospital as he was in pain.

Momin who works in the fields, was not present when the incident took place, but he heard at 3.00 pm that his brother had been arrested by the BSF. After returning home he heard the details of the arrest and the treatment, Hasnat was subjected to, from his brother. When Hasnat was carried to his home from the bank of the rival there were no bruises or visible or external injuries on his body. But he complained of excruciating pain all over and was very weak. He revealed a shocking description of the torture carried out on him. According to Momin, after Hasnat was arrested by the BSF officials his hands were tied and he was gagged. At first he was beaten with bamboo sticks on the feet then a couple of BSF soldiers jumped on his chest and loin. He was beaten on the hip and from the description he gave it seems his anus was violated with a bamboo stick. Later his hands were tied with two ropes and his arms pulled from opposite sides. In that position the BSF dragged him forward until he collided with a stump of a tree.

On 22 January 2010, Hasnat was brought to the Chuadanga District Hospital, where he remained for 12 days. He had trouble breathing, vomited blood and constantly complained of pain. The doctors there operated on his chest (right side) to remove blood cots and pustule. Finally he was referred to the Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital. On 2 February 2010, he was brought to the Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital at 9.00 pm, where he was declared dead upon arrival. The next day, Hasnat Halsham Inu was buried in his village graveyard at 4.30 pm.

Momin also informed Odhikar that, no post-mortem was done after his death in Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital and all of his medical documents were lost there. An unknown police officer took the reports from the family to lodge the case. The family never went to bring back the reports nor did the police officer return them.

Shahdat Hossain, Member of Kuralgashi Union Parishad

Shahdat Hossain, a member of the Kuralgashi Union Parishad¹ was also interviewed by Odhikar. He said that he heard about it at around 3.30 pm on 21 January 2010. That night when Hasnat was brought home from the local doctor in Kapasdanga Hospital, he went to see him. He recalled that Hasnat was in a lot of pain, but there was no visible signs of injury. He also told Odhikar that Hasnat was a very nice boy and studied till Class 3 in the village school but could not continue because of his family's poverty.

¹ Union Parishad is lowest tier of the local government in Bangladesh

Subedar Nazrul Islam, Thakurpur BDR camp in charge

Subedar Nazrul Islam has been in charge of the Thakurpur Camp for 2 years. While carrying out the fact finding into the incident of Hasnat, the BDR was an integral component though it had no part in the whole ordeal. The BDR stated that Hasnat was captured by BSF when he crossed the river to bring his ducks back and was released an hour later. There was no flag meeting held between the BDR and BSF regarding the capture and torture of Hasnat. Thus there is no explanation or anything along the line from the BSF on the matter. Hasnat was brought home from the river bank by his father, so there was no official hand over either.

He further stated that victim Hasnat Halsham Inu's house fall's within the area of 'no man's land' where Odhikar was not allowed to go. Thus the whole interview was done in the BDR camp, where Momin Halsham, the victim's brother came. One thing that the BDR was able to affirm was that, there was no visible injury on victim's body but they heard and reported from victim's family, that he had been brutally tortured by the BSF.

Biva Lahari (27), Nurse, Chuadanga District Hospital

Biva Lahiri works the night shift at the Surgical Male Ward of Chuadanga District Hospital. During her shift she had the opportunity to take care of Hasnat. She told Odhikar that Hasnat complained a lot about pain all over his body, and especially in the chest. He had breathing problems and could not sleep at night. After a week, he started to vomit blood. As his condition deteriorated, he was referred to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on 2 February 2010.

Dr. Latifur Rahman, Chuadanga District Hospital

Dr. Latifur Rahmna informed Odhikar that Hasnat was admitted to the Chuadanga District Hospital on 22 January at 11.00 am and discharged on the afternoon of 2 February, when he was referred to Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital. He was the doctor in charge of the male ward and treated Hasnat there. Hasnat was kept in the Surgical Male Ward. According to him, Hasnat could not breathe properly, complained of extreme pain and could not sleep at night. There were a few bruises on his feet and legs. As he suffered from chest pain, an X-ray was taken which showed dried blood and accumulated water in his lungs. Doctors operated, making an incision under his right arm to remove the blood and water. They found the area to be infected as well. When his condition did not improve, he was referred to the Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital.

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