



A Bangladeshi citizen was killed by BSF at the Kazipur Border in Gangi, Meherpur

Fact-finding Report
Odhikar

Name of the victim : Shahidul Islam
Age : 37
Address : District: Meherpur, Police Station: Ganni, Union: Ganni, Village: Kazipur.
Border/Pillar (Bangladesh) : Kazipur Border,
Border/ Pillar (India) : Fulbari Border
Date of Occurrence : Between the evening of 14 January and the morning of 15 January 2010



Photo: Shahidul Islam

Shahidul Islam, a 37-year-old Bangladeshi was killed by the BSF shooting along the Kazipur border in Meherpur district at some time between the evening of January 14 and morning of 15 January 2010.

Kamala Khatun, wife of Shahidul Islam, told Odhikar that Shahidul was released from an Indian prison, about six weeks ago where he had been detained for three years. As Shahidul owned no land, he had been working as a day-labourer in the Kazipur village where he lived with his mother, wife and two daughters.

On January 14, 2010, Shahidul left home at 4.00 in the evening telling his wife that he would be back for dinner at 8.00 pm. The next morning, his family have been informed by villagers that Shahidul had been killed by the BSF, a few kilometers from his home.

There was some confusion as to his time of death. The villagers and the family members all concluded that they heard gunshot at around 9.00 pm on 14 January, 2010. However, both the BSF and the BDR claimed that he was killed between 4.30 and 5.00 am on 15 January while crossing the border.

On January 17, 2010, the BSF handed over the body of Shahidul to the BDR and he was buried by his family the same day. The family members and police informed Odhikar that Shahidul had been killed with one bullet in the abdomen. His family also informed that there were several bruises on his body. They also claimed that his bones were broken and that there was a wound at the back of his head. The investigating officer, however, said that there were no physical signs of harm on the body.

An autopsy was conducted in India before the body was handed over to the Bangladeshi authority. As of February 13, 2010, the Bangladeshi police had not obtained a copy of the autopsy report from the Indian authority or from the Meherpur District Hospital.

Odhikar has not been able to obtain further details as to the exact circumstances of Shahidul's death. The killing took place probably at night at a place located 1.5 kilometers near the border. BDR, police and villagers claimed that it was on the Bangladeshi side of the border but there were no witnesses.

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

- The family of Shahidul Islam
- Local residents
- Concerned members of the BDR
- Concerned police officers

Kamala Khatun, wife of Shahidul Islam

Kamala Khatun, Shahidul's wife, told Odhikar that Shahidul was captured three years ago by BSF while working for a cattle trader. He had spent the 3 years detained in an Indian Jail and was released about one and half months before his death. Since his release Shahidul continued his previous occupation as a day labourer in other people's fields and he also helped people around their homesteads.

On January 14, 2010, Shahidul left home at 4.00 pm saying that he would be back by dinner at 8.00 pm. Kamala was not surprised when Shahidul was not in by 8.00 pm because he often was not back till 12 at night.

At 10 am, 15 January, 2010 Kamala heard that her husband had been killed by the BSF. She was told that her husband was shot in Kazari, a place near the Kazipur BDR camp and about 1.5 km from the Kazipur village. She also heard that he was shot in the abdomen and that there was a lot of blood around his head. The family received the body on 18 January 2010 at midday. There were bruises on victim's body and a couple of bones were broken. Kamala also said that the back of Shaidul's head was severely damaged. On the same day at 5.00 pm the body was buried.

Kamala now resides in the Kazipur village with her daughter and mother-in-law.

Rongilla, Mother of Shahidul Islam

Shahidul's mother Rongilla told Odhikar that on 15 January, 2010, he was working in the field with his plough. Shahidul did not own any land of his own, so he worked as a day labourer on other's fields. That night he did not come back home for dinner and the next day she heard that Shahidul had been shot by the BSF in a field 2 km from the house.

Rongilla said that she did not hear any shots on the night of 14 January but that other villagers did. They got the body back on 18 January, 2010.

Shadeen Ali, villager, Kazipur Village

Shadeen Ali, a villager of the Kazipur village told Odhikar that he heard gun shots at 9.00 pm on 14 January, 2010. Around 9.00 am next morning, 15 January, 2010, he heard that Shahidul had been killed from the villagers. According to him, Shahidul used to work in Milton's field as a day labourer. That field was situated 2 km from his house.

Abdul Samad, (46) friend of Shahidul, Kazipur Village

Abdul Samad, a resident of the Kazipur village was Shahidul's friend. He told Odhikar that Shahidul was a good and innocent man but he had some hearing problems. He was really poor which probably compelled him to take part in cattle trading. About a week before his death, Shahidul told Abdul Samad that if he had the chance then he would go back to India one last time. Shahidul told him that it was because of one cattle trader that he had to spend the last three years in an Indian Jail. Abdul Samad wanted an answer from that person. He told Odhikar that he and his family also heard gun shots at 9.00 pm on the night of 14 January 2010.

Camp Commander (wishing to remain anonymous), Kazipur Border Camp

According to the BDR Camp Commander, Shaidul was caught between Kazipur BDR camp and Shaolatola BDR Camp. Both the camps are under the administration of the Tetulbari BDR Camp. Shaolatola Camp had acquired information regarding Shahidul's killing but as he was a resident of Kazipur village, the Kazipur BDR Camp received the body of Shahidul from the BSF and a flag meeting was also held there.

According to the Camp-in-Charge, Shahidul was a criminal and a terrorist who had been released from an Indian jail just a few weeks ago.

He asked Odhikar to talk to the officials in the Tetulbari BDR camp, as he did not have much information in this regard. The flag meeting between Kazipur BDR camp and Fulbari BSF camp was held on 17 January, 2010 at 9.00 am when the body was handed over. The BSF told the BDR that Shaidul was trespassing at the border with a cow between the Kazipur BDR camp and Shaolatola BDR Camp at 4.30 am, when he was shot. The BDR handed the body over to Gangni Police Station on the same day.

Osman Goni (42), Investigating Officer, Gangni Police Station, Meherpur

Odhikar talked with Sub Inspector (SI) Osman Goni, the investigating officer in the killing of Shahidul Islam. SI Osman Goni informed Odhikar that Shahidul had been released from the Krishna Nagar Jail of India two months ago. He received a fax from the Police

Headquarters asking him to inquire as to whether Shahidul had any criminal record. This was a standard procedure applied by the government when Bangladeshi nationals were released from jails outside the territory. No criminal record was found on Shahidul but upon inquiry, SI Osman Goni found out from villagers that Shahidul was very poor and worked as a labourer for the cattle traders. On the day of incident, another fax was sent from Dhaka asking for the whereabouts of Shahidul. When SI Osman Goni went to look for Shahidul, he found out that he had been killed by the BSF during a cattle trading operation.

Shaidul's body was handed over by the BSF to the BDR on 17 January 2010. The police received the body from the BDR of the Kazipur BDR camp on the same day at 9.30 am. In the inquest report, it was stated that the victim was shot once. The body was then sent to Meherpur District Hospital where a second post mortem had been conducted, though the Indian authority had already conducted a post mortem on the body. However, the post mortem report from the Meherpur District Hospital could not be acquired. A General Diary numbered 632, dated 18.01.2010, was filed with Gangni Police Station on 18 January, 2010. On the same day the body was returned to the family.

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