



Teenager killed by BSF at the Wahedpur border under Chapainababganj District

Fact-finding Report
Odhikar

Name of the victim : Shyamol Karmokar
Father's Name : Naren Karmokar
Age : 17
Address: District : Chapainababganj, Police Station: Shibganj, Union: Charpaka, Village:
Bishroshiya
Border/Pillar
(Bangladesh) : Wahedpur Border/ Main pillar 13 Sub Pillar 3
Border/ Pillar
(India) : Chadnichawk Border, 151 BSF Camp/ Main pillar 13 Sub
Pillar 3
Date of Occurrence : 27 January 2010

The people of Bishroshiya Charpaka village under Shibganj Thana, Chapainababganj are mourning the death of Shaymol Karmokar. Shaymol Karmokar (17) was the only barber in the village and with his death by the bullets of BSF on 27 January 2010; no one in the village cuts their hair or shaves in the salon any more.

The unfortunate event has shaken the villagers and officials alike. Shaymol went to India with out informing his father, to meet his aunt who lives in Malda, India. When he could not meet her, he called his father who asked him to come back at once. His father Naren Karmokar was aware of the BSF atrocities, particularly their shooting at Bangladeshi people at the border. He asked Shaymol not to return with any cattle traders. As fate would have it, Shaymol found Zahid, a cattle trader, who agreed to take him back to Bangladesh. On the night of 27 January they started to move towards Bangladesh but were spotted by the BSF at once. As the shooting started Zahid and his accomplice Abdul Mannan fled and Shaymol fell on the ground. He was shot thrice in his chest, abdomen and neck.

On 28 January, 2010 at 4.30 pm the BSF handed over the body of Shaymol to the BDR after a post mortem was done. The BDR handed it over to the Shibganj Police Station at 5.00 pm the same day. It was sent for a second post mortem to the Shibganj District Hospital. On 29 January at 3.30 pm the body was finally returned to the deceased's family.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission into the incident on 24 February 2010. During the fact-finding mission, Odhikar spoke with:

- The family of Shaymol Karmokar
- Eye witness
- Local residents
- Concerned members of the BDR
- Concerned members of the police

Naren Karmokar (45), father of the victim

Naren Karmokar (45) is a blacksmith by profession. When Odhikar met him for an interview, they found him very distraught.

He informed Odhikar that Shaymol's maternal aunt lives in Malda, India. For a month or so, before Shyamol was killed on 27 January 2010, he was saying that he missed his aunt and wanted to go to Malda to visit her. Naren Karmokar kept delaying his son to visit his aunt. He did not have the money for a passport at the moment and kept asking Shaymol to wait a bit longer. Once they had the money he could get a passport and visit his aunt. However, Shyamol was not ready to wait. He left home without informing anyone at 5.30 pm on 24 January 2010. Every one in the family was worried about his well being. Around 10.30 am on the 25 January, Naren Karmokar received a call from Shaymol. He was in India but had not been to his aunt's yet. He was staying in Hasanpur. Receiving his phone call Naren was relieved at his son's safety. He tried to convince Shaymol to return. He told him to come back without visiting his aunt. He also told Shaymol to return alone, he asked him not to take any help from cattle traders. Shaymol called his father again on 26 January to inform that he will be returning on 27 January and that he had found a Bangladeshi who would help him. At around 3.30 am Naren heard gun shots near the border. He became anxious about Shaymol. Around 5.30 in the morning of 27 January Zahid along with Md. Mannan came to his house and told him that Shaymol had been shot dead by the BSF. Naren informed the BDR camp about this incident. He received the body of his son on 29 January at 3.30 pm. There were 3 gun shot wounds on his abdomen, chest and neck.

Naren now curses himself for not being able to procure a passport for his boy. He curses himself for being poor, for losing his son in the hands of the BSF. All he wants now is justice “*amar chele ke jara marche Bhagoban jeno tader bichar kore*”¹

Mohammad Zahid (22), Eye-witness

Mohammad Zahid was the person who informed Naren Karmokar about Shyamol's death. He informed Odhikar that he met Shaymol on 26 January 2010 at 9.00 am when he was asked if he could take him along when returning to Bangladesh. Zahid, Abdul Mannan and Milon work in a rice mill in Bangladesh. However, some times they work for the cattle traders. That day they were bringing two cows to Bangladesh. He told Shaymol to meet them at 11.30 am at the border. Shaymol, Mannan, Milon and Zahid met at 3.30 and started journey to Bangladesh. They had two cows with them. Milon who was the line man, arrived an hour earlier. Soon after they reached near the border area, the BSF spotted them and opened fire. Shaymol fell on the ground and Zahid and Mannan ran away. Zahid said that he did not know what had happened to Shaymol after that. Once they entered into Bangladesh, Zahid went to Shaymol's house with Mannan to inform his father about his death.

Abdul Mannan (32), Eye-witness

Abdul Mannan works in a rice mill with Zahid and Milon. He also worked for the cattle traders occasionally. He informed Odhikar that on 27 January 2010 they were supposed to bring some cows to Bangladesh from India. On 26 January Zahid told him that a young boy named Shaymol Karmokar would also be accompanying them. All of them met at 11.30 pm on 26 January. Once they tried to enter into Bangladesh, the BSF started shooting at them and Shaymol fell on the ground. They were scared and fled the scene leaving Shyamol behind. He later informed Shyamol's family about his fate.

Subedar Sirajul Islam, Camp Commander, Wahedpur Border Camp

Odhikar spoke to Subedar Sirajul Islam, BDR Camp Commander at Wahedpur border about the death of Shaymol Karmokar. He stated that in their investigation they found that Shaymol was a barber who hitched a ride back home with cattle traders. His death was unfortunate and sad. There was no criminal record on him what so ever.

¹ May god punish those who have killed my son

The Camp Commander also said that a flag meeting was held on 28 January 2010 at 4.30 pm when the body was handed over the BDR by the BSF. The BSF claimed in the meeting that Shaymol was a cattle trader who was smuggling cows into Bangladesh. Thus there was nothing wrong with the fact that the BSF has shot him. The body was supposed to be returned earlier that day but because of delay in post mortem it was finally returned in the evening.

Yameen Ali, Constable, Shibganj Police Station

Constable Yameen Ali of the Shibganj Police Station was interviewed by Odhikar about the killing of Shaymol. He confirmed that the victim was indeed coming to Bangladesh by crossing the border with a group of cattle traders. Upon their investigation they found that Shaymol had been a barber who had a shop in the Bishroshiya Bazaar.

He also informed Odhikar that a General Diary was filed in this connection (GD # 1159/2010) on 29 January 2010. Police received the body from the BDR on 28 January at 5.00 pm. Three gun shot wounds were found on the body during inquest. Later it was sent to the Shibganj District Hospital for post mortem. On 29 January at 3.30 am the body was handed over to his cousin Doyal Karmokar for the funeral.

Yameen Ali told Odhikar that it was one of the most unfortunate incidents happened in this area. This boy was innocent who was shot just for walking with cattle traders. Odhikar asked for a copy of the post mortem report but the police refused. Instead, the constable informed odhikar what the post mortem report stated.

Shibganj District Hospital

The body of Shaymol was sent to the Shibganj District Hospital for post mortem on 28 January 2010. It was found in the post mortem report that an earlier post mortem had already been done on the body. There were three gun shot wounds on the chest, abdomen and neck and the cause of death was the shot in the chest. In the post mortem report stated there was no other sign of injury on the body.

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