



Akhi Shutrodhor allegedly killed over dowry demands

Fact finding Report

Odhikar

Akhi Shutrodhor (20) was from the Maijhail Mistripara village of Belkuchi upazilla of Sirajganj district. Her family alleged that at around 1:30 in the night of December 21, 2011 Akhi's husband Sri Ashim Shutrodhor and the members of his family killed Akhi by suffocating her. Akhi's elder brother, Sri Bipul Kumar Shutrodhor filed a case in Belkuchi Police Station of Sirajganj as a plaintiff against 12 people. The case is numbered-10, dated- 21/12/2011, under sections 302/34/109 of the Penal Code¹. On December 22, 2011 police arrested Akhi's aunt-in-law, Komla Rani Shutrodhor and she was sent to Sirajganj District Jail. The main person accused, Akhi's husband Ashim Shutrodhor was absconding. However, on January 22, 2011 ten of the accused persons were awarded two months anticipatory bail.

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission into the matter. During this, they interviewed:

- Relatives of the deceased
- Neighbors
- Doctor
- Investigating officer



Photo: Akhi Shutrodhor

¹ Section 302 of the Penal Code, 1860 provides for punishments for murder; section 34 provides penalties for several persons committing an offence with a common intention and section 109 provides punishment for abetment of a crime.

Sri Bipul Kumar Shutroddhor, Akhi's elder brother

Sri Bipul Kumar Shutroddhor told Odhikar that Akhi was married to Ashim Shutroddhor, son of Sri Vasha Shutroddhor of Maijhail Mistripara village of Belkuchi upazilla on June 27, 2010. He informed that at the time of the marriage they gave 25 thousand taka and 2 carats of gold ornaments to Ashim as dowry and assured him that they would give 10 thousand taka more. After the marriage, Ashim used to beat Akhi and repeatedly remind her of the rest of the dowry money yet to be paid. Moreover, he used to abuse her physically and verbally. When Ashim's family was informed about this, they also abused Akhi. That is why; Akhi informed him and her father and asked for the money to be given. Since her family took loans for Akhi's marriage, they were facing a financial crisis and were unable to pay. Moreover, at the time of the delivery of Akhi's son, her brother spent almost 35 thousand taka. Even this 35 thousand taka was a loan.

At around 1.30 in the night of December 21, 2011 Akhi's brother-in-law, Polash called Bipul Kumar and said that Akhi was dead. Akhi's family reached her in-laws house at around three in the night. There they saw Akhi's body lying on a bed. They saw that her left toe had been injured and there were scratch marks on her body. Then Bipul Kumar asked Akhi's mother-in-law what happened. Akhi's mother-in-law, Alo Rani Shutroddhor told him that Akhi committed suicide by hanging herself. However, one of Akhi's aunt-in-law's, Komla Rani told them that she had suffered a heart attack. Listening to their inconsistent information, he asked his cousin, Gobindo to inform the Belkuchi Police Station and on hearing this, Ashim's father and uncles wanted to physically assault them. In the morning, police came to take the body to the morgue. Bipul said that Ashim and his family killed Akhi over dowry.

Mosammat Asma Khatun, Ashim's neighbor

Mosammat Asma Khatun told Odhikar that at around one in the morning of December 21, 2011 she heard a scream from Ashim's house and rushed over. Going there she saw that Akhi's body was lying on the bed and Ashim's mother was pouring water on Ashim's head. Ashim's mother Alo Rani told her that Akhi had gone to bed after dinner. When Akhi's son started crying she went to call Akhi, but found her dead. Asma also said that nobody had told her that Akhi had committed suicide or had died of a heart attack. Then Akhi's family came while she was still there and Ashim's mother said that Akhi committed suicide while Ashim's aunt said that Akhi had a heart attack.

Shondha Rani Das, Ashim's neighbor

Shondha Rani Das told Odhikar that at around 1:00 in the night of December 21, 2011 she heard a very loud uproar from Ashim's house. Going there she saw many people and asked Ashim's father what happened. Vasha Shutrodhor said that Ashim's wife might have had a heart attack and she died. Shondha Rani said that Akhi's left toe was injured.

Dr. Robiul Islam, Residential Medical Officer, Sirajganj Sadar Hospital

Dr. Robiul Islam told Odhikar that at 11:00 in the morning of December 21, 2011 Akhi's body was brought into the morgue. He said that he clearly mentioned in the post-mortem report that she died by suffocation.

Sub Inspector, Kamrul Islam, the Investigating Officer, Belkuchi Police Station, Sirajganj

Sub Inspector Kamrul Islam told Odhikar that at around 6:00 in the morning of December 21, 2011 Akhi's cousin came to the Belkuchi Police Station to inform them of the incident. He went to Ashim's house with his police force. At that time, neither Ashim nor his family members were present. They took Akhi's body to the morgue. Then he took Ashim's aunt, Komla Rani Shutrodhor to the Police Station for interrogation. Komla Rani informed him that Ashim told her that Akhi slept at around 12.30 after dinner. When their child started crying, he called Akhi but she did not wake up. After that Ashim called his parents and other family members. They found Akhi dead. Komla Rani told SI Kamrul that they thought she had suffered a heart attack.

Later on, Akhi's brother Bipul filed a case as a plaintiff against 12 people in total including from Ashim's family, his paternal aunt, Komla Rani Shutrodhor; father, Vasha Shutrodhor; mother, Alo Rani Shutrodhor; brother, Ashik Shutrodhor; paternal uncle, Ronjit Shutrodhor; brother's, Bablu Shutrodhor, Polash Shutrodhor, Prokash Shutrodhor; maternal uncles, Pores Shudrodhor, Shopon Shudrodhor and Liton Shudrodhor and against Ashim Shudrodhor himself. Then Sub Inspector Kamrul Islam sent Komla Rani to Sirajganj District Jail. He said that based on the post-mortem report and his investigating experience, he believes that there was no one but Ashim and Akhi in the room, so he is assuming that Ashim suffocated Akhi. He said that he would arrest the main accused, Ashim as soon as possible.