



Nazrul Islam was allegedly arrested and then disappeared by RAB

Fact finding Report

Odhikar

Mohammad Nazrul Islam (38) is the son of late Soloyman Sarkar and Zohura Begum of Jhaoil village in Kamarkhand upazilla of Shirajganj. At around 5.30 pm on June 13, 2012, Nazrul Islam was allegedly arrested and then disappeared by RAB-12 members.

Nazrul Islam was working in the vegetable plot beside the rail-crossing near his house, when RAB arrested him. Then they forcefully took him to the RAB-12 head office in a motorcycle and confined him. Since then he has been missing, his family alleged.



Photo: Mohammad Najrul Islam and his National ID card

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

- Relatives of Nazrul Islam,
- Eye-witnesses; and
- Members of law enforcement agencies.

Zohura Begum (60), mother of Nazrul Islam

Zohura Begum told Odhikar that Nazrul Islam is a farmer. At around 5.30 pm on June 13, 2012, her niece Khadija informed her that RAB had arrested Nazrul and forcefully took him with them on a motorcycle. She went near the rail crossing with Nazrul's wife soon after hearing the news. She heard from the locals that RAB took Nazrul away just few minutes ago. An eye-witness, her grandson Mohammad Nasim Sarker, told her that Mohammad Golam Rabbani from Ariamohon village and Babu Munshi from Kalia Kandapara took Nazrul near the rail crossing when he was nursing the egg plants. Two strangers came and grabbed him there. Then there was a scuffle among them. The locals asked the two strangers about the reason for holding onto Nazrul. They identified themselves as RAB-12 members and one of them showed an identity card. The people there noticed the name on the card was Sub Inspector (SI) Kamrujjaman.

Zohura Begum also said that Nazrul was taken to the office of RAB-12 situated inside Shirajganj Kowmi Jute Mill (known as National Jute Mill now). The shop owners of the shops in front of the RAB-12 office saw Nazrul there as they informed her. At around 9am on June 14, 2012, she sent her son-in-law Abul Kashem to the RAB-12 office in search of Nazrul. RAB members told Kashem that Nazrul was not there. They could not find Nazrul even after searching for him in the RAB and other law enforcement offices.



Photo: Kamarkhand Rail crossing, from where the RAB members arrested Nazrul

Mosammat Jhorna Akhter (30), wife of Nazrul Islam

Mosammat Jhorna Akhter told Odhikar that at around 3 pm on June 13, 2012, her husband was working in an egg plant plot near the house. At around 5.30 pm, her sister-in-law, Khadija, informed them that two RAB members had taken Nazrul away in a motorcycle.

She went near the rail crossing and came to know from the eye-witnesses that the locals obstructed the men. One of them showed them an identity card. The name written on the card was SI Kamrujjaman. The locals were assured that those men were from RAB and one of them was SI Kamrujjaman. After that, Jhorna went to the RAB-12 office at Shirajganj to look for her husband. She was informed that there was no one there named Nazrul Islam. On June 16, 2012, she filed a case of abduction in the Kamarkhand Police Station.



Photo: Wife and children of Nazrul Islam



Photo: Nazrul worked in this crop field before being missing

Mohammad Nasim Sarkar (18), nephew of Nazrul and eye-witness

Mohammad Nasim Sarkar told Odhikar that at around 5.30 pm on June 13, 2012, he was chatting with his friends near the Jhaoil rail crossing after playing cricket. At that time, he saw his uncle walking towards the rail crossing with Mohammad Golam Robbani and Babu Munshi. After some time, two strangers came to the spot and held his uncle's *lungi*¹. Then he saw a scuffle among them and his uncle was trying to free himself. He saw those men taking Nazrul towards a motorcycle and getting him on the motorcycle in a hurry. At that time, Nasim and other locals obstructed the men, who were wearing *lungis* and shirts. The locals asked them their identity and they said that they were from RAB-12. Moreover, the locals asked them to show their identity card and then one of them displayed an identity card. Mohammad Nasim Sarkar saw that the identity card was of SI Kamrujjaman. Nasim noticed that there was no number on the license plate. Nasim asked them the reason and they replied that law enforcement agency members did not need any numbers on their motorcycle. They took Nazrul away, and Nasim went to the RAB-12 office but he was informed that his uncle was not there.

Mohammad Rofikul Islam (27), eye-witness

Mohammad Rofikul Islam told Odhikar that at around 5.30 pm on June 13, 2012, he was resting near the Jhaoil rail crossing after playing cricket. At that time, he saw two strangers holding onto Nazrul's waist. Nazrul was trying to free himself. He went forward to see what was happening. Those men were trying to take Nazrul towards a motorcycle. Then the locals obstructed them so they could not take Nazrul. He asked the men why they were taking Nazrul with them. Then one of them identified themselves as RAB members and showed an identity card. The locals then assumed them to be RAB officers seeing the identity card, and withdrew.

Mohammad Nurul Islam Sarkar (40), elder brother of Nazrul Islam

Mohammad Nurul Islam told Odhikar that at around 6 pm on June 13, 2012, his son Mohammad Nasim Sarkar informed him that two men who identified themselves as RAB members took Nazrul away when he was working in the vegetable plot beside his house. Then he went to RAB-12 office in search of his brother. He came to know from the office that they did not arrest anyone named Nazrul. However, he informed that the shop owners of the shops around the office saw Nazrul at around 8.30pm when he entered the office. Nurul Islam arranged a press conference at Shirajganj Press Club on June 16, 2012.

¹ A South Asian male dress



Photo: RAB members parked their motorbike in the rounded marked place in front of neighbour Shamim



Photo: RAB members took away Nazrul through this path beside the vegetable field

Captain Mehedi, Adjutant, RAB-12, Sirajganj

Captain Mehedi told Odhikar that their investigation was going on since Nazrul was missing. He said that the allegation made by Nazrul's family about his arrest by RAB was false. Moreover, there was no one called SI Kamrujjaman in RAB-12 office, he said.

Mohammad Abdul Halim, Inspector (investigation) Kamarkhand Police Station, Shirajganj

Mohammad Abdul Halim told Odhikar that at around 5.30 pm on June 13, 2012, he came to know from the locals and the family members of victim that a man named Nazrul Islam was taken away by people who identified themselves as RAB members. On June 16, 2012, his family filed an abduction case under sections 346/34² of the Penal Code, 1860. The case number is: 6; dated: 16/06/12. He was the investigating officer of the case. In the meantime, he searched for Nazrul in different places including Shirajganj and Bogra with Nazrul's elder brother, Nurul Islam.

Statement of Odhikar:

In Bangladesh, the incident of enforced disappearance is increasing. It is already evident that the position against all extra-judicial killing and torture, declared by the government in the United Nations Human Rights Council, was actually meaningless.

RAB-12 denied the allegation of abducting Nazrul Islam despite of evidence to the contrary. According to the Convention related to enforced disappearance, this is an incident of enforced disappearance. Odhikar is concerned about this matter and demands the Human Rights Commission take this matter into its account and that the government take steps for proper investigation and recovery of Nazrul Islam.

-End of Report-

² Section 34 talks about the acts done by several persons in common intention and section 346 deals with the wrongful confinement in secret.