

of Shirajdikhan Upazilla. Rakib started demanding dowry and asked his wife to tell her parents to give money for a new house, a television, bed and furniture. Sonia informed her parents about this matter. Sheikh Halem refused to give any money. For this reason, Rakib started abusing Sonia physically and mentally. Shahadat, a neighbour of Rakib, informed Sonia's mother that Rakib was beating Sonia. Sonia's mother asked Sonia, who admitted to the fact and gave her mother in details. After that, Sonia's parents went to Rakib's home to bring Sonia back; but Rakib refused to let his wife leave.

Sheikh Halem said that he then mortgaged his house and gave 36,000 taka to Rakib for building a house. After a few days, Rakib demanded 15,000 taka to build a bed and Sonia's mother gave him 10,000 taka. On 30 July 2011, Rakib again demanded 5000 taka and Sonia's mother gave him 2000 taka, without informing her husband.

On 6 August 2011 at around 7:00 pm, Rakib's elder brother Din Islam informed Sonia's mother Minu Begum that Sonia had collapsed and asked them to come to the house. Sonia's parents and cousin Arif left for Rakib's home and reached the house at around 9:30 pm. They learnt from Din Islam and his wife Mahima Akhter that Sonia closed the bedroom door and hung herself with a scarf. Din Islam said he bought the body down.

At around 11:00 in the night, he along with Sonia's cousin Arif and Shohag went to Shirajdikhan Police Station where police were told them to wait till the next morning. The police said that a case would be filed after seeing the body in the morning. On 7 August 2011 at around 10 in the morning he (Halem), Mahbubur Rahman, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Shirajdikhan Police Station, Sub Inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam and Upazilla Porishod member Meherunnessa went to Rakib's house. They saw Sonia on the bed covered by a quilt. Her face was normal but there were two bruises on both sides of her throat. Sheikh

Halem said that he believed Sonia did not hang herself. Moreover, Sonia did not look like died by hanging. He said that Rakib with his family members killed her by strangling her with a scarf for dowry money.

Sub Inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam and Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mahbubur Rahman prepared the inquest report of the body of Sonia in the presence of everybody. Sub inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam took the body to the Police Station at around 11:00 am. On 7 August 2011 at around 1.15 pm, he filed a suit against Rakib in the Shirajdikhan Police Station as a plaintiff. The case number is: 9, date: 7.8.2011, under section 11(ka) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003) on the crime of killing a wife on the demand of dowry. However, the police and Shohag, Chairman of Rakib's area, recorded the case in a different way in favor of Rakib. He also said that Rakib's elder brother Din Islam was involved in the matter. However, police and Chairman Shohag avoided mentioning this.

Then police took the body of Sonia to Munshiganj Sadar Hospital for post-mortem. After post-mortem, the body was brought to the Abirpara village and buried there.

#### **Minu Begum (37), Sonia's mother**

Minu Begum told Odhikar that she found out from neighbours and from Sonia that Rakib started abusing his wife physically and mentally from the third day of their marriage. She gave 36,000 taka to Rakib for building a house. After a few days, Rakib again demanded 15,000 taka to make a bed but she could only give him 10,000 taka. Then Rakib demanded 5000 taka more and on 30 June 2011, she gave 2000 taka. On 6 August 2011, she talked to Sonia in the late afternoon.

After iftar (the sunset meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan) she got a call from Rakib's elder brother, Din Islam

and went to Rakib's home at around 9.30 pm with Sonia's father and her cousin. There they came to know that Sonia hanged herself. They asked Din Islam how he knew she had been hanged and Din Islam said that the door was open and he saw Sonia hanging and got the body down. She then asked him how Sonia could have hung herself with the door open and people in the house. In reply, Din Islam began verbally abusing Sonia's mother. Minu Begum also said that Sonia lay looking like she had just gone to sleep and her arms and legs were not cold. On both sides of Sonia's neck, just below her jaw, there were two bruises. She believes that members of Rakib's family killed Sonia and tried to make it look like a suicide.

**Dr. Abul Khayer (52), Janapriyo Medical Hall, Shirajdikhan Market, Munshiganj**

Dr. Abul Khayer told Odhikar that Sheikh Halem is his next-door neighbour. Hearing the news of Sonia's death, he went to the Police Station on 7 August 2011 and saw two marks on the neck. He did not see any evidence of hanging.

**Din Islam (25), elder brother of the accused**

Din Islam informed Odhikar that when he returned home after fishing, he saw Sonia and Rakib talking. Later on, he went to their room and found Sonia dead on the bed and Rakib absent. After that, he called Sonia's mother and asked her to come. He also called the neighbours and the former UP member Billal Hossain.

**Meherunnesa, female UP member, Abirpara village**

Meherunnesa told Odhikar that she went to the Police Station to report the news of the death of Sonia, the daughter of Seikh Halem to the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Shirajdikhan Police Station. Hearing details the Officer-in-Charge (OC) said that he would investigate the matter the next morning. On 7 August

2011 around 10:00 am she along with Sonia's parents, neighbours, relatives, Sub Inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam and Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mahbubur Rahman went to Rakib's home. They saw Sonia laid on the bed and learnt that Rakib had absconded. Police took the body to Shirajdikhan Police Station after preparing the inquest report. After filing the case, the body was sent to Munshiganj Sadar Hospital for post-mortem.

**Sub Inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam, Investigating Officer of the case, Shirajdikhan Police Station, Munshiganj**

Sub Inspector (SI) Shofikul Islam told Odhikar that at around 10 in the morning of 7 August 2011 he went to Rakib's home for preparing the inquest report after hearing the news of Sonia's death. He saw that the body was laid on the bed and covered by quilt. He brought the body and the investigation report to Shirajdikhan Police Station. On 7 August 2011, Sonia's father filed a case in Shirajdikhan Police Station as a plaintiff. Case number is 9, dated: 7.8.11 under section 11(ka) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003). He did not get the post-mortem report yet.

**Dr. Ehsanul Karim, Resident Medical Officer (R.M.O) Sadar Hospital, Munshiganj**

Dr. Ehsanul Karim told Odhikar that by the post-mortem examination, he found that Sonia was killed by strangulation. He also found an injury on the right side of her head. He did not found any sign of hanging.



### 22 August 2011: Belly Khatun

On 22 August 2011 at around 12 noon, Belly Khatun (21) was killed by her husband Md. Anwar Hossain, brothers-in-law Ariful Islam Dolon, Md. Ahsanul Islam Meno, father-in-law Md. Nurul Islam, sisters-in-law Anjuara Khatun, Mossammat Sabina Khatun, brother-in-law Md. Zoblu Hossain and her husband's uncle Abdur Sattar; who poured kerosene on her in the Batia village of Shahjadpur Upazilla of Sirajganj district. Belly's father, Md. Yusuf Ali filed a case in the Shahjadpur Police Station of Sirajganj as a plaintiff. The case number is 21 and dated-23/08/11, under section 11(ka)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain 2000 (Amended in 2003).

On 22 August 2011, police arrested Belly's brother-in-law Md. Zoblu Hossain and her uncle-in-law Abdur Sattar. At present, they are out on bail. Belly's husband Anwar Hossain is still absconding and the other accused people are out on bail from the Court.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission. During this Odhikar interviewed-

- Relatives of Belly Khatun
- Eye-witnesses
- The doctor
- Members of Law enforcement agencies.



Belly Khatun

### Md. Yusuf Ali (50), Belly's father

Md. Yusuf Ali told Odhikar that on 21 March 2008 his daughter Belly got married to Anwar Hossain, son of Md. Nurul Islam of Batia village. He informed that at the time of marriage he gave Anwar 65,000 taka in cash. After 1 month of the marriage, Anwar demanded 25,000 taka more. Then he sold his cow and gave his son-in-law the money. After one year, Anwar again demanded 50,000 taka to buy cow. When he refused to pay, he (Anwar) started physically abuse Belly. When Belly was pregnant, Yusuf Ali brought her home. After two months of her delivery, members of Anwar's family took Belly back to her in-laws home. After few days, Anwar again gave pressure for money. On 19 August 2011, Belly was badly beaten by Anwar. Then Belly went to Anwar's elder sister, Shirin's home in Norina village. From there she called her mother and told her to either give the money or take her home. Then Shirin convinced Belly to go back to Anwar's home. The next day on 20 August 2011, Belly called her mother and told her that Anwar beat her again. At around 11.30 in the morning of 22 August 2011 Anwar called Yusuf Ali. Anwar told him to come to his house quickly as Belly was very ill.

Yusuf Ali and his wife left for Anwar's home in Batia village and reached there at around 1 pm. They found the home empty. Seeing them, the neighbours came and said that Belly had been burnt and taken to Shahjadpur Hospital. Then they went to Shahjadpur hospital but did not see anyone of Anwar's family. After that, Yusuf Ali called Anwar's elder brother Ariful Islam Dolon and he told them to go home as they were taking Belly to Bogra hospital. So they went to Anwar's home again and asked the neighbours about the incident. Then a neighbour named Rezaul informed them that on hearing screams they came and saw Belly burning. He heard her asking for help and saying that they set fire to her. Then they put out the flames and took her to the hospital. At around 5 in the afternoon

Anwar's elder brother Ariful Islam Dolon and neighbour Raju Ahmed brought Belly's body home and kept it in the yard. Then they informed Saiful Islam, the Chairman of Narina Union Parishad. Saiful Islam proposed Yusuf Ali to settle the matter through mediation, but he refused and went to the Police Station to file a F.I.R.<sup>59</sup>. Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Shahjadpur Police Station, Josim Uddin and Sub Inspector (SI) Kongkon Kumar Bishwas came to take the body to the morgue. Anwar and other members of his family fled after hearing that police were coming.

On 22 August 2011 Police arrested Anwar's uncle Abdur Sattar and his cousin Md. Zoblu Hossain and put them in custody. The next day on 23 August 2011, the Superintendent of Police, Sirajganj Police Station, Md. Mosharof Hossain inspected the place of incidence. He believes that Ariful Islam is a Union Parishad member for this reason police is not trying to arrest perpetrators.

#### **Md. Rezaul Karim, eye-witness**

Md. Rezaul Karim told Odhikar that on 22 August 2011 he heard a scream and ran to where it came from. There he saw Belly burning and saying 'they killed me'. He asked the family what happened then Anwar's sister-in-law Anjuara Khatun said the Belly set herself on fire from an electric spark and another said that she set fire to herself by first pouring kerosene on her body.

#### **Dr. Yunus Ali, Doctor of Ibne Sina Diagnostic Centre of Shahjadpur**

Dr. Yunus Ali told Odhikar that at around 1.30 in the afternoon of 22 August 2011 a burn patient named Belly was brought to his chamber. He found the patient in a critical condition and

<sup>59</sup> F.I.R- First Information Report.

after giving the first aid he suggested she be taken to Bogra hospital. He was absolutely certain that the patient had been burnt by using firewood.

#### **Raju Ahmed, Anwar's neighbour**

Raju Ahmed told Odhikar that on his way home from Shahjadpur he heard that a burn patient from Batia village had come to the chamber of Dr. Yunus. Then he went to see the patient and found it was Anwar's wife Belly. Belly was conscious when he went to see her. Dr. Yunus suggested she be taken to Bogra or Enayetpur quickly. Then Raju, Anwar and Ariful Islam Dolon started for Bogra in a microbus taking Belly with them. During the journey, Belly died and they came back to Anwar's home with the body. Anwar and Dolon said him that Belly doused herself with kerosene before setting herself on fire.

#### **Saiful Islam, Chairman of Narina Union Parishad**

Chairman Saiful Islam told Odhikar that Ariful Islam Dolon is a member of the Narina Union Parishad. At around 1.30 in the afternoon of 22 August 2011 Dolon called him and said that the wife of his younger brother Anwar died by setting herself on fire. Ariful asked him to come to Anwar's home quickly. Then Saiful Islam went to Batia village and tried to make a settlement with the plaintiff (Belly's father).

#### **Sub Inspector (SI) Kongkon Kumar Bishwas, the Investigating Officer**

Sub Inspector (SI) Kongkon Kumar Bishwas told Odhikar that at 6:00 in the evening of 22 August 2011 Belly's father Md. Yusuf Ali came to the police station and filed a F.I.R. against 8 people. In the F.I.R he mentioned that his daughter was burnt and killed. Then the Sub Inspector went to Batia village and saw Belly's body lying in the yard. He went to the room where the incident took place and saw that all electric lines were



active and found a burnt piece of cloth on the floor. He said that everything would be clear after the post-mortem report came. He also said that he is trying to arrest the accused and on the day of incidence two of them were arrested.

**Md. Mosharof Hossain, Superintendent of Police (SP), Sirajganj**

SP Md. Mosharof Hossain told Odhikar that on 22 August 2011 Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Shahjadpur Police Station, Josim Uddin informed him about the matter. On 23 August 2011, he went to Batia village and ordered the arrest of the accused after proper investigation.

**Follow up:**

On March 2012 the Court dismissed the case due to the statement of Beli Khatun's father at the Woman and Child Tribunal, Sirajganj. In this respect Beli's brother Merajul Islam said, "We have mitigated the matter. There was no use of continuing the case, because we don't have any support". The Investigation Officer Kongkon Kumar Biswas told that plaintiff and defendant mitigated the matter at the Court.

**09 October 2011: Mosammat Sabina Akhter**

At around 12.00 noon of October 3, 2011 Mosammat Sabina Akhter (21) of Nichunpur village of Gopalpur Upazilla in Tangail district was physically abused by her husband Arif Hossain (28), mother-in-law Rashida Begum (50), and father-in-law Korban Ali (55). Sabina died at around 2.30 in the afternoon of October 9, 2011. Sabina's father Mohammad A. Sobhan filed a case of murder as a plaintiff against Sabina's in-laws and husband in Ghatail Police Station. The case was numbered-08; dated-06/10/2011 under section 11 (kha)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amended in 2003). Police arrested Sabina's husband though her mother-in-law and father-in-law are absconded.

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission and during this they interviewed:

- Sabina's relatives
- The doctor and
- Members of law enforcement agencies

**Mohammad A. Sobhan (45), Sabina's father**

Mohammad A. Sobhan told Odhikar that Sabina married Arif Hossain, son of Korban Ali of Shotturbari village of Ghatail upazilla, about two years ago. At the day of marriage, a dowry of 60,000 taka was supposed to be given to the groom, but Mohammad Sobhan gave 15,000 taka. He assured Arif's father, Korban Ali that the rest of the money would be given soon. After a few days of the marriage, he took a loan of taka 10,000 from a NGO named 'Asha' and gave the money to Arif. After 1/2 months of taking 10,000 taka, Arif put pressure on Sabina for the rest of the dowry money of 35,000 taka. Arif mentally and physically abused Sabina for dowry. At the beginning, he settled the matter within the family. He informed that on October, 2010, Arif abused Sabina physically. Sabina could not tolerate that and returned her father's home. To settle this matter Sobhan complained to the legal aid NGO 'Manabadhikar Bastobayon Parishad' of Modhupur. They sent a notice to Arif Hossain's home. After that on November 4, 2010, Golam Kibria, President of Modhupur Manabadhikar Bastobayon Parishad asked him to bring Sabina to their office and also called Arif Hossain and his family. That day arbitration was held. Arif's uncle Mohammad Shahjahan Talukder, Mohammad A. Halim and Mohammad Mizanur Rahman and Arif's fathers' cousin Shohrab Ali were also present. In the arbitration, Arif promised not to abuse Sabina again and that he would not demand dowry. Moreover, he would give Sabina the rights as his wife and he would allow Sabina to visit her father's home thrice a year. After the arbitration, Arif took Sabina back to his home. But after few

days, Arif again abused Sabina for dowry and she went to her father's home. Then Arif's father Korban Ali and a few influential people of the village again brought Sabina back to her in-laws home. When Sabina was pregnant, he sent Sabina's mother to Sabina's in-laws home to bring their daughter back. At the time of delivery, he talked to Arif and requested him to come. But Arif only came 3/4 days after the delivery of his child to take Sabina back to his home. However, Sobhan did not allow Arif to take Sabina with him.

15/20 days before the death of Sabina, Arif and his father came to his home. Arif's father told him that no more problems would occur. He assured that he would handle everything and requested to take back his grandson and daughter-in-law. Sabina's father agreed and let Sabina go with them.

After 7 days, his son Mohammad Ujjol Mia (Sabina's brother) called him to inform that Sabina was ill. Two days after talking to Ujjol, at the morning of October 5, 2011 he went to Sabina's in-laws home. Sabina started to cry seeing him and said that Arif beat her a lot for that 35,000 taka. Mohammad Sobhan wanted to bring Sabina away for treatment but Korban Ali did not allow him to take her. He informed Golam Kibria, President of 'Modhupur Manabadhikar Bastobayon Parishad'. Golam Kibria told him to go to Ghatail Police Station.

On October 6, 2011 he went to the Police Station and filed a case as a plaintiff against three people under section 11 (Kha)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003). He rescued Sabina from her in-laws home with the help of police. On that day she got admitted to the Gopalpur Upazilla Health Complex and on October 7, 2011 she was shifted to the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Her condition worsened and that is why they sent her back home on October 8, 2011. At around 2.30 in the noon of October 9, 2011 Sabina died. Sabina's father thinks that she died because of the physical abuse.

#### **Mohammad Ujjol Mia (23), Sabina's brother**

Mohammad Ujjol Mia told Odhikar that on October 4, 2011 Sabina called him and said that she was ill and asked him to take her back. Then he called his father and told him to bring her back. On October 5, 2011 Sabina's father went to her in-laws home. His father informed him that Sabina was beaten by her husband Arif, father-in-law and mother-in-law. Her health was very bad. Then he told his father to bring Sabina back. On October 6, 2011 he came to know over phone that Sabina was rescued by police and was admitted to the Gopalpur Upazilla Health Complex.

On October 7, 2011 he went to Mymensingh Medical College from Gazipur to see Sabina. At that time Sabina's condition was very critical. There were black bruises below the left eye and injury marks on her body, nose and face. Sabina told him that her husband, father-in-law and mother-in-law punched and kicked her by holding her hair. Ujjol Mia informed that Sabina told him that when she was screaming in pain, her mother-in-law gave her a medicine. After one hour of taking that medicine her condition worsened and she felt like her chest was burning. After staying in the hospital for a few moments, Ujjol Mia came back to Gazipur. On the next day, October 8, 2011 at around 12 at night, he went to their home and saw Sabina there, after she was released from Mymensingh Medical College. Sabina died at noon of October 9, 2011. He blames Sabina's husband and in laws for Sabina's death.

#### **Dr. Mohammad Abul Kalam, (Emergency Medical Officer), Gopalpur Upazilla Health Complex, Tangail**

Dr. Mohammad Abul Kalam told Odhikar that at around 5 in the afternoon of October 6, 2011, Sabina's mother brought Sabina to the hospital. At that time Sabina's situation was critical. There were blue marks below the left eye and injuries on her cheeks, neck, face and body. Her situation was so

critical that he suggested not admitting her into the hospital. Later on, her mother signed the bond and Sabina was admitted and Dr. Abul Kalam gave her first aid. Sabina was later transferred to Mymensingh Medical College.

**Golam Kibria, President, Manabadhikar Bastobayon Parishad, Modhupur, Tangail**

Golam Kibria told Odhikar that based on the complaint of Sabina's father they sent a notice to Sabina's husband Arif Hossain. Receiving that notice Arif Hossain along with a few of his relatives came to his office at Modhupur on November 4, 2010 and arbitration was held there. Arif Hossain promised both orally and in writing that he would not torture his wife and would not demand dowry again. On October 5, 2011 Sabina's father informed him that Sabina's husband, father-in-law and mother-in-law beat Sabina for dowry money. He said that on the next day, October 6, 2011 he went to Sabina's in-laws house with police from Ghatail Police Station and rescued Sabina in an injured condition. Then on October 9, 2011 he came to know that Sabina had died.

**Sub Inspector Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, Investigating Officer, Ghatail Police Station, Tangail**

Sub Inspector Mohammad Mizanur Rahman told Odhikar that based on the complaint of Mohammad A. Sobhan, on October 6, 2011 he along with three police went to Arif's home at Shotturbari. They rescued Sabina from there and arrested Sabina's husband, Arif Hossain. Among the three accused two are still absconding. He said that at first the case was under section 11 (kha)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003) and then he brought the case under section 11 (Ka)<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> The section of the Law refers to causing death due to dowry demands. The maximum sentence is death.

On January 19, 2012 Sub Inspector Mohammad Mizanur Rahman informed that he received the death certificate of Sabina few days ago. But as the viscera report is not prepared yet, he did not get the post-mortem report. As soon as he receives the post-mortem report, he would submit the final charge sheet in the Court.

**Follow up:**

The charge sheet of the case was submitted on February 19, 2012 to the Court. Sabina's husband was on bail. The date of first hearing was fixed on March 27, 2013.

**21 December 2011: Akhi Shutrodhor**

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 Code<sup>61</sup>. 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.

<sup>61</sup> 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.



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

- Relatives of Akhi Shutrodhor
- Neighbours
- The doctor
- Members of Law enforcement agencies.



Akhi Shutrodhor

### **Sri Bipul Kumar Shutrodhor, Akhi's elder brother**

Sri Bipul Kumar Shutrodhor told Odhikar that Akhi was married to Ashim Shutrodhor, son of Sri Vasha Shutrodhor 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 Shutrodhor 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 neighbour**

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 neighbour**

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, Poresh Shutrodhor, Shopon Shutrodhor and Liton Shutrodhor and against Ashim Shutrodhor 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.

**Follow up**

On June 12, 2012 Odhikar contacted with Investigation Officer SI Kamrul Islam. He told that accused Asim is still absconded. Other ten accused got ad interim on January 22, 2012 at High Court. When these ten accused appeared before the Court, the Court ordered to detain them and sent them to jail. After one month of imprisonment, all of them including Komola Rani are on bail. Kamrul Islam added that he will submit the charge sheet within 5-6 days.

**04 February 2012: Shahinur Begum**

Shahinur Begum (19) was the daughter of Kalu Miah Prodhan of Baghaiakandi village of Gojaria thana in Munshiganj district. On May 20, 2011, Shahinur got married to Humayun Kabir Raju (25), son of Mohammad Badshah Miah from Lokkipur village and soon after the marriage, Raju started demanding dowry. According to Shahinur's family, at around 2.30 pm of February 4, 2012, Raju hacked and killed Shahinur because they could not continue giving dowry. Shahinur's brother, Mohammad Sanaullah Prodhan filed a case as a plaintiff in Gojaria Police Station. The case is numbered: 03, date- 04/02/2012 under section 11 (ka)/30 of Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003).<sup>62</sup> On April 30, 2012, the Investigating Officer, Sub Inspector (SI) Farid Uddin submitted the charge sheet to the Court.

<sup>62</sup> Section 11 (ka) talks about the punishment for killing someone over demands for dowry and section 30 deals with the punishment for abetment.

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission into the matter and interviewed:

- Relatives of Shahinur Begum
- Eye-witnesses
- The doctor who conducted the post mortem and
- The members of law enforcement agencies.



Shahinur Begum

**Kalu Miah Prodhan (55), Shahinur's father**

Kalu Miah told Odhikar that he arranged Shahinur's marriage with the son of Badshah Miah, Humayun Kabir Raju of Lokkipur village and Taka 150,000 was fixed as dowry. On May 20, 2011, the marriage took place. At the time of the marriage, he gave gold ornaments and Taka one lac (one hundred thousand) towards Raju's business. 15 days after the marriage, Raju came to demand one lac taka more as dowry. Kalu Miah mortgaged their homestead and gave the money to Raju. However, after few days Raju demanded two lac taka more. Kalu Miah expressed his inability to give any more money. From then, Raju started abusing Shahinur. One day, Shahinur called her father and told him that Raju had tried to suffocate her while demanding dowry from her. The day after this phone call, Kalu Miah went to Raju's home and brought

his pregnant daughter back. Raju came to his house after around one month and at night he dragged Shahinur out of the home and physically assaulted her. Neighbours stopped him and came to her rescue. Raju snatched away Shahinur's gold chain and threatened her father that he would not take Shahinur back unless one lac taka was given and he left. Two months passed by and then one day Raju came back to his father in law's home and apologised. He also pleaded for forgiveness from other members of the family and finally took Shahinur back home. Julekha, Shahinur's friend, called Kalu Miah to tell him that Raju was abusing Shahinur both physically and mentally all most every day. Hearing this Kalu Miah went to Lokkipur on February 3, 2012. However, Raju again demanded one lac taka. When Kalu Miah refused to give him any more money, Raju verbally abused him and said that he would not be able to see Shahinur any more unless the demanded dowry was given. Then Raju threw him out of his home.

At around 2.30 pm of February 4, 2012, his neighbour, Mohammad Asad Ali Miyaji called him to say that Shahinur was gravely ill and under treatment in Gojaria Health Complex. Kalu Miah went to Gojaria Health Complex, where he saw Raju's brother, Babul sitting beside Shahinur. Shahinur told him that Raju, with the help of his parents, brother and sister, injured her by hacking at different parts of her body. Kalu Miah talked to the duty doctor, Tapan Kumar Bormon about Shahinur's condition. The doctor said that her injuries was so deep, they were causing her to bleed excessively. He referred her to Dhaka Medical College for better treatment. Kalu Miah went to the nearby market to call his son, Sanaullah. Returning from the market, he learnt that Babul had taken Shahinur to Dhaka in a microbus. However, the microbus returned to the Gojaria hospital after 30 minutes and Babul escaped. The driver told Kalu Miah that they returned right after the patient



died. Afterwards, the police of Gojaria Police Station went to the hospital, arrested Raju and prepared the inquest report. After preparing the report, they left with the body of Shahinur. His son, Sanaullah went with them and filed a case in the Gojaria Police Station, he informed.

**Mohammad Sanaullah Prodhan (25), Shahinur's elder brother**

Mohammad Sanaullah told Odhikar that at around 3 pm on February 4, 2012, he came to know from one of his friends, Shah Ali that Raju wounded Shahinur badly and she was in Gojaria Health Complex. Sanaullah reached there from Dhaka at 7 pm and found Shahinur dead. He saw Sub Inspector (SI) Farid Uddin preparing the inquest report, with the assistance of two female police officers. After they prepared the report, they left taking the body of Shahinur. He went to Gojaria Police Station to file a case. However, SI Farid Uddin kept him waiting for three hours. The SI ordered the Officer-in-Charge (OC) Shohidul Islam, on his arrival, to file the case. The OC wrote the F.I.R but took his signature without reading it out to Sanaullah. SI Farid Uddin told him that the F.I.R was filed against Shahinur's husband Humayun Kabir Raju (25) father-in-law, Badshah Miah (70), mother-in-law Monowara Begum (60), brothers-in-law Babul (40), Moajjem (35), Masud (23) and sister-in-law Jesmin Akhter (37). At around 11.40 pm SI Farid Uddin filed the case. Case number-03; Date- 04/02/2012 under section 11 (ka)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003).

At around 9 am on February 5, 2012, he also went to the Munshiganj District Hospital for the post mortem with the police. The body of Shahinur was returned home in the evening and she was buried at the Baghaiakandi village.

**Al Amin (40), Eye-witness**

Al Amin told Odhikar that he is Raju's neighbour. Shahinur's friend, Julekha, also a neighbour, used to tell him that Raju

beat Shahinur quite often. At around 2.30 pm of February 4, 2012, Julekha informed him that Raju was beating Shahinur behind closed doors. Hearing this, Al Amin went to Raju's home and made him open the door. Then he saw a crowbar in his hand and blood on the floor. Raju injured Shahinur by beating and hacking her with the crowbar. Al Amin sent Shahinur to the Gojaria Upazilla Health Complex with Raju's brother Babul. The locals locked Raju in a room so that he could not escape. Then Al Amin called Union Parishad member of Lokkipur, Abdus Sattar and the Chairman of Bhober Chor Union Parishad, Professor Gias Uddin and informed them that Shahinur had little chance of survival after such injury. Professor Gias Uddin informed the Gojaria Police Station and at 4 pm SI Farid Uddin came and arrested Raju.

**Mohammad Asad Ali Miyaji (60), neighbour of Shahinur's father**

Mohammad Asad Ali Miyaji told Odhikar that at around 3.00 pm of February 4, 2012, he saw a crowd at the Gojaria Health Complex and stepped forward. He found out that Kalu Miah's daughter Shahinur was brought in dying. Then he called Kalu Miah and the Commissioner of Baghaiakandi village, Mohammad Mojammel. He also talked to the duty doctor, Tapan Kumar Bormon who said that Shahinur had very little chance of survival. Then he went home because he was ill.

**Doctor Tapan Kumar Bormon, Gojaria Upazilla Health Complex**

Dr. Tapan Kumar Bormon refused to talk about the death of Shahinur.

**Abdul Mannan, Member of Lower Subordinate Staff (MLSS), Gojaria Upazilla Health Complex**

Abdul Mannan told Odhikar that on February 4, 2012, a man called Babul brought a woman called Shahinur from Lokkipur to the hospital. She had injuries on her back, chest and ears.



She also had injuries to both sides of her abdomen which were so deep that there was no way to stop the bleeding or give her stitches. There was little the emergency doctors could do and they just covered her injuries with a bandage.

**Sub Inspector (SI) Farid Uddin, Gojaria Police Station, Munshiganj**

SI Farid Uddin told Odhikar that at around 3 pm of February 4, 2012, the Chairman of Bhober Chor Union Parishad, Professor Gias Uddin called and informed him that in Lokkhipur a woman named Shahinur had been badly injured by her husband and in-laws with the probable intention of killing her. He went to Lokkhipur and at around 4 pm he arrested Humayun Kabir Raju, who was covered in blood, despite his hurried efforts to wash himself. The SI said that there was a bloody crowbar and two big knives in the room. He also recovered some clothes covered with blood. He arrested Raju and went to Gojaria Health Complex to prepare the inquest report. After preparing the report, he took the body of Shahinur to the Gojaria Police Station and kept it there. Shahinur's brother, Sanaullah filed a case as a plaintiff against eight people. As the Investigating Officer of the case, he took the body to the Munshiganj District Hospital at around 9 am of February 5, 2012. After the post mortem, he returned the body to the family. He informed Odhikar that the investigation was still going on.

On May 27, 2012 SI Farid Uddin informed Odhikar that, he submitted the charge sheet to the Court on April 30, 2012. Charge sheet number-98.

**Doctor Ehsanul Karim, Residential Medical Officer, Sadar Hospital, Munshiganj**

Doctor Ehsanul Karim told Odhikar that at around 11.30 am on February 5, 2012, the SI of Gojaria Police Station, Farid Uddin and a person named Sanaullah brought in a body of a woman. SI Farid Uddin informed him that she was Shahinur Begum. He conducted the post mortem of the body of Shahinur. There were injuries on her back, chest and ear. She also had very deep abdominal wounds and her stomach was partially exposed. In the post mortem report, he mentioned that she died of excessive bleeding. On the same day, police took the body.

**Taslima (45), who conducted the bath ritual of the body**

Taslima told Odhikar that on February 5, 2012, she conducted the bathing ritual of Shahinur's body with two other neighbours, Rahima (50) and Kulsum (40). She saw 11 injury marks on Shahinur's back, hands, fingers, and lower abdomen.

**Follow up**

A follow up of the incident was carried out on 10 June 2012. It was learnt that on December 30, 2012 the charge sheet of the case was submitted to the Court. The Court has taken the case under consideration and fixed the date of trial on June 18, 2012.

**28 February 2012: Fatema Khatun**

Fatema Khatun Kajol (19) was the daughter of Mohammad Akram Shorder of Alipur Purbopara village of Sadar upazila of Satkhira district. On November 5, 2011, she married Mohammad Mominur Rahman Momin (26), the son of Harun Molla of Boikari village of Sadar upazila.

On February 27, 2012, Momin and his family assaulted and injured her for dowry money. At around 6 in the morning of February 28, 2012, they tried to kill her by pouring poison into her mouth. She died under treatment at around 8.30 in the night on the same day. Fatema's family alleged that she was killed due to dowry demand. Fatema's father, Akram Shorder filed a case as a plaintiff. The case is numbered: 66, dated: 28/2/12 under section 11(ka)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003).<sup>63</sup>

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission into the matter. They interviewed:

- Relatives of Fatema Khatun
- The accused and his family
- Eye-witnesses
- The doctor who conducted the post mortem and
- Members of law enforcement agencies

<sup>63</sup> Section 11(ka) talks about the punishment of killing a person in demand of dowry and section 30 deals with the punishment of abetment for the same crime.



Fatema Khatun

### **Mohammad Akram Shorder (50), Fatema's father**

Mohammad Akram Shorder told Odhikar that on November 5, 2011, Momin and Fatema got married. Fatema had a 'dark' complexion and due to that reason, Momin's family demanded dowry, which included a steel almirah, a pair of gold ear rings and seventy two thousand taka. Akram Shorder was concerned for Fatema's future and on November 4, 2011, he gave Momin fifteen thousand taka. He also fulfilled the other demands, including the rest of the money within one month of the marriage. However, Momin and his younger sister named Mosammat Fatema Khatun used to physically assault his daughter. Fatema told him that Momin always carry a clasp-knife. Momin used to scare her with that and asked her to bring more money from her father. He also recalled that two *salish*<sup>64</sup> were held in Momin's house due to the abuse.

At around 7 in the morning of February 28, 2012, Azizul Islam, Momin's brother-in-law, called Akram Shorder and told him that Fatema had taken poison. He went to Momin's residence, where he learnt that Momin and Azizul had taken Fatema to the chamber of Abdullah Al Baki, a local doctor at Boikari bazar. He went to Boikari bazar and found Fatema in a very

<sup>64</sup> Mediation

bad condition. Her head was bleeding. He said that Fatema tried to tell him that her in-laws were responsible. Her condition was so critical, the doctor suggested that she be taken to Satkhira. At around 10.45 in the morning, the three of them took Fatema to the Shotota Clinic, Satkhira. She was treated there till 7.30 in evening. After that she was transferred to the Shimul Clinic at the north side of Satkhira Judge Court. At around 8.30 in the night, Dr. Shohidul Islam declared her dead. Akram Shorder returned home with Fatema's body. He also informed his cousin Rouf Shorder, former Chairman of Alipur Union Parishad. Rouf Shorder informed the Satkhira District Police Station and the police came to his house. At around 10 in the night, police arrested Momin and Azizul and took the body of Fatema to the police station for post mortem. After that, Mr. Shorder went to Satkhira District Police Station and filed a case as a plaintiff against five people. On February 29, 2012, Fatema was buried at Alipur Purbopara village after the post mortem.

### **Enamul Huq (35), Fatema's cousin**

Enamul Huq told Odhikar that on February 28, 2012, he came to know from Fatema's father that Fatema was ill and had been admitted to Shotota Clinic in Satkhira. Then he went to Shotota Clinic and found Fatema in a critical condition. He said that he saw she had injured her head. He also saw the doctors wash her stomach. He recalled that the doctors brought something white out from her mouth. He also said that her head was bleeding a lot while the washing process was taking place. He told Odhikar that it was only after the marriage that the family learnt Momin traded in illegal cattle. Momin used to demand dowry each time the supply of cows from India dwindled and he suffered loss.



**Rouf Shorder, Fatema's uncle and former Chairman of No.7 Alipur Union Parishad, Satkhira**

Rouf Shorder told Odhikar that Fatema's father informed him about her illness over phone. Then he went to Shotota Clinic and saw Fatema in a critical situation. He said that he informed Satkhira District Police Station.

**Mominur Rahman Momin (26), Fatema's husband and the accused**

Odhikar's fact finders went to Satkhira District Jail to talk to the accused, Momin. Mominur Rahman Momin told Odhikar that on February 26, 2012, there was a quarrel between Fatema and his mother. That is why he informed Fatema's parents. Fatema's parents came and wanted to take her with them forcefully. However, she refused to go with them. Then Fatema's father got angry and verbally abused her. As a result, she got upset and took poison on February 28, when nobody was at home. He claimed that he did not know when and how she took the poison. The fact finder asked him about the injury on her head. He said that a tile fell down from the roof and cut her head. He claimed that Fatema's parents are responsible for her death.

**Nur Jahan (50), Fatema's mother-in-law**

Nur Jahan told Odhikar that at the time of marriage, Fatema's father gave 30,000 taka in cash. He was also supposed to give a bicycle, a gold ring and a watch which he did not give. She said that she was not at home on February 28, 2012 when Fatema took the poison.

**Mohammad Nurul Huda, Momin's relative and member of Boikari Union Parishad, Satkhira**

Mohammad Nurul Huda told Odhikar that Momin never assaulted Fatema. Fatema committed suicide out of depression.

He also said that on February 27, 2012, Momin and Fatema had a quarrel. Then Momin pushed Fatema and she fell on the stairs and injured her head.

**Dr. Abdullah Al Baki, Village Doctor, Molla Clinic, Boikari Bazar, Satkhira**

Dr. Abdullah Al Baki told Odhikar that at around 9 in the morning of February 28, 2012, two persons from Boikari Purbopara, called Momin and Azizul brought in a patient named Fatema. At first, he refused to give treatment and wanted to refer her elsewhere because of the critical injury to her head. However, he gave her first aid.

**Dr. M.A Kabir, Shotota Clinic, Satkhira**

Dr M.A Kabir told Odhikar that at around 10.45 in the morning on February 28, 2012, a patient named Fatema was brought to Shotota Clinic. He did not want to keep her there as her condition was very critical. But on the request of the former Chairman of No. 7 Alipur Union Parishad, Rouf Shorder, he kept her there till 7:30 in the evening. Later on, he heard that she was taken to Shimul Clinic and she died on the way there.

**Sub Inspector (SI) Topon Kumar Shingho, Satkhira Sadar Police Station, Satkhira**

SI Topon Kumar Shingho told Odhikar that on February 28, 2012, the former Chairman of No. 7 Alipur Union Parishad, Rouf Shorder informed him that Akram's daughter from Boikari village was killed by her in-laws. Then he went to Fatema's father's house and prepared the inquest report. In the inquest report, he mentioned about the injury on head. At around 10 in the night, he arrested Momin and his brother-in-law Azizul from Fatema's father's house. Fatema's father filed a case. The case in numbered: 66, dated: 28/02/12 under section 11(ka)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003). He was the Investigating Officer of the case.

On May 28, 2012, he informed Odhikar that he got the post mortem report, though the charge sheet had not been submitted to the Court. The investigation was going on.



**Dr. Touhidur Rahman, the doctor who conducted the post mortem, Satkhira Sadar Hospital, Satkhira**

Dr. Touhidur Rahman told Odhikar that at around 10 in the morning of February 29, 2012, SI Topon Kumar Shingho of Satkhira Police Station brought in a body of a woman named Fatema. He informed that he conducted the post mortem, numbered post mortem no. 36. He said that he saw a wound which was two inch wide and one third of an inch deep on her head. The liver, kidney and stomach of the body of Fatema Khatun were sent to Mohakhali, Dhaka for viscera test. The doctor said that he could not say anything until he got the viscera report.

**Ujjol, morgue assistant, Satkhira Sadar Hospital, Satkhira**

Ujjol told Odhikar that at around 10 in the morning on February 29, 2012, police brought a body of a woman named Fatema to the morgue. He saw a two inch long injury on her head.

**Odhikar's statement**

During the fact finding, Odhikar came to know that Fatema's father was illiterate and that is why a policeman wrote the F.I.R. for him. In the F.I.R, he mentioned that at around 6 in the evening of February 28, 2012, Fatema was given poison. However, Fatema's relatives said that Fatema was poisoned in the morning of February 28, 2012. Even the accused Momin mentioned that the incidence took place in the morning.

According to section 154 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, an FIR must be read back to the informant and signed by him. It is doubtful that this was done, since the time of occurrence is wrong. This could jeopardise the investigation. Odhikar demands proper, lawful investigation into the case and the accused to be punished.

**2. ACID VIOLENCE**

**09 July 2011: Monzila Khatun Sathi**

On the evening of 9 July 2011, at around 7.30pm Liton, the son of Kader Ali and Khadeja Begum of Chadkathi village of police line area of Satkhira threw acid on and burnt the face, neck and breast of his wife Mosammot Monzila Khatun Shathi (20), the daughter of Yunus Ali and Mosammot Rokeya Khatun of Itgacha. Hearing Monzila Khatun scream, local people rushed to the spot and rescued her and poured water on her injury and got her immediately admitted to the Satkhira Sadar Hospital. In hospital, Monzila was given emergency treatment for 5 days. Treatment for acid victims is not advanced in Satkhira which is why she was transferred to the Acid Survivors Foundation in Dhaka. After getting treatment for 12 days, she is staying in her father's residence at Itagacha. Monzila's mother as a complainant filed a case against Liton in Satkhira Police Station. Case is numbered-42, dated: 10/07/2011 under section 5(Kha) of the Acid Control Act 2002. The case is under investigation under SI, Mahbubur Rahman of Satkhira Sadar Police Station. Liton has not yet been arrested, though it is known that he is staying in his house.



Monzila Khatun Shathi

Human Rights organisation, Odhikar, conducted a fact-finding mission in to the matter. During this, they interviewed:

- Mosammot Monzila Khatun Shathi, acid victim
- Mosammot Rokeya Khatun, Monzila's mother
- Liton, accused acid thrower
- Abdul Khalek, Liton's uncle
- Sumon Kumar Das, Doctor of Satkhira Sodor hospital
- Madhob Datt, Director of NGO Shodesh
- The Officer-in-Charge of Satkhira Sodor Police Station
- SI Mahbubur Rahman, the Investigating Officer

#### **Mosammot Monzila Khatun Shathi (20), acid victim**

Mosammot Monzila Khatun Shathi told Odhikar that she had been in a relationship with Liton for five years. Promising to marry her, Liton took her to Bhoirob and he confined her there forcefully and raped her. With the help of Abdul Ohab, Liton's brother-in-law they brought them Satkhira to get married. After coming to Satkhira, Liton refused to marry her that is why Monzila filed a rape case against Liton. Therefore, Liton was bound to marry Monzila and got married on 17 March 2010. The marriage was registered in Registry book no-A (10), page no-64. After the marriage, Monzila was not taken to her in-laws home formally, so she continued staying at her father's home. Liton asked Monzila to withdraw the rape case and she did. After the case was withdrawn Liton started coming to Monzila's father house and beat her. After some days he stopped coming to Monzila's father's house and stopped paying maintenance. On 29 November 2010, Monzila, along with her two sisters, went to her in-laws house where Liton used to live. There Monzila's mother-in-law misbehaved with the three of them and Liton hit Monzila on the head with a large knife. Monzila filed a case against Liton, Liton's mother Moshammot Khadeja Begum and Liton's sister Rojina Khatun for assault and hurt for demanding dowry, under section

11(GA)/30 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (the Suppression of Repression on Women and Children Act, 2000), in Satkhira Court. (amendment 2003).

Being injured by the knife Monzila was admitted to the Satkhira Sadar Hospital and she came to know that Liton had married a second time on 25 November 2011. Later on, after she recovered, she called Liton's new wife and told her about Liton's violence. Liton became furious.

At around 6.50 pm on 9 July 2011, Liton called Monzila on her mobile phone and asked her to meet him near the Rosulpur Police Line of Satkhira. When Monzila approached the road before Rosulpur Police Line, Liton threw acid on the left side of her face and ran away. Hearing Monzila's screams the people around came and poured water on her burns and took her to the Sadar Hospital by van. She was given treatment in the Sadar Hospital for 5 days and then she was moved to the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) at Banani in Dhaka by an NGO called Shodesh for better treatment. At ASF, Monzila took treatment for 12 days and then returned home. Monzila said that the doctor at the ASF told her that she would need to take further treatment after few days. The left side of Monzila's face, neck and right side of her breast were burnt by acid.

#### **Mosammot Rokeya Khatun (50), Monzila's mother**

Rokeya Khatun told Odhikar that on 17 March 2010 Monzila got married to Liton (26), the son of Abdul Kader of Chadkathi of Tala upazila. After the marriage, Liton used to beat Monzila for dowry and other reasons. On 29 November 2010, Monzila went to Liton's home and he injured her on the head with a big knife and then threw her out of the house. Liton's parents got him married for the second time without informing Monzila. When Monzila decided to file a case against Liton, he got angry and threatened her.



At around 6:50pm on 9 July 2011, Liton called Monzila's mobile and asked her to come in front of Rosulpur Police Line at Satkhira. Liton ran away from there after throwing acid on the left side of her face. Monzila's face, neck, and breast were burnt and singed by acid. Hearing Monzila's screams the people around came running to save her and admitted her to the Satkhira Sadar Hospital.

**Robiul Islam (witness of the case), Journalist, Daily Jai Jai Din**

Journalist Robiul Islam informed Odhikar that when the incident of acid throwing took place he was at the Satkhira Press Club. He got the information through his mobile phone and went to see Monzila at Satkhira Sadar Hospital. Monzila was badly burnt and they were pouring water on her injuries.

**Liton, accused acid thrower**

When the fact finders of Odhikar went to Liton's home, everyone there hid. Fact finders guessed that they had not gone far. They communicated with the help of the neighbours and then one by one Liton's elder uncle, his mother and finally Liton himself came in front of the fact-finding team. Liton admitted marrying Monzila also said he knew about the case but denied throwing acid on her. Liton said that on 9 July 2011 he was weeding and cleaning the turmeric field until noon.

**Abdul Khalek, elder uncle of Liton**

Liton's elder uncle told Odhikar that on 9 July 2011 Liton did not throw acid on Monzila. From the morning there was work going on at home. Liton was assisting in the work. He also said that on 24 November 2010 Liton sent a divorce letter to Monzila.

**Dr. Sumon Kumar Das, Sadar Hospital, Satkhira**

Dr. Sumon Das, the doctor of Satkhira Sadar Hospital told

Odhikar that on 9 July 2011 acid victim Monzila was admitted to the hospital. She was given the primary treatment and sent to the Acid Survivors Foundation at Dhaka for proper, specialised treatment.

**Madhob Datt, the Director of NGO Shodesh**

Madhob Datt told Odhikar that he got Monzila admitted to Acid Survivors Foundation in Dhaka from Satkhira Sadar Hospital through his NGO Shodesh. He also said that the injury on Monzila's face is completely due to an acid attack.

**Mohammad Shahjahan Khan, Officer-in-Charge, Satkhira Sadar Police Station**

OC Shahjahan Khan told Odhikar that after getting the written complaint from the plaintiff he took the case under section 5(Kha) of the Acid Crime Control Act, 2002 for the crime of injuring someone by throwing acid. At first, the case was given to SI Borhan to investigate. Later on, it was given to SI Mahbubur Rahman. The case is under investigation.

**SI Mahbubur Rahman, the Investigating Officer, Satkhira Sadar Police Station**

SI Mahbubur Rahman of Satkhira Sadar Police Station told Odhikar that on 10 July 2011 Monzila's mother as a plaintiff filed a case in Satkhira Sadar Hospital on the fact that on the road in front of the Rosulpur Police line of Satkhira municipality, Monzila's husband Liton threw acid on her. The case no is 42 under section 5(Kha) of the Acid Crime Control Act, 2002. To catch Liton, the only accused of this case, police searched his home but Liton was absconding. Within two months, the investigation report will be sent to the Court. On 31 July 2011, Satkhira Sadar Hospital was asked to send the report regarding Monzila's treatment. As well as this clothes that Monzila was wearing at the time of the incident have been



sent to Mohakhali for chemical testing. SI Mahbubur Rahman also said that after getting the report, the charge sheet will be sent to the Court on the completion of investigation.

On 7 August 2011, during the interview with SI Mahbubur Rahman, the fact finding team of Odhikar informed him that Liton was not absconding and he was in his home; and that the team had talked to Liton. Later on when Odhikar's representative inquired about the case, the investigating officer SI Mahbubur Rahman said that Liton's home is in Chadkathi which is under the Tala Police Station and that he had sent a requisition letter to the OC of Tala Police Station on 6 September 2011.

#### **Odhikar's Observation**

It is apparent that on 24 November 2010 Liton sent a divorce letter to Monzila and on 25 November 2010 Liton got married for the second time before the divorce was finalised.

Police informed Odhikar that Liton was absconding, but the fact-finding team of Odhikar talked to Liton at his home on 6 August 2011. During fact-finding Liton said that on the day of the incident, he was cleaning his turmeric field until noon but his uncle informed Odhikar that Liton was helping in some work at home. There are huge contradictions in their statements.

Odhikar demands the accused Liton be arrested as soon as possible and tried under the prevalent criminal laws; and that the government ensure enough security for Monzila.

#### **24 August 2011: Six members from the same family**

#### **became victims of Acid violence**

A dispute had been running for many days between Mohammad Alauddin, resident of Songbolla Poschim Para at Kalihati upazila of Tangail district and his own paternal uncle named Rohomot Ullah (48) for demarcating boundary line of the dwelling house. Mohammad Alauddin and his paternal uncle Rohomot Ullah lived in the same house. Last August 24, 2011 at around 6.45 in the evening Mohammad Alauddin and his wife Sohana (28), daughter Dristti (8), Tanas (2 months), father A. Salam (60) and mother Aleya Brgum (55) was taking there iftar<sup>65</sup>. In the mean time, Rohomot Ullah threw a bowl of acid used to dye cotton thread, at them. A. Salam's face, eyes and chest; Sohana's face and breast; child Tanas's and Dristti's chest and back, Aleya Begum's face and Mohammad Alauddin's right elbow and back were injured and they suffered both simple and grievous hurt. Hearing the screams, neighbours came and poured water on them. Then, they were taken to the Tangail General Hospital. They were given primary treatment there. Later, they were admitted in the Dhaka Medical College Hospital burn unit.

Mohammad Alauddin filed a case at the Kalihati Police Station as a plaintiff, the case number of which is- 24, date – 25.08.2011, section 5 (a) (b) of the Acid Crime Control Act, 2002. Later, when the fact finding team of Odhikar went there to conduct fact finding, they came to know that the victim family was compensated with Tk. 1, 00,000 by the accused for medical treatment. Later, Mohammad Alauddin informed the fact finding team that they had mitigated the case. For that reason, he did not want to talk any further about this matter.

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<sup>65</sup> Iftar means breaking of Ramadan fasting after sunset with snacks and cold drink.

### 29 May 2012: Mosammat Fatema Begum

On 29th May 2012 at around 12am, *Mosammot* Fatema Begum (28) wife of Sheikh Nuruzzaman of Pirojpur village, Kaliganj Upazila, Satkhira district was scalded with an acidic substance thrown at her by her neighbour Ansar Ali Mistri, son of deceased Omor Ali Mistri, as claimed by her family.

Fatema has filed a case regarding this incident at the Kaligonj Police Station. As she is illiterate, a policeman wrote the First Information Report (FIR) on her behalf, under section 4(1)(Kha) of the Suppression of Repression against Women and Children Act, 2000 (Amended 2003). However, there is no such section in the said Act of 2000 (corrected 2003). The correct section would be 4(2)(Kha). Fatema informed the fact finding team of Odhikar that when the policeman was writing the FIR he mentioned that the name of Ansar Ali and one un-named abettor had been included as the accused in the case. Later she got to know that in the FIR, no names had been mentioned, and there is only 'un-named person' named as the accused.

Odhikar carried out a fact-finding mission into the incident. During the mission, Odhikar interviewed:

- Fatema Begum and her family members
- The accused Ansar Ali's mother
- The doctor and
- Members of the Law enforcement agencies



Fatema Begum

### Mosammot Fatema Begum (28), victim:

Mosammot Fatema Begum told Odhikar that her husband Nuruzzaman is a rickshaw-puller in Dhaka. He comes home every 15 days. Due to this, Ansar Ali used to harass her with indecent proposals. On 26th May 2012 when her husband Sheikh Nuruzzaman came home, she informed him about Ansar Ali's indecent proposals. Her husband and Ansar Ali got into an argument. As a result, Ansar Ali threatened that he would shut Fatema's mouth for good. After that on 28th May 2012, her husband went back to Dhaka.

She said, on 29th May 2012, at around 12pm, she took her elder son Milon Sheikh (12) to the bathroom beside her house. She was waiting for her son outside the bathroom. At that time, Ansar Ali and another person, threw a liquid at her and ran away. She believes they may have used a syringe to do so. The liquid caused the left side of her neck and chest to burn in pain. She began screaming and fell to the ground, writhing in pain. People living nearby came and put water on her wounds. On 29th May 2012 at around 10am she got admitted to Kaligonj Upazila Health Complex for treatment. After being treated there for one day, on 30th May 2012, she was admitted to Khulna Medical Hospital for better treatment.

### Sheikh Nuruzzaman, Fatema's husband:

Sheikh Nuruzzaman informed Odhikar that he is a rickshaw-puller in Dhaka. He comes back to his village Pirojpur of Kaligonjthana every 15 days. He informed that on 26th May 2012 he had a heated argument with Ansar Ali for harassing his wife with indecent proposals. Ansar Ali threatened that he would make them suffer. He said that when he left on 28th May 2012, Ansar Ali threw acid at his wife. Upon hearing the news in the morning of 29th May 2012 from Fatema's sister's husband, Alomgir Gazi, he came back home on 30th May 2012. Then he took Fatema to Khulna Medical College Hospital for better treatment.



**Milon Sheikh (12), Fatema's elder son:**

Milon Sheikh told Odhikar that on 29th May 2012 at around midnight, his mother Fatema took him to the bathroom beside their house. Suddenly he heard his mother scream and saw that she was on the ground writhing in pain. During that time he saw two men running away. The he called out to all the people in the surrounding houses. A few people came and poured a lot of water on his mother's wound.

**Topon Kumar Mondol, Medical Officer, Kaligonj Upazila Health Complex, Kaligonj:**

Topon Kumar Mondol informed Odhikar that on 29th May 2012 at around 10 am Fatema Begum got admitted to the hospital. At that time, Fatema's physical condition was not good. On 30th May 2012 at around 10am, Fatema was referred to Khulna Medical College Hospital for better treatment. When asked whether Fatema was attacked by acid or not, Dr. Topon Kumar said that that can only be determined after tests carried out by the Dhaka-based NGO, Acid Survivor's Foundation, through a specialized doctor.

**Rabeya Khatun, accused Ansar Ali's mother:**

Rabeya Khatun told Odhikar that Fatema's accusation that Ansar Ali threw acid on her is false. She claims that Fatema burnt herself to take revenge on her son as they had an altercation over catching fish two days ago.

**Sub Inspector (SI) Sohrab Hossain, Kaligonj Police Station, Satkhira:**

SI Sohrab Hossain, informed Odhikar that he is investigating the case filed by Fatema Begum, wife of Sheikh Nuruzzaman of Pirojpur village, Kaligonj Upazila of Satkhira. During the investigation he got to know that Fatema Begum's son Milon Sheikh was present there when the incident took place.

Although Milon saw two people running away from the scene of the crime, he could not recognise them. When they went to arrest Ansar Ali according to the accusation made by Fatema Begum, he could not be found. He claimed that Ansar Ali has been in hiding since the incident.



### 3. RAPE

*All the names in this section used for the victims/or their families are pseudonymous and detail addresses are kept under secrecy.*

#### 15 October 2011: Nilima Das

##### Nilima Das: Victim

Nilima Das a 17 year old girl from Satkhira district was allegedly raped by police constable Salauddin Gazi on October 15, 2011. On October 15, 2011 Salauddin Gazi, Constable of Debhata Police Station had phoned Nilima Das to come to Satkhira township. When she arrived, he confined her at Shapla Hotel in Satkhira township for eight hours while raping her repeatedly. Nilima Das told Odhikar that, two years ago 29 year old Salauddin Gazi (Constable no. 1210, Father- Daud Ali Gazi, Village- Damuhuda, Upazila- Moktarpur and District- Chuadanga) lived in a rented house next to hers and the family knew him. Nilima called Salauddin 'uncle'. On October 15, 2011 at around 3 in the afternoon Salauddin had phoned her to come to Satkhira. When she reached the place, Salauddin brought her to a room in Shapla Hotel near the Khulna road crossing. There Salauddin forcefully raped her with the help of his accomplice Azharul Islam, owner of the hotel. At one stage, Nilima fell sick and a doctor was brought in to treat her. After having his way with her, Salauddin Gazi left Nilima in such a bad condition that the next day he returned and took her to the Sadar Hospital in a van and left alone outside. Nilima managed to phone her mother who came and admitted her to the hospital.

##### Labony Rani, Nilima's mother

Nilima's mother informed that, on October 16, 2011 she came to Satkhira and admitted her daughter to Satkhira Sadar Hospital at around 12 noon, as she was critically ill.

During the fact finding into the incident Odhikar observed that, some influential people were trying hard to convince Nilima and her family not to implicate Salauddin Gazi. The influential people threatened them not to give a confession under section 22 of the Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000 (amended 2003) in the Court.

Labony Rani, Nilima's mother, told Odhikar that, her husband Shudhir Das worked as a barber and she also worked as domestic help in different house to bear the cost of education of her two daughters. However, she never thought that a person whom Nilima called 'uncle' could have such bad intention to harm her daughter. She told that, some people were siding with Salauddin and blaming and defaming her daughter. She said that she was too ashamed to go out to work and that her husband had not left the house since the incident became public. Nobody talked to them, nobody came to their home.

##### Doctor Maruf Hossain, Resident Medical Officer of Satkhira Sadar Hospital

Dr. Maruf Hossain informed that, in the medical test the evidence of rape was found. He told that, as the victim was severely injured and lost a lot of blood, she needed to inject blood and had to take treatment for some days.

Later, when the fact finding team of Odhikar went to talk with Nilima's mother she replied that they resolved the matter. The accused compensated them 1, 50, 000 Tk. to mitigate the incident.

She did not agree to talk about the incident and requested the fact finding team not to conduct any report on the matter. She also requested not to ask the matter to others. Otherwise, they would face various difficulties and fall in danger.

As a result, the fact finding team of Odhikar did not conduct any fact finding nor prepare any report.

### 07 March 2012: Debosry Mojumder

Debosry Mojumder a 32 year old married woman of Satkhira district had been receiving illicit proposal from Porimol Mondol. At one stage on March 7, 2012 at around 9 in the morning Porimol entered into the living house of Debosry and forcefully raped her with the help of his accomplice Shantilal (35), son of Kanailal and Proshanto Mojumder (40), son of Kana Makhon. Hearing the scream of Debosry, her husband Ramesh came and saw Porimol with two others. The two others escaped but Ramesh caught Porimol. At that time, Porimol Mondol physically assaulted Ramesh to escape. Though Ramesh was injured but he did not let go Porimol Mondol. In this connection, Debosry Mojumder filed a case under section 9(1) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000 (amended in 2003) and section 323/506 of Penal Code 1860 against Porimol Mondol and the two others accomplice. On that day at around 5.30 in the afternoon Sub Inspector (SI) Shofiullah Khan arrested the 1st accused Porimol Mondol and sent him to Jail custody.

During the fact finding, Odhikar at first interviewed the victim Debosry Mojumder. Debosry Mojumder told Odhikar that, Porimol Mondol had been giving illicit proposal for many days. Earlier he raped her once before the incident but she did not disclose it for the fear of losing dignity in the society. At that time she told Porimol not to do it again otherwise she will informed it to her husband. However, Debosry also stated that her husband Ramesh Mojumder sat with Porimol Mondol to mitigate the case.

Ramesh Mojumder, husband of Debosry told that, what has happened is happened. Many incident occurs when everyone stays together. Everything should not be kept in mind. He forgave Porimol and submitted affidavit in the Court. He told that, though Porimol conducted an offence but Chairman, Member and local influential people put pressure to mitigate the matter. Thus, he mitigated the matter.

Later, when the fact finding team of Odhikar went to talk with victim and her family they replied that they did not want to move to the Court. They submitted affidavit to mitigate the case in the Court. They did not agree to talk about the incident and requested the fact finding team not to conduct any report on the matter.

As a result, the fact finding team of Odhikar neither conducted any fact finding nor prepared any report.

### 20 March 2012: Mosammat Mitu Akhter

A six and a half year old girl Mosammat Mitu Akhter from Sirajganj district was allegedly raped by Fulbabu (19), son of Habil Bepari from the same village at around 2 pm of March 20, 2012.

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

- Relatives and neighbours of Mitu Akhter
- Relatives of accused Fulbabu
- The doctor and
- Members of law enforcement agencies.

### Akbar Ali (26), elder brother of Mitu Akhter

Akbar Ali told Odhikar that his younger sister Mosammat Mitu Akhter is 6 and a half years old. She is a student of class two of Nondolapur Government Primary School. At around 2 pm on March 20, 2012, he heard Mitu scream out from the room of Fulbabu, son of Habil Bepari. Hearing the scream he, along with neighbours Ruhul Amin, Abdur Rahim, Mogrob Ali, Rokeya and few other people rushed towards Habil Bepari's home. Seeing them approach, Fulbabu escaped. They found Mitu lying on Fulbabu's bed and crying in pain. Akbar brought Mitu home. Mitu informed him that at around 2 pm Fulbabu offered her a chocolate and took her to his room. Then he put



his hand over her mouth and hurt her. Akbar took Mitu to Shahjadpur Potajiya Upazilla Health Complex where Dr. Onnopurna examined her.

Akbar Ali also informed Odhikar that Fulbabu's father and brother came to him to requesting him not to file a case and assured him they would settle this matter. He said that they did not take any initiative even after two days. Then he went to Shahjadpur Police Station on March 22, 2012. He filed a case as a plaintiff against Fulbabu (19), Habil Bepari (50) under section 9 (ka) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003)<sup>66</sup>. The case is numbered: 21 and dated: 22/03/2012. He also said that Mohammad Monirul Islam Moni, cousin of Fulbabu and Mohammad Abdul Habil, uncle of Fulbabu, were threatening him to withdraw the case. Both of them were influential people in the locality that is why he filed a General Diary (GD), numbered- 602 in Shahjadpur Police Station on April 15, 2012, against them.

#### **Ruhul Amin (28), a shopkeeper and Mitu's neighbour**

Ruhul Amin told Odhikar that at around 12.30 pm on March 20, 2012, Fulbabu bought 5 chocolates from his shop. At around 2 pm, he heard a scream from Fulbabu's home and went there. He saw Mitu's brother Akbar Ali taking her out from there. She was bleeding by the time she got home, and was taken to the hospital at around 6 pm.

#### **Mosammat Rokeya Begum (40), Mitu's neighbor**

Mosammat Rokeya Begum told Odhikar that at around 2 pm on March 20, 2012, she went to Fulbabu's home after hearing screams coming from there. She saw Mitu lying on Fulbabu's bed and screaming in pain. She also saw her bleeding.

<sup>66</sup> This section deals with the crime of rape and death caused due to rape and lays down the punishments.

#### **Sub Inspector (SI) Amirul Islam, Shahjadpur Police Station, Shirajganj**

SI Amirul Islam told Odhikar that on March 22, 2012, Akbar Ali, from Nondolapur Dokkhinpara village filed a case against Fulbabu (19), Habil Bepari (50) and Hiru Miah (25). He is the Investigating Officer of that case. He informed Odhikar that he came to know from the investigation that the fact is true and he was trying to arrest the accused.

#### **Dr. Onnopurna Kundu, Medical Officer, Shahjadpur Potajiya Upazilla Health Complex, Sirajganj**

Dr, Onnopurna Kundu told Odhikar that at around 6 pm on March 20, 2012, a girl named Mitu was brought to the hospital by her mother and brother. She examined the girl and had to give two stitches to mend her genital area; and prescribed medicines for her. Later on, she referred Mitu to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital for better treatment.

#### **Dr. Robiul Islam, Resident Medical Officer, Sirajganj District Hospital, Sirajganj**

Dr. Robiul Islam told Odhikar that a girl named Mitu was brought to the hospital. He sent her to a female doctor for health examination and the report was sent to the District Civil Surgeon.

#### **Habil Bepari (40), Fulbabu's uncle**

Habil Bepari told Odhikar that at around 3 pm on March 20, 2012, he came to know that Mitu got injured after falling from the tree. He recalled that few days earlier there was a problem between Mitu's father and his brother, Habil Bepari. Rahimuddin Islam filed a false case to take revenge, he commented.

### 11 April 2012: Bobita Das

The family of fourteen year old girl Bobita Das alleged that at around 6pm on April 11, 2012, she was raped by Shagor (18) son of Akbar Ali from the same village of Munshiganj district.

Odhikar conducted a fact finding mission into the matter. They interviewed:

- The victim, Bobita Das
- Relatives of the victim
- Neighbours
- Relatives of the accused, Shagor
- Representatives of the locality
- The doctor and
- Members of law enforcement agencies.

#### Bobita Das (14), the victim

Bobita Das told Odhikar that at around 4 pm of April 11, 2012, her mother Shukla Das sent her to borrow 100 taka from her aunt Josna Das. At around 5.30 pm, on her way to home, she met an acquaintance, Sharmin Akhter. Sharmin took her to her neighbours house saying that she had something important to share with Bobita. Bobita refused to go there as her mother would be waiting for her. However, Sharmin assured her that it would not take much time. Sharmin started making excuses in order to keep Bobita in the neighbour's house. Sharmin took Bobita to Shagor's room and locked her in. When Bobita tried to open the door, Shagor, who was hiding in the corner of the room, tied her mouth with a *gamcha*<sup>67</sup>. Then Shagor forcefully tied her hands with her *orna*<sup>68</sup> and made her lie on the bed.

<sup>67</sup> A thin cloth towel.

<sup>68</sup> A long scarf, part of the outfit called Salwar-Kamiz worn by women in the subcontinent. The tunic is called the kamiz and the baggy pants are the salwar.

When Bobita tried to shout, Shagor slapped her and threatened to cut her throat with a sharp weapon. Then he took off her *salwar* and raped her. She lost unconsciousness, and when she came to, she saw she was surrounded by women, one of them being her aunt Josna Das, who took Bobita to her home.

#### Shukla Das (35), Bobita's mother

Shukla Das told Odhikar that at around 4 pm of April 11, 2012, she sent Bobita to borrow 100 taka from her brother-in-laws wife, Josna Das. At around 7.30 pm, Josna informed her that their neighbour Akbar Ali's son Shagor had raped Bobita. She also told her that she took Bobita to her house. Shukla went to Josna's house and brought Bobita back to home.

Later on, she went to Al Amin, member of 9 no. ward of Lotobdi Union Parishad. She informed him about the incident and demanded justice. Al Amin could not settle the matter that is why, Shukla along with Bobita, her two brother-in-laws, Ripon Das and Khokon Das and a neighbor named Kamal, went to Shirajdikhan Police Station at around 10.30 pm of April 12, 2012. Bobita filed a case as a plaintiff against Shagor and Sharmin Akhter.

#### Josna Das (45), Bobita's aunt

Josna Das told Odhikar that she is the wife of Bobita's paternal uncle. Bobita came to borrow 100 taka from her, but left when Josna could not give her the money. At around 7 pm, Sharmin Akhter informed her that Bobita was in neighbour Shagor's room and there was something wrong. Sharmin told her to bring Bobita back from Shagor's home. Then she went to Shagor's house and brought Bobita to her place, and informed Bobita's mother of the matter.

#### Ripon Das (45), Bobita's uncle

Ripon Das told Odhikar that he came back home from work at



around 8 pm on April 11, 2012. He came to know that his brother's daughter, Bobita was raped by Shagor, son of Akbar Ali. Then he went to UP member Al Amin with Bobita's mother. Al Amin arranged a meeting that night but nobody from Shagor's family came. That is why, Al Amin advised Shukla to go to the police station. Then he and his brother, Khokon Das went to the police station with Bobita, Bobita's mother and a neighbour named Kamal at around 10.30 pm on April 12, 2012. Bobita filed a case as a plaintiff under section 9(ka) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003)<sup>69</sup>. The case is numbered: 12 and dated: 12/4/2012. He informed that he along with two constables of Shirajdikhan Police Station too Bobita to Munshiganj District Hospital for health check up.

**Akbar Ali (70), father of the accused Shagor**

Akbar Ali told Odhikar that his son did not rape Bobita.

**Al Amin (35), Member, 9 no. ward, Lotobdi Union Parishad, Shirajdikhan, Munshiganj**

Al Amin told Odhikar that at around 10 pm on April 11, 2012, Ripon called him and told him that the daughter of late Shopon Das, Bobita was raped by the son of Akbar Ali, Shagor. That night he went to Shopon's home. He assumed that Bobita had suffered some sort of trauma, as he could see that she was in a poor physical state. Then he called Akbar Ali on his cell phone, but he refused to come at that time and said to meet him the next morning on April 12, 2012. Since Akbar Ali did not

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<sup>69</sup> Section 9(ka) provides punishment for rape. It also punishes the perpetrator for any other act that may stem from the rape, such as the suicide of the victim. In this case, the perpetrator will be deemed to have abetted in the suicide.. On re-checking the police station documents, it was confirmed that the case was filed under this section of the law, even though the victim, Bobita did not commit suicide.

appear the next morning, Al Amin suggested Shukla Das to go to the police station.

**Dr. Ehsanul Karim, Resident Medical Officer, Munshiganj Sadar Hospital**

Dr. Ehsanul Karim told Odhikar that at around 12 pm on April 13, 2012, two constables from Shirajdikhan Police Station and a man named Ripon Das brought a girl named Bobita Das to the hospital. One of the constables said that Bobita was a victim of rape. He examined Bobita and found some physical indications that showed that she did not consent and was raped.

**Sub Inspector (SI) Thakur Das Malo, Investigating Officer, Shirajdikhan Police Station, Munshiganj**

SI Thakur Das Malo told Odhikar that on April 12, 2012, Bobita Das filed a case as a plaintiff against Shagor and Sharmin Akhter in Shirajdikhan Police Station under section 9(ka) of the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain, 2000 (Amendment 2003). The case is numbered: 12 and dated: 12/04/2012. He is the Investigating Officer of this case. He informed that none of the accused had yet been arrested.

**The End**

### About Odhikar

In 1994, a group of human rights activists initiated discussions and underscored the need to uphold the civil and political rights of the people of Bangladesh along with social, cultural and economic rights. Eventually, a decision was arrived at to form an organisation in order to advance such rights. In October 1994, Odhikar (a Bangla word that means 'rights') came into being with the aim to create a wider monitoring and awareness raising system on the abuse of civil and political rights. The principal objectives of the organisation are to raise the awareness of human rights and its various abuses, on the one hand and to create a vibrant democratic system through election monitoring on the other. The organisation also performs policy advocacy to address the current human rights situation. Odhikar has no field or branch offices. Instead, it has trained more than 300 people all over the country to be human rights defenders, who are relied upon for information outside Dhaka. These activities help contribute to eventual positive steps towards the creation of transparency and accountability in the responsible sectors of the government with an aim to improve its human rights record and to facilitate an active democracy with the participation of people from all sections of society.

In Bangladesh, women, children, religious and ethnic minorities are among the groups that are most vulnerable to human rights abuses. Furthermore, poor people's inability to access the justice system is blatantly obvious. Keeping this in mind, the organisation's fact-finding missions in rural Bangladesh also play a role in awareness raising among the vulnerable groups. Odhikar always emphasises the active participation of the grassroots community. It realises that empowerment is the precondition to establish human rights, which is based on a recognition and faith in people's own power and resources. With this in mind, Odhikar is working

with the vision of "society where full enjoyment of human rights by every human being will be ensured".

On 10 October 2012, Odhikar celebrated eighteen years of defending human rights. It has not been an easy struggle and the Odhikar team understands that working on civil and political rights is no easy task. Despite the odds, the whole team remains firmly committed to the organisation's principle of upholding such rights of common people. Indeed, it is the close relationship and team spirit of this relatively small organisation that helps it move forward.

Odhikar has been able to establish itself as a leading human rights organisation. It has developed a strong network of partners and human rights defenders not only all over Bangladesh, but also in the region.

For more information visit the Odhikar website at [www.odhikar.org](http://www.odhikar.org).



## About KIOS

The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights KIOS is a consortium of eleven Finnish organisations working for human rights and development issues. KIOS was founded in 1998 to fund projects promoting human rights and development of democracy. KIOS is an independent, non-political, non-religious and non-governmental foundation.

Founding organisations are Amnesty International Finnish Section, Committee of 100 in Finland, Finn Church Aid, Finnish Disabled People's International Development Association (FIDIDA), Finnish League for Human Rights, Finnish Peace Committee, Finnish Refugee Council, UN Association of Finland, Service Centre for Development Cooperation (KEPA), Finnish National Committee for UNICEF and The National Committee for UN Women in Finland.

KIOS promotes the realisation of human rights in developing countries as they are defined in the human rights treaties and instruments of the United Nations and the Council of Europe and in other correspondent regional human rights instruments. To advance this mission KIOS funds human rights projects of developing countries and is thus a direct channel of support to projects that promote the realisation of human rights of the developing countries and human rights knowledge of civil society actors. The mission of KIOS is to channel development cooperation funds of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland effectively and with good quality to human rights projects of the developing countries.

The founder organisations are represented in the KIOS Executive Board, which is the supreme organ of KIOS. Executive Board formulates the strategy of the organisation, guides the staff in its work and makes all the final funding

decisions. KIOS has a staff of five and an annual budget of approximately 1.5 million euro. KIOS receives financial support for its activities from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The KIOS office is located in Helsinki, where we share office premises with Abilis, FIDIDA and Siemenpuu.

For more information, visit the KIOS website, at [http://www.kios.fi/english/about\\_kios/](http://www.kios.fi/english/about_kios/)