

BSF firing kills a boy named Mohammad Sujon Ali at Chor Majardia border of Poba Upazila in Rajshahi

Fact Finding Report

Odhikar

On October 7, 2012 at around 11:30pm Mohammad Sujon Ali (16), son of Mohammad Shukur Ali and Tazzema Begum of Chor Majardia village in Haripur Union Porishod of Poba Upazila in Rajshahi district had gone fishing at a branch of the Padma River between sub pillar 1 and 2 of the 61st main pillar at the Bangladesh-India border when the Border Security Force (BSF) of India shot Sujon to death. Sujon went to lay a fishnet in the river near the Chor Majardia border in Rajshahi district around 5:00pm that day and returned home. At around 11:30pm, he went back to the river to collect the fishes with the help of his torchlight. This time, members of Harubhanga BSF camp under Raninagar Thana of Murshidabad district opened fire at him. Sujon died on the spot in the BSF fire, claim his mother and uncle.

Sujon Ali studied till the fifth grade. He was unable to continue his studies as his family was insolvent and there were no middle schools in Chor Majardia. Sujon helped his family by farming. Sujon occasionally went fishing for his family at the branch of the Padma river.

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

- Sujon's relatives
- The witnesses who saw Sujon's dead body
- The doctor who conducted the post mortem and
- Members of the law enforcement agencies



Mohammad Sujon Ali after his death (Photo:collected)

Mosammot Tazzema Begum (45), Sujon's mother:

Mosammot Tazzema Begum informed Odhikar that on October 7, 2012 at around 5:00pm Sujon returned home after dropping the fishnet at the branch of the Padma River between sub pillar 1 and 2 of main pillar 61 of the border. At around 11:00pm Sujon went back to the river to see whether any fish got caught in the net or not. After some time she heard the sound of a gunshot. As Sujon did not return home she became worried. On October 8, 2012 at around 12:15am, her neighbours Rustom Ali and Shahjahan recovered Sujon's body and brought home. She learnt from the two that Sujon's body was floating in the river. She noticed that a bullet pierced through under his right eye and came out through the back of his head.

Mohammad Habibur Rahman (43), Sujon's uncle and neighbour:

Mohammad Habibur Rahman told Odhikar that On October 7, 2012 at around 5:00pm Sujon went to drop the fishnet at a branch of the Padma River near the Chor Majardia border in Rajshahi district and returned home. He went back to the river at around 11:00pm to check the captures. At around 11:30pm he heard the sound of a gunshot from the border of the branch of the Padma river. His wife Mosammot Aseya Begum informed him that Sujon did not return from fishing at the border. At 12:00 midnight on October 8, 2012 he went to Sujon's house to check whether Sujon returned home. After sometimes, he saw Sujon's neighbours Rustom Ali and Shahjahan brought Sujon's body home. Shahjahan told him that after hearing the sound of a gunshot at the border near the branch of the Padma river he and Rustom Ali went there and found Sujon's body floating in the river beside the fishnet. Shahjahan and Rustom took his body out of the water and brought home. He noticed the bullet pierced under Sujon's right eye and came out from the back of his head. On October 8, 2012 at around 9:00am when they were going to bury Sujon's body at Majardia graveyard, members of Majardia sub-post of 37 Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) came there. At around 2:00pm, the BGB officials took Sujon's body for post mortem at Rajpara Police Station in Rajshahi. Sub-Inspector Rajibul Islam of Rajpara Police Station completed the inquest report of Sujon's body at around 9:00pm on October 8, 2012 and took his body to the morgue of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for post mortem. On October 9, 2012 at around 2:00pm after the completion of the post mortem Habibur returned home with Sujon's body. He was buried at the Chor Majardia graveyard later that day at 4:00pm.

Mohammad Shahjahan Ali (25), neighbour, who discovered Sujon's body:

Mohammad Shahjahan Ali informed Odhikar that on October 7, 2012 at around 11:30pm he heard the sound of a gunshot. To see why there was a sound of gunshot at the border area he and Rustom Ali went there. After searching for a while they found a body floating on the branch of the Padma river situated between sub pillar 1 and 2 of main pillar 61. They went near the body and figured it was their neighbour Sujon. On October 8, 2012 at around 12:15am he and Rustom got the body out of the water and took it to Sujon's house.



Photo: The area circled in the photo indicates the place where Sujon Ali's body was floating. His neighbours Shahjahan and Rustom rescued his body from that place (Photo courtesy: Odhikar, Date-October 10, 2012)

Subedar Mohammad Morshed Mia, D Company Commander, 37 Border Guard Bangladesh, Rajshahi:

Subedar Mohammad Morshed Mia told Odhikar that on October 8, 2012 at around 8:00am a BGB official of Chor Majardia sub post informed him that on October 7, 2012 at around 11:30pm a boy named Sujon Ali of Chor Majardia village was killed by BSF firing. He informed 37 BGB's Acting Commanding Officer Major Solaiman Hossain. On October 8, 2012 at around 10:00am, on order of Major Solaiman Hossain, he sent a letter to the Company Commander of Harubhanga BSF camp in Raninagar Thana of Murshidabad district for holding a flag meeting. The flag meeting was held at around 5:00pm near number sub pillar 1 of main pillar 56 of the border. At the flag meeting he represented BGB and Inspector DS Candari of E Company Commander of BSF 130 represented BSF. At the flag meeting, Inspector DS Candari told Mohammad Morshed Mia that BSF was not involved with the killing of anyone named Sujon at Majardia border.

Mohammad Zillur Rahman, Officer in-charge (O.C), Rajpara Police Station, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, Rajshahi:

Mohammad Zillur Rahman informed Odhikar that on October 8, 2012 at around 12:30pm he learnt from a journalist that a boy named Sujon Ali was shot by BSF near Majardia border. He told Sub-Inspector (SI) Mohammad Rajibul Islam to inquire about the incident.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Mohammad Rajibul Islam, Rajpara Police Station, Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, Rajshahi:

Sub-Inspector (SI) Mohammad Rajibul Islam told Odhikar that on October 8, 2012 at around 12:35pm Officer in-charge (OC) Mohammad Zillur Rahman told him to inquire about the death of

Sujon Ali, son of Shukur Ali of Chor Majardia village. At around 2:30pm BGB officials of Majardia border outpost handed him the dead Sujon's corpse. At around 4:30pm Sujon's father Mohammad Shukur Ali came to the police station and filed a case against unidentified BSF officials under section 302¹ of the Penal Code, 1860. The case number is: 17; Date: 08/10/2012. As the investigating officer of the case, he completed the inquest report for the body. He mentioned in the inquest report that the bullet pierced through under the right eye and came out of the back of the head. He took the body to the morgue of Rajshahi Medical College Hospital for post mortem. On October 9, 2012 at around 12:30pm after the completion of the post mortem Sujon's body was handed over to his family. He discovered the following information from his investigation: On October 7, 2012 at around 11:30pm, holding the torchlight by his mouth, Sujon was trying to catch fish. At that time BSF shot at him from inside Indian territory. A bullet hit him on his face and as a result he died.

Dr. Mohammad Ali Majrui Rahman, Professor, Department of Forensic Medicine, Rajshahi Medical College Hospital:

Dr. Mohammad Ali Majrui Rahman informed Odhikar that on October 9, 2012 at around 10:10am police of Rajpara Police Station brought the body of a boy named Sujon into the morgue for post mortem. He carried out the post mortem on the body. He said a bullet had pierced through under the right eye of the dead body and come out of the back of the corpse's head. In medical terms the region where the bullet entered is called the infraorbital region and the wound there was 1/4th inch by 1/4th inch while the region through which the bullet left the body is called right occipital temporal region and the wound there was 3 inches by 3 inches. He mentioned in the post mortem report that Sujon died from the bullet hit. After completion of the post mortem, at around 12:30pm the police of Rajpara Police Station took Sujon's body away.

Odhikar's view:

It has been observed by Odhikar that the human rights of Bangladeshi citizens are being constantly violated by the Border Security Force (BSF) of India. The BSF is open firing, torturing and killing innocent Bangladeshi citizens by violating international laws. Odhikar observes that due to the weak foreign policies of Bangladesh, the government is not taking stronger roles to protect innocent Bangladeshis even children who are being killed, tortured and abducted at the border. Odhikar demands adequate compensation for the family of Sujon Ali and trial and punishment for the perpetrators from the Indian Government. Odhikar urges the government to take strong steps to protect the lives of Bangladeshi citizens at the borders and take appropriate measures to ensure security and economic safety of the Bangladeshi people living at the border.

-End of Report-

¹ Section 302 of the Penal Code, 1860 stated about punishment for murder.