



June 01, 2010

Human Rights Report: 1-31 May 2010

‘Crossfire’ continues: Law Minister says ‘Crossfire has stopped’

Allegations of death in Police custody

Whereabouts of a wood merchant unknown after arrest by RAB

Continuance of political violence

Attack on journalists

Government Blocks Facebook

Allegations of a Boro leader being handed over to the Indian authorities

Forceful possession of property belonging to religious minorities

Arrests under the Anti-Terrorism Act 2009

Human rights violations and killings along the Bangladesh-India border

Verdict of the BDR mutiny trial at Rangamati

Illegal fatwa

Odhikar defends civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of the people and as part of its mission, observes reports and analyses the human rights situation of Bangladesh. Odhikar documents and records violations of human rights and receives information from its network of human rights defenders as well as from monitoring media reports in twelve national daily newspapers. Odhikar conducts detailed fact-finding investigations where serious violations occur.

In line with this campaign, an account of the human rights situation of Bangladesh covering the period of May 2010 is presented below.

At least one person was killed extra judicially every two days, in May:

Following the crossfire killings of two brothers from Madaripur on November 15, 2009, a bench of the High Court Division (HCD) consisting of Justice A F M Abdur Rahman and Justice Imdadul Huq Azad issued a Rule on the Government asking it as to why the HCD should not declare illegal the crossfire killings of the two brothers. When the Government prayed for time on the date of hearing on December 14, 2009, the Bench issued a direction to stop crossfire killings until the Rule was disposed of. Later on when the Chief Justice reconstituted the concerned Bench, the hearing of the Rule issued ended up not taking place. Nonetheless, killings in the name of crossfire continue in violation of the HCD directive.¹

1. On March 1, 2010, Doctor Dipu Moni, the Bangladesh Foreign Minister at a high-level meeting of the Human Rights Council at Geneva stated that Bangladesh was fully committed to stopping extra-judicial killings.²
2. On May 28, 2010, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed claimed that crossfire Killings have stopped. 'No more crossfire incidents are taking place in the country. It has stopped'.³
3. During May 2010, 17 people were killed by law enforcement agencies. It has been alleged that of these people, 07 were killed by RAB and 09 by Police and 01 person was killed by the joint operation of RAB and police. Of these 17 casualties, 04 passed away while they were in custody of the law enforcement agencies.

Types of death:

Crossfire/encounter/gun fight:

4. It has been alleged that of these extrajudicial killings, 13 persons were killed in 'crossfire/encounters/gun fights'. Of these deaths, 06 were by RAB, 06 by police and 01 was killed by RAB and police jointly.

¹ Source: 14 January 2010 Jaijaidin

² Source: 2 March 2010 Amader Shomoy

³ Source: 29 May 2010 New Age

Tortured to death: Among the 17 killed, 04 were allegedly tortured to death.

Identities of the deceased:

5. Of the 17 killed, 02 belonged to the Gonomukti Fouz, 02 to the Gono Bahini, 01 to the Purbo Banglar Communist party. In addition, 01 was a businessman, one was a driver, one a night guard and 09 were alleged criminals.
6. Although the Government has consistently given its assurance that it will end extra-judicial killings, the trend continues and members of the law enforcement agencies continue to kill criminal suspects and others outside the purview of the judicial process.
7. Odhikar is alarmed at the fact that the law enforcement agencies now maintain a policy to kill citizens outside the judicial process.
8. Odhikar continues to urge the Government to constitute a commission to carry out a neutral investigation into the issue of extra-judicial killings and bring the killers to justice.

Allegations of death while in Police custody

9. On May 11, 2010, Md. Manik (38), a night-guard of the Anjuman Residential Hotel at Reyajuddin Bazaar, 116 Station Road, Chittagong, died while he was in custody at the Kotowali Police Station at Chittagong. Family members of the late Manik alleged to the fact finding officer of Odhikar that SI Yunus Miah arrested Manik on May 10, 2010 and tortured him during interrogation which caused Manik's death. Manik came from the village of Chorpaborti of Companyganj, Noakhali.⁴
10. On May 13, 2010, a man named Rabiul Islam Khokon (23) died while in custody at the Chatkhil Police Station, Noakhali. The family members of the late Rabiul Islam alleged to the fact finding team of Odhikar that Rabiul was admitted to the Noakhali General Hospital in a bad state after he was physically tortured by SI Abdul Mannan of the Chatkhil Police Station who had taken Rabiul into remand. When Rabiul's condition deteriorated, he was admitted to the Dhaka Medical

⁴ Odhikar's Fact Finding Report

College Hospital when he passed away. Rabiul Islam Khokon came from the village of Mojjotpara of Noakhali.⁵

11. A businessman named Abul Kalam Azad (44) passed away while in custody of RAB-1. The family members of the deceased alleged that Azad had been tortured to the death by RAB. The late Azad had stopped by his son Ripon Haoladar's phone-fax shop at Mohakhali, in Dhaka, while he was on his way home on the night of May 24, 2010. This was when 7-8 plain clothed men, claiming to be members of RAB, arrived in a microbus and searched the shop. They arrested Azad and his son. At the RAB headquarters, father and son were interrogated separately during which Abul Kalam Azad passed away in the early hours of the following day. The son of the deceased said, 'My father died because the RAB members had locked him up in another room and tortured him'.⁶
12. The Court has issued arrest warrants against 19 persons including 12 Police Officers from Natore after allegations were raised regarding the torturing to death of a man named Ansar. The verdict was passed on May 10, 2010, by the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate. It must be mentioned here that on July 27, 2009, ASI Jasimuddin of the Shingra Police Station had filed a murder case which stated that when a police patrol team was passing the Kakiyan forest, Ansar and other dacoits opened fire on the police. The police returned fire which caused Ansar's death. Ansar's father Rojob Ali alleged that his son had been killed in a pre-planned manner and filed a complaint case at the Court of the Chief Judicial Magistrate at Natore on August 17, 2009. Magistrate Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman took cognizance of the case and directed Judicial Magistrate Mahmudul Hasan to carry out a judicial inquiry into the incident. Magistrate Mahmudul Hasan submitted his report following completion of the inquiry. His report stated that Ansar died while he was in custody and his body was dropped off inside the Kakiyan forest. The report stated further that Ansar had not been killed in crossfire but was tortured to death while he was in custody following arrest.⁷

⁵ Odhikar's Fact Finding Report

⁶ Odhikar's Fact Finding Report

⁷ Source: 13/5/2010 Amar Desh

13. Odhikar urges that the Government bring an end to custodial deaths. Odhikar has repeatedly expressed concern over incidents relating to custodial death. It appears that despite national and international concern regarding deaths in custody, there is hardly any effective step from the government to stop such occurrences.
14. Deaths while in custody reflect a gross violation of human rights. Although Bangladesh signed the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on October 5, 1998, its principles are not being followed. As per this Convention, a person cannot be physically or mentally tortured or subjected to other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This principle is also guaranteed in Article 35(5) of the Bangladesh Constitution.

Whereabouts of a wood merchant remain unknown after being arrested by RAB

15. It has been alleged that at 4.30 pm on March 19, 2010, members of RAB-5 arrested Md. Akbar Ali Sardar (28), a wood merchant who did contractual work for one Chan Miah, from Shalmondor Noula of Thakurgaon; and Bipin Chandra Sarkar (36) coming from the same village. Both of them were picked up by RAB from the road in front of the Salendar Bissho Islami Mission mosque. Although Bipin Sarkar was released by RAB at 10.00 am on March 20, 2010, the whereabouts of Akbar are still unknown. The Police of the Thakurgaon Police Station have so far rejected attempts made by Akbar's family to file a General Diary (GD) or a case. Later on when Akbar's family inquired about Akbar at RAB-5 through the Police Superintendent of the Thakurgaon Police Station, the RAB-5 authorities denied having arrested Akbar.⁸
16. A recent trend in the human rights scene is that plain clothed men claiming to be members of law enforcement agencies are arresting many persons. Afterwards many of the arrested are nowhere to be found. Some of their dead bodies are discovered after the passing of time. The families of the victims claim that it is the members of the law enforcement agencies who are making the arrests.

⁸ Source: Human Rights Defender of Odhikar at Thakurgaon

17. Odhikar expresses deep concern over such incidents of arrest and disappearance and urges the Government to arrange for the search and rescue lost persons and also provide a statement as to what is essentially going on.

Political violence continues

18. Two rival groups of the Chattra League at the Barisal Polytechnic Institute clashed in an attempt to exert presence and control over the campus. The clash left 8 persons seriously injured. On May 4, 2010, members of the Mishu and Anup group of the Chattra League unit of the Polytechnic Institute attacked Nazrul from the group of Abdur Razzak, President of the Polytechnic Institute Chattra League and left him on campus. Nazrul's veins were severed. On hearing this news, Razzak and his companions entered the campus with sharp weapons after which there was a clash between the two groups. The clash left Shobuj, Shubir and Riaz and eight others, all students of the Institute, seriously injured.⁹
19. On May 5, 2010, when members of the BNP were on their way to attend Begum Khaleda Zia's meeting at Rajshahi, they were attacked by Awami League activists at Shingra, Natore. The attack left Zakir Hossain, Joint Convener of the BNP of Gari Doho Union of Sherpur, dead and over a hundred BNP members injured.¹⁰
20. On May 5, 2010, a group of 10-12 persons led by Nantu, Shaju, Muhit and Farhad of the Chattra Dal attacked the Chattra Dal President of the Sylhet Government College, Abdul Rakib Chowdhury and his brother Abdul Hasib Chowdhury. Hasib was severely injured during the attack and has been admitted to the Sylhet Women's Medical College Hospital.¹¹
21. The activists of Chattra League attacked the followers of the Shomajtantrik Chattra Front at the Noakhali Government College. The attack left 10 persons injured. On May 6, 2010, the female students of the Muktijoddha Wahadur Rahman Ohud Female Hostel organised a human chain demanding a reduction of the hall charge. When the members of the Chattra Front expressed solidarity with the cause and tried to organise a protest procession on the campus, they were

⁹ Source: 5/4/2010 Ittefaq, Human Rights Defender of Odhikar at Barisal

¹⁰ Source: 06/05/2010 Ittefaq

¹¹ Source: 06/05/2010 Manabjamin

- attacked by the activists of the Chattra League. The attack left the local President, General Secretary of the Chattra Front and 10 others injured.¹²
22. An Awami League leader has physically assaulted the Head Mistress of Bhitobag High School at Bagatipara, Natore. The Awami League leader Abdul Kuddus and seven of his associates entered the school with canes on May 3, 2010 following a rift that was related to the nomination of the President of the school's Managing Committee. They then attacked Head Mistress Mahmuda Begum. She was admitted to the Puthiya Upazilla Health Complex.
23. According to information gathered by Odhikar, 21 have been killed and 1323 injured in political violence during May 2010. There were also 78 incidents of internal violence in the Awami League and 07 in the BNP. In addition to this, 04 people were killed in Awami Leagues internal conflict while 562 were injured. On the other hand, 01 was killed in BNP's internal conflict people and 67 persons were injured in BNP initiated violence.

Attack on journalists

24. Sayyed Nur, Farid Ullah and several other Chattra League activists led by the President of the Naikhongchori Chattra League, Taslim Ishbal, attacked Abul Bashar Noyon, the Naikhongchori, Bandarban representative of the Dailies Amardesh and Karnafuli. The Chattra League members also ransacked Noyon's office located at 'Media Palace' adjacent to the Union Parishad, where Noyon was working when the attack took place. The attack was related to the publication of a certain news item on May 1, 2010.¹³
25. On May 21, 2010, the Dhaka University administration and the student leaders of the Chattra League handed over the Dhaka University representative of the Daily Bangla, Anwar Hossain Shagar, to the Police because he allegedly belonged to the Hizbut Tahrir.¹⁴
26. On May 21, 2010, the Gazipur Pouro Awami League President Advocate Waziuddin Miah and several others attacked Sohrab Hossain, a physically

¹² Source: 07/05/2010 Amader Shomoy

¹³ Source: 3 May 2010 Amar Desh

¹⁴ Source: 22 May 2010 Amar Desh

- disabled editor of the local Daily Mukto Khobor over the publication of a certain news item.¹⁵
27. Odhikar expresses deep concern over the attacks and threats by politically partisan groups on journalists trying to do their job. It demands that those responsible be immediately brought before justice and punished.
 28. During May 2010, 01 journalist was killed, 06 injured, 01 journalist was attacked, 03 threatened and 04 journalists were assaulted

Government Blocks Facebook

29. Despite the rhetoric of 'Digital Bangladesh', On 29 May 2010 (Saturday) the Bangladesh government blocked access to Facebook, a social networking tool, The decision came after the arrest of Mahbub Alam Rodin (30) for uploading satiric images of some leading politicians, including the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition. A team of the Rab-10 detained Rodin at Ranking Street in Wari, Old Dhaka, at about 00:30 in the morning.
30. Protests over this block are coming from people from different backgrounds. Editors of some national dailies have already strongly criticised this government action.
31. The Government did not make any official statement as this report is being written. The Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) sources claimed that Facebook is now bocked 'temporarily' for the hosting of some 'anti-religious' and pornographic links by users across the globe.
32. This is not the first time the present regime is violating the constitutional rights of the citizens with regard to freedom of expression and thought. The intolerance had earlier been expressed by blocking the popular video sharing website YouTube for hosting a recorded conversation held between the Prime Minister and army officers after the BDR killings.

¹⁵ Source: 23 May 2010 Amader Shomoy

Killing of Bangladeshis at the border by the Indian Border Security Force

33. On May 14, 2010, members of the BSF opened fire on the members of a farming family of the village of Rotnai Barasa near Pillar No. 381/2, when they brought their cows and sheep for grazing at the Rotnai border of Baliyadangi, Thakurgaon. The firing resulted in the deaths of Bangladeshi citizens Mujibur Rahman (25) and Parul Akhtar (13). In addition, Saiful (26) and Khaleda Khatun (20) were seriously injured.¹⁶
34. Odhikar notes with concern that despite the fact that incidents of violence along the border are being raised on a regular basis, there are no signs of steps being taken to end such violence or providing compensation to the families of the victims or the victims themselves.
35. During May 2010, there have been incidents where the human rights of Bangladeshis have been violated by the Indian BSF 06 persons were shot and killed by the BSF while 03 were tortured. A further 02 persons were allegedly kidnapped by the BSF.

Allegation of a Boro leader being handed over to the Indian authorities

36. It has been revealed that Ranjan Doimari, Chairman of the National Democratic Front of Boroland has been handed over to the Indian authorities. On May 1, 2010, Ranjan Doimari was handed over to the Indian BSF across the Dauki international border along Meghalaya, India. The Indian media revealed that Ranjan Doimari was taken into 12 days police remand after being brought before the Kamrup Court by the Assam Police. On 17 April, 2010, the Indian media stated further that a joint drive of the Indian and Bangladeshi intelligence led to the arrest of Ranjan and two of his associates from Jhinaigati, Sherpur.¹⁷

¹⁶ Source: Human Rights Defender of Odhikar at Thakurgaon

¹⁷ Source: 3 May 2010 Amar Desh

37. This Boro leader was engaged in the struggle for self-determination and to protect his own life had taken shelter in Bangladesh. Article 25(1) (C) of the Bangladesh Constitution states, ‘The State shall base its international relations on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, peaceful settlement of international disputes, and respect for international law and the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter, and on the basis of those principles shall –(c) support oppressed peoples throughout the world waging a just struggle against imperialism, colonialism or racialism.’
38. Odhikar expresses concern over the stance taken by the Government of Bangladesh regarding the liberation struggles of oppressed people.

Taking forceful possession of property belonging to religious minorities

39. A Bench of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh has directed that the members of indigenous minorities be rehabilitated on their own land at Mothbariya, Pirojpur - the land from where they had been forcefully displaced . The Bench, constituting of Justices A H M Shamsuddin Chowdhury and Md. Delwar Hossain gave this direction on May 6, 2010.¹⁸ On April 19, 2010, Shongkor Mitro at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, alleged on behalf of the indigenous minorities, that they were fed up of the harassment and torture of the General Secretary of the Amragachiya Union Awami League Mujibur Rahman Sayed and his henchmen Amir Hossain Manik, Hasan Hossain and Topa, Hares and Tajul. These men were not allowing the minorities to stay on their own land. Shongkor Mitro stated that Sayed and his associates had taken control of 500 bighas of their land and subsequently ousted them from it.^{19/20}

¹⁸ Source: 7/5/2010 Ittefaq

¹⁹ Source: 26/4/2010 Shamokal

²⁰ Source: 10/5/2010 Amar Desh

Arrests under the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009

40. From March 1 to April 10, 2010, cases were filed against over 200 leaders and activists of various groups at the Dhaka Courts under the Anti-Terrorism Act 2009. The police were the Petitioners in these cases. The accused in these cases are members of anti-Government political organisations. Allegations have been raised against the police that they are taking the accused into remand and torturing them in the name of interrogation. The only accusations against the arrested persons are that they were either distributing leaflets or had met with an objective to carry out illegal activities.²¹
41. There is no internationally agreed definition of ‘terrorism’. Anti-terrorism laws have been passed in various countries and through their application; human rights are being grossly violated. The recently concluded Army- supported Caretaker Government first promulgated the Anti-Terrorism Ordinance on June 11, 2008. The present Government after taking power on January 6, 2009 passed the said Ordinance as an Act in the very first session of Parliament.
42. Odhikar, from the very beginning, has been protesting against the passing of this law. Odhikar feels that such laws will always be used to violate human rights.

Verdict of the BDR mutiny trial at Rangamati

43. The verdict of the BDR mutiny at the 12 Rifles Battalion, Rangamati was given on May 2, 2010. The then Director General of the BDR Moinul Islam read out the verdict. The local human rights defenders of Odhikar followed the trial process.
44. In the verdict, 9 accused BDR Jawans were punished and awarded various sentences. One was sentenced to the maximum imprisonment of 7 years and fined Taka 100/-. Three of the remaining Jawans were sentenced to 6 years imprisonment, one sentenced to 5 years, another to three years and three Jawans to two years imprisonment. Additionally they were also fined Taka 100/-.
45. After the verdict was read out and the sentenced Jawans were on their way to the Rangamati District Jail, some of them tried to shout out claiming their

²¹ Source: 17/5/2010 Amar Desh

innocence.²² One of the brothers of the sentenced Sepoy Md. Shakhawat Hossain told Odhikar, ‘This is a one-sided trial. Justice was not served here’. Ajmol Hossain, younger brother of sentenced Sepy Abul Kalam Azad told Odhikar, ‘My brother joined work on February 23 after spending his holiday at home. He was tagged in this case as part of a conspiracy’.

Information on the BDR trials being held at Rangamati, Khulna and Dhaka

46. On May 3, 2010, the second case of the BDR mutiny began at Rangamati. On this day, the Special Tribunal-4 took the confessional statements of 25 eye-witnesses against 75 Jawans of the 9th Marissha Rifles Battalion. Afterwards, the accused were allowed to cross-examine the eye-witnesses. Lt. Colonel Shamimur Rahman, the Prosecutor of this case and the Commander of the 9th Marissha Rifles Battalion applied for the inclusion of 16 more eye-witnesses. This application was granted by the Tribunal. Therefore the total number of witnesses amounted to 101. The Tribunal declared that the next hearing of this case would be January 10, 2011.
47. On May 3, 2010, all the 49 accused from the 23 Battalion during the BDR mutiny were brought before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrates Court at Khulna. All these men were initially arrested under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure due to their involvement in the mutiny during February 25 and 26, 2009. Subsequently, cases were filed against them by the OC of the Khalipur Police Station on May 12, 2009 at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrates Court Khulna (Case No. – CR – 50/09).²³
48. On May 3, 2010, the process of the Dhaka BDR mutiny trials resumed. The Tribunal directed the 187 BDR members of the Peelkhana Signals Sector and 113 members of the Rifles Security Unit to appear before it on the date of framing of charges. The BDR- DG Moinul Islam carried out the examination-in-chiefs of Subedar Major Ansar Ali Bir Protik of the Signals Sector and several others. The

²² Source: 3 May 2010 Prothom Alo

²³ Source: Human Rights Defender of Odhikar at Khulna

Tribunal set December 5 as the date for the charge framing of the BDR members of the Signal Sector and December 19 for the members of the Rifles Security Unit.

Acid Violence

49. A housewife was burnt with acid, doused with petrol and set on fire after she filed for divorce. Toruna Parvin, a housewife from the village of Ilishpur of Kolorowa, Shatkhira divorced her husband Asadul Islam on the grounds of torture he inflicted upon her. The aggravation that resulted from the divorce caused Asadul Islam, his brother Emdadul Islam, neighbor Saiful Islam to lead a group of 5-6 persons to throwing acid on Toruna Parvin. They then wrapped a mosquito net around her and spilled petrol over it which they subsequently set on fire. Toruna Pavin was admitted to the Khulna hospital in a severely injured condition where she eventually succumbed to her horrific injuries. A case has been filed at the Kolorowa Police Station. Although the police have been able to arrest Emdadul Islam and Saiful Islam, they are yet to arrest the main perpetrator Asadul Islam.
50. In May 2010, 07 persons were victims of acid violence of which 04 were women 01 man and one a boy and a one a girl..

Violence against women

Dowry related violence

51. Shima (15) who was set on fire for dowry fought death for 23 days, after which she passed away at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Her drug addict husband Delwar Hossain, set fire on the sleeping Shima on April 28, 2010 after she could not meet his dowry related demands. Shima came from Munshipara, Rangpur.²⁴
52. During May 2010, a total of 25 women were subjected to dowry related violence. Of these women, it has been alleged that 17 were killed because of the dowry and

²⁴ Source: 23/5/2010 Amar Desh

07 were tortured in various other ways. Of these women 01 allegedly committed suicide after failing to come to terms with the dowry related torture.

Rape

53. On May 17, 2010, Mizanur Rahman, a Health Assistant of a village community clinic at the village of Aliyara of Nangolkot, Comilla raped a mentally impaired female who had come to the clinic to take an injection. The cries of the girl resulted in the gathering of the local residents who confined Mizanur. On hearing the news, the police arrived at the crime scene and struck a compromise by imposing a Taka 50,000/- fine on the rapist Mizanur in exchange for his freedom.²⁵
54. During May 2010, it has been reported that a total of 51 females were raped, where 21 were adults and 30 were children. From the adult females, 06 were killed after being raped and 11 were gang raped. From the 30 female children who were raped, 03 of them were killed after being raped and 08 were victims of gang rape. Two girls allegedly committed suicide after being raped.

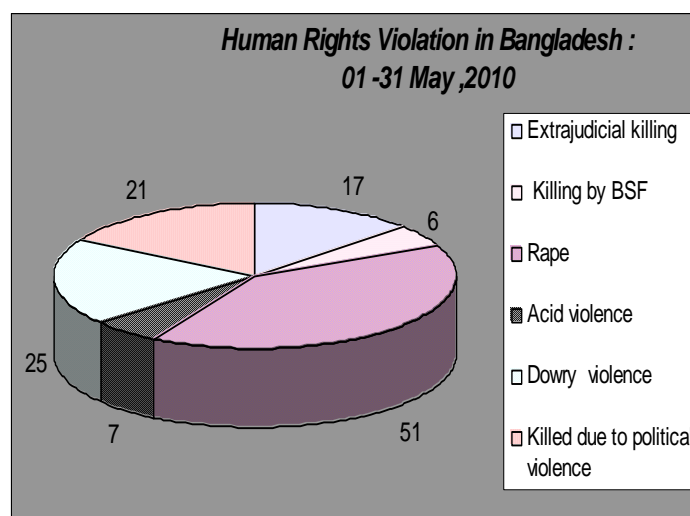
Illegal fatwa

55. On May 19, 2010, a fatwa was given by three local Imams Abdur Rahim, Abubakar and Mobarak Hossain according to which Hosna Akhtar (17) would be whipped 101 times and kicked out of her village due to an alleged affair between herself and Shonkor Debnath (22). Both these persons came from the village of Purbohati of Bancharampur, Brahmanbariya. As per the fatwa, Hosna Akhtar's maternal uncle Md. Moinuddin began to whip Hosna who lost consciousness after 25 lashes. Golam Gilani, the former UP Chairman and the President of the Fordabad Union Awami League presided over the arbitration where the fatwa was issued.
56. On August 25, 2009, the High Court Division directed the Government, law enforcement agencies, all Union Parishads and Pouroshabhas to take steps against those who are responsible for beatings, whippings and other forms of extra-

²⁵ Source: 19/5/2010 Jugantor

judicial forms of punishment. On May 24, 2010, the High Court Division also issued a Rule asking the Government to show why the Court should not declare extra-judicial forms of punishment in the name of fatwa and Shariya illegal. It has also asked why articles discouraging extra-judicial punishment should not be incorporated into text books at various levels.

<i>Statistics of Human Rights violations</i>	
<i>01 -31 May 2010</i>	
Human Rights Violation	Number of violence
Extrajudicial killing	17
Killing by BSF	6
Rape	51
Acid violence	7
Dowry violence	25
Killed due to political violence	21



Recommendations

57. Extra-judicial killings must come to an end as per the declaration made by the Government. Those involved in such killings must be brought before justice by the Government.
58. Torture in remand and other forms of custody must end.
59. The Government must rescue those who have been kidnapped by groups claiming to be law enforcement agencies and also provide a clear statement on the killings that follow kidnappings.
60. The Government must take effective steps to end political violence and bring those involved to justice.
61. Those responsible for torturing and attacking journalists must be arrested and brought before justice.
62. Odhikar strongly stands against any form of national oppression and human rights violation and supports every effort for peaceful negotiation to resolve political

- conflicts. Demanding self-determination is a democratic right. However, information about the arrest and handing over of political leaders to India is a serious violation of international norms and human rights. This will inevitably destabilise the region as whole. Arrested political leaders demanding self-determination of their people must be treated with sympathy and compassion.
63. Face book should be unblocked immediately.
 64. The State must restore the fundamental rights of religious minorities and provide physical protection to them along with security over their property.
 65. The Anti-Terrorism Act 2009 is a 'repressive' law. It must be scrapped.
 66. The Bangladesh Government must take immediate steps to bring an end to the BSF's abuse and killing of Bangladeshi citizens.
 67. The trial of the BDR Jawans must be made transparent and accountable.
 68. The Government must take appropriate measures to stop violence against women. The offenders must be brought under the purview of the law to ensure that justice is served. Furthermore, the victim must be provided with adequate legal support. Public awareness regarding the rights of women, prevention of violence against women and children as well as related laws must be incorporated into the primary and higher secondary school books.
 69. Odhikar demands that the Government take timely steps in order to stop violence against women in the form of illegal fatwas.

Tel: 88-02-9888587, Fax: 88-02-9886208,
Email: odhikar@sparkbd.net, odhikar.bd@gmail.com
Web: www.odhikar.org

Notes:

1. Odhikar seeks to uphold the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the people.
2. Odhikar documents and records violations of human rights and receives information from its network of human rights defenders and monitors media reports in twelve national daily newspapers.
3. Odhikar conducts detailed fact-finding investigations into some of the most significant violations.
4. Odhikar is consistent in its human rights reporting and is committed to remain so.