



A Bangladeshi farmer picked up by BSF from the Rotnai border of Thakurgaon District and detained in Indian jail

Fact-finding Report
Odhikar

Name of the Victim : Mohammad Dilbar Hossain
Age : 28
Father's Name : Ismail Hossain
Address : District: Thakurgaon, Police Station: Baliadangi, Union: Haripur,
Village: Barosha
Border/Pillar
(Bangladesh) : Rotnai Border/ Pillar No: 382 Main pillar, Sub Pillar 3
Border/ Pillar
(India) : Sonamothi Border/ Pillar No: 382 Main pillar, Sub Pillar 3
Date of Occurrence : 19 January 2010



Mohammad Dilbar Hossain was a farmer who lived in the village of Barosha under Baliadangi Police Station in Thakurgaon district which fell near the Indian borders Sonamothi. On the Bangladesh side the village is within the pillar no 382 sub-pillar 3 at the Rotnai border. Dilbar was living with his wife and father. He had been farming land which fell at the Indian side of the river 'Nagor' which divided Bangladesh and India. His land is mainly situated in the 'no mans land' which is only 150 yards from the Indian border fence.

On January 19, 2010 at 8.00 am he and a man named Mohammad Khatibuddin went to the field for spreading 'China seeds'¹. When they were sowing the seeds, the BSF troops came to fetch them and they arrested Dilbar Hossain while Khatibuddin succeeded in escaping.

On receiving the news from Khatibuddin, Dilbar's father went to the BDR camp and they all went to the spot but could not trace him. The BDR did not hold any meeting or send any letter to the BSF in this regard. On communication with the higher authority of the 20th Rifles Battalion of the BDR, they were ordered not to send any letter to the BSF until the BSF sent them one. As Dilbar's family found no trace of him, they gave this news to one of their relatives living at Sonamothi in India. On January 29, 2010 they came to know by their relative that Dilbar had been detained in the Indian jail and that he had visited him too.

It has been two and half months since Dilbar Hossain fell under detention in Islampur Jail in India. His father was preparing his passport to visit his son in India.

Odhikar conducted a fact-finding mission into the incident on March 26, 2010. During the fact-finding mission, Odhikar spoke with:

- Family members of Dilbar Hossain
- Local residents
- Eye witness
- Local union Parishad Member
- Concerned members of the BDR

¹ Paddy seeds imported from China

Ismail Hossain (50), Father of Dilbar Hossain

Ismail Hossain (50), father of Dilbar Hossain, was interviewed by Odhikar. Odhikar was told by Ismail Hossain that on January 19, 2010 at 7.30 am, he met last with his son and saw him going out with Khatibuddin. He did not know in which field he was going to work at. At 8.30 am of that day he saw Khatibuddin running to his house and he came to know that while they were sowing 'China seed" in the field near the Nagor River, three BSF members had spotted them and Dilbar was captured by the BSF. Ismail Hossain went to the nearest Rotnai BDR camp and informed the BDR about the incident. He also told the local Baliadanghi Union Parishad member Mohammad Lajibuddin at around 9.00 am. He along with the local UP member and the BDR Camp Commander Nayek Abdul Malak and Habildar Harun went to the place of occurrence at 9.30 am and found empty.

According to Ismail, the BDR had refused to send any letter to the BSF and also did not help them trace Dilbar out. He also told Odhikar that he sent a message to one of their relatives who was staying in Sonamothi village in India. He informed them that Dilbar was in the Indian jail at Islampur and had been living a very miserable life. Ismail told Odhikar that he was making his passport to see his son. He was angry that the BDR was not at all helpful. Odhikar also asked to Ismail whether they had informed the police station about his missing son. He said they did not inform the Baliadanghi Police Station.

Roshna (22), wife of Dilbar Hossain

Roshna told Odhikar that she has two daughters and a father-in-law who lived with her. According to her, on the day of the incident, Dilbar woke up at 6.00 am. After he had his breakfast, their neighbour Khatibuddin came to their house and asked her husband to come out for farming. She heard Khatibuddin telling her husband to sow 'China seeds' in the field. Dilbar along with Khatibuddin went out at 7.30 without telling her where he was going to work. At

around 8.30 am, Khatibuddin came back to their house. Khatibuddin was trembling and let them know that Dilbar had been caught by the BSF. She got to know that her husband was working on the field which was located only 150 yards from the Indian border fence and they went there by crossing the river for sowing the paddy.

Later on January 29, 2010 in the afternoon at around 5.00 pm, she came to know from one of her relatives that her husband was kept in Islampur Jail in India. Roshna told Odhikar that they had been living in misery because there was no male other than her aged father-in-law in the house. She was crying all time during the interview.

Mohammad Khatibuddin (29), Eye-witness

Odhikar spoke to Mohammad Khatibuddin (29), a resident of Barosha village. He used to help Dilbar in the fields. On January 19, 2010, Khatibuddin came to Dilbar's house at 7.30 in the morning. He saw Dilbar eating. He suggested that Dilbar to sow 'China seeds' on the land which is located at the border pillar 382/3S near the Indian fence. At 7.45 am Dilbar Hossain went out from the house with Khatibuddin. They crossed the river Nagor and reached the field at 8.00 am. When they started sowing seeds on the field, three armed BSF soldiers came. They started running and Khatibuddin succeeded in escaping but the BSF caught Dilbar. Khatibuddin came to Dilbar's house at 8.30 am and informed the family about the incident. He was so shocked and frightened that he was not able to talk at first. He accompanied Dilbar's father to the Rotnai BDR camp at around 9.00 am. At around 9.30 am, along with a local member of the Baliadangi Union Parishad, they went to the bank of the river Nagor on the Bangladesh side. They found the place empty and no trace of Dilbar Hossain. Later on, he came to know from Dilbar's father that Dilbar was in the Islampur Jail in India.

Mohammad Lajibuddin (55), a local union member of Baliadangi

Member of Baliadangi union, Mohammad Lajibuddin told Odhikar that he came to know about the incident at around 9.00 am on January 19, 2010 and that he was informed through a cell

phone call by Dilbar's father Ismail Hossain. He went to the BDR camp at 9.30 am, with Ismail Hossain and later they all went to the spot and found no trace of Dilbar Hossain. He came to know that a few days ago, one of Dilbar's relatives informed Dilbar's father that he was in Islampur Jail in India. Lajibuddin told Odhikar that Dilbar was the main bread earner of his family and his father had no other son. He also heard that Dilbar's father was trying to visit his son in India and for this he was getting a passport.

Nayek Subedar Moazzem Hossain, Camp Commander, Rotnai BDR Camp

Nayek Subedar Moazzem Hossain informed Odhikar that Nayek Malek was the BDR Camp Commander on the eve of the incident on January 19, 2010. Nayek Malek was transferred to another camp. Odhikar interviewed Nayeb Subedar Moazzem Hossain, the present commander at the Rotnai camp. He informed Odhikar, after seeing the register of the BDR camp, that on January 19, 2010 at 9.15 am Dilbar Hossain's father Ismail Hossain came to the camp and informed them that the BSF had arrested his son while he was working in the field near main pillar 382, sub-pillar 3 on the bank of the river Nagor² which fell on Indian side. The former camp commander went to the main pillar 382, sub-pillar 3 and found nothing. According to Moazzem Hossain, after coming back from the spot, the former camp commander communicated with the higher authority of the 20th Rifles Battalion of the BDR. The higher authority had ordered that until the BSF give them any letter, the BDR will not send any. Subsequently, the BDR did not send any letter to the BSF. According to the register there was no flag meeting held between the BDR and the BSF on the Dilbar Hossain case.

-End of Report-

² It divides Bangladesh and India on both side.