



Dewan Shohidur Rahman Shopon was tortured at Kaliakoir Police Station in Gazipur

Fact finding Report

Odhikar

Dewan Shohidur Rahman Shopon (36) is the son of Dewan Mozibur Rahman and Shefali Begum of Gosatra village in Gazipur. At around 2.30 pm on 19 August 2011, police officers of Kaliakoir Police Station in Gazipur arrested him on suspicion over the theft of a motorcycle. According to the complaint he lodged, in order to get a statement from him, the police tied his hands, hung him to the ceiling fan by his arms, and tortured him.

On that allegation, an official investigation team was created, which found proof of the allegation and suspended the Officer in Charge of the Kaliakoir police station.

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

- Shopon's family
- Relatives
- Eye-witness
- Members of law enforcement agencies



Picture: Dewan Shohidur Rahman Shopon was tortured at Kaliakoir Police Station in Gazipur
Courtesy: The Daily Jugantor and Prothom Alo

Dewan Shohidur Rahman Shopon, victim

Dewan Shohidur Rahman Shopon informed Odhikar that on the night of 17 August 2011, he was going to the home of a relative for some family matter. On his way, he met a person named Zakaria Mohammad Zinnat Ali, who lives in Uttarpara village of Dhamrai Thana. Shopon was informed that he (Zakaria) came on a motorcycle that was now missing. Zakaria requested Shopon to help him find the motorcycle. Shopon told Zakaria to go to the local police station with the papers of the motorcycle to file a General Diary (GD) and give him (Shopon) a photocopy of the documents too. He also said that he could do nothing at the moment as he was going to his relatives' house on urgent work. He would talk to the local

elders in the morning; and with the help of others; he would try to find the motorcycle. Later, he met Zakaria again and the latter repeated his request to find the motorcycle.

Shopon told Zakaria to give him the license and related papers of the motorcycle. However, Zakaria did not do so. He also told Zakaria that to find the motorcycle, its theft had to be informed to other people; but he did not have any money to travel to contact others. Shopon asked Zakaria for some money. He said that because he asked for money, Zakaria suspected him to be involved in the motorcycle theft.

Shopon also told Odhikar that Zakaria assumed that he hid the motorcycle and then demanded money in exchange for it. At around 2 pm on 19 August 2011, Shopon went to Kaliakoir market to buy clothes for his children. Zakaria called him and told him to go to Boliadi market. He said that he was busy and asked Zakaria to contact him later but Zakaria requested him to go. Immediately, Shopon then left for Boliadi market a tempo (kind of scooter).

Shopon informed Odhikar that he reached Boliadi at around 2.30 pm and Zakaria and a police officer took him away in a police van. He learnt later that the police officer was the Sub Inspector (SI) of the Kaliakoir Police Station, Murad Ali Shekh.

Shopon asked the Sub Inspector why he was being taken to the police station. SI Murad Ali Shekh informed him that Zakaria had filed a case as a plaintiff against unknown people for the theft of his motorcycle and that is why he had been arrested. The case number is 24; date: 19/08/2011. Then Shopon was confined in the police station for around 3/4 hours. In the evening, SI Murad tied his hands and beat him. He asked Shopon to return the stolen motorcycle.

Shopon said that he was not a thief and did not steal any motorcycle. Sub Inspector (SI) Murad did not listen to him. The Sub Inspector (SI) verbally abused him and asked him who else was involved with the theft and for the list of those people who drove motorcycles without a license. Moreover, the SI asked him to admit his guilt.

When he refused, SI Murad Ali Shekh tied his hands with a rope with the help of two other people. They pulled Shopon up on a chair, hung him up from the hook of the ceiling fan by his arms, and then moved the chair from under him. They beat Shopon brutally with wooden sticks. SI Murad told Shopon that if he would give taka 50,000 then he would not send Shopon to the Court. However, Shopon told him that he could not afford that sum.

At around 8 pm on 20 August 2011, SI Murad brought him out of the police station call and took him to the Officer-in-Charge (OC), Amir Hossain. OC Amir Hossain interrogated him about the theft of the motorcycle. Shopon replied that any local person might have conspired in his arrest. He said that he was not a thief and he had no knowledge about any motorcycle theft. OC Amir Hossain asked him to admit to his involvement and take the liability. The SI ordered Shopon's torture until he made an admission.

Shopon said that on the night of 19 and 20 August 2011, he was tortured in different ways. He said that on 21 August 2011 SI Murad Ali Shekh sent him to Court. The Court sent Shopon to jail. On 24 August 2011, he came out of the jail on bail.

During the fact finding, Shopon showed Odhikar investigators the marks of torture on his legs and wrists. He told them that the next court date was on 13 October 2011.

On November 29, 2011 Shopon informed Odhikar that the allegation brought against him could not be proved, so the investigation Officer of this case submitted a final report to the Court on 23 October, 2011. The report number was 69.

Shefali Begum (50), Shopon's mother

Shefali Begum informed Odhikar that at around 3 pm on 19 August 2011 Shopon went to Kaliakoir market to do shopping for Eid (Muslim religious festival). From there SI Murad took him away with the help of the motorcycle owner Zakaria and tortured him in the police station. Her son was accused without any proof of his involvement in the theft. She said that some people implicated Shopon intentionally in this case over previous enmity. She also said that many people did not like the involvement of Shopon in the Parliament elections. For this reason to humiliate his family, Shopon was being implicated in this false case.

Nazrul Islam Badol, Shopon's uncle

Nazrul Islam Badol told Odhikar that he learnt from locals that at around 2.30 pm on 19 August 2011 police of Koliakoir Police Station arrested Shopon from Boliadi area and tortured him. He went to the police station and introduced himself as the uncle of Shopon to the Officer-in-Charge Md. Amir Hossain. Badol requested the OC to set Shopon free but police paid no heed.

Mir Robiul Islam, eye-witness

Mir Robiul Islam informed Odhikar that he is the local representative of the daily newspaper 'Amader Somoy'. At around 9.30 on the night on 19 August 2011, he went to Kaliakoir Police Station to cover activities there and the latest arrests. He saw that a person had been hung up from the hook of the ceiling fan in the room of the Sub-Inspector. Then the police untied Shopon's hands and took him down, in his presence.

Sub Inspector (SI) Murad Ali Shekh, Kaliakoir Police Station, Gazipur

SI Murad Ali Shekh informed Odhikar that at around 2.30 pm on 19 August 2011 he arrested Shopon from Boliadi market as a suspected in the case filed by Zakaria. He said Shopon was not beaten and the news of hanging him up is untrue. When the fact finder mentioned the published news with a picture of the torturing of Shopon in the Daily Jugantor and Prothom Alo newspapers, the SI said it was just a rumour against him done out of enmity. He said he did not know who took the picture of Shopon. Nothing like that happened in his room. Shopon was brought to the police station because of his confession. He said Shopon had the motorcycle, and that he demanded 5,000 taka from the motorcycle owner, Zakaria for the return of the motorcycle. Moreover, SI Murad said that the 'higher authority' suspended him temporarily from duty on 21 August 2011.

Sub Inspector (SI) Md. Hasan, Kaliakoir Police Station, Gazipur

SI Md. Hasan informed Odhikar that he took the responsibility of investigating this case when the investigating officer of case number 24 filed on 19 August 2011, SI Murad Ali Shekh, was suspended temporarily.

On 29 November, 2011 he informed Odhikar that the allegation against him could not be proved. Therefore, police has filed final report to the Court.

Md. Mizanur Rahman, Additional Superintendent of Police, Gazipur

Md . Mizanur Rahman informed Odhikar that he was given the responsibility to conduct a primary investigation when an allegation of torturing a person named Shopon in Kaliakoir Police Station on 19 August 2011 was made. He submitted his primary investigation report on 21 August 2011 and the accused SI Murad Ali Shekh was temporarily suspended temporarily. After that, the Police Superintendent made a committee of 3 members, including himself, with ASP Abul Hossain and ASP Aktarujjaman for further investigation. He said that they talked to everyone involved in this matter. After investigation, they found the allegations

of torture on Shopon to be true and then submitted the investigation report to the Police Superintendent.

Odhikar commends the police for taking the officer who tortured Shopon to task but hopes that justice for this physical abuse is carried out, and not forgotten.

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