



**Share-cropper Mohammad Ali Shot and Killed by the BSF at the
Sreerampur Border of Lalmonirhat**

Fact-finding Report

Odhikar

At 5.00 am on November 12, 2009, Mohammad Ali (35), a resident of the village of Kisamat Nijjama, was shot and killed by the BSF at the Sreeram border of Patgram, Lalmonirhat. Mohammad Ali was shot by members of the BSF belonging to Battalion 132 of the Jolpaiguri Sector as he was working on his own farm land within Bangladeshi territory near Pillar 854/3S of the Bangladesh-India border.

Odhikar sent a fact-finding mission to the area. During the fact finding, Odhikar spoke with:

- Family members of Mohammad Ali
- Local residents
- Concerned officials of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and
- Concerned Police officials



Mohammad Ali

Md. Ismail Hossain (58), Mohammad Ali's father

Md. Ismail Hossain told Odhikar that on the early morning of November 12, 2009, Mohammad Ali left for the border area to work on his farm land. At 5.00 am he heard two gun shots from the border area which was followed by another shot. After hearing the shots, Ismail went to the area near Pillar 854/3S with some of his neighbors where he learnt that his son Mohammad Ali had been shot and killed by the BSF and that the BSF had taken Ali's body inside India. Later on, the BDR members of the Sreerampur border contacted the BSF. The BSF returned Ali's body on the evening of November 13, 2009, to the BDR. After completion of the Post Mortem, Mohammad Ali's body was returned at 4.00 pm to his family by the Police of the Patgram Police Station.

Ismail recalled seeing bullet wounds at the centre of his son's chest, under his left armpit and through his left palm. He demanded that the BSF members responsible for his son's killing be brought to justice.

Alefa Begum (25), Mohammad Ali's wife

Alefa Begum told Odhikar that her husband was a share-cropper by profession. On the early morning of November 12, 2009, her husband left to work at the farm land at the border. At 5.00 am after hearing the firing of gun shots, Alefa's father-in-law and some other neighbors left for the border area only to learn that the BSF had shot and killed Ali and had taken his body back inside India. Alefa informed further that Ali's body was returned by the BSF the following day.

Alefa stated that the family lived in poverty. Her husband was the sole breadwinner. Alefa and Ali had a daughter named Monira Akhtar who was 9 years old and two sons named Mehedi Hasan Arif (6) and Polash (3). Alefa expressed frustration as to how she would arrange for the money needed to sustain the livelihood and education of her children. She demanded justice for her husband's killing along with financial support from the Government.

Sofiyar Rahman (75), Kisamat Nijjama, Patgram, Lalmonirhat; a resident of the area where the killing took place

While speaking with Odhikar, Sofiyar Rahman stated that he was at home on the morning of November 12, 2009. At 5.00 am he heard three gun shots from the area near Pillar 854/3S but out of fear did not go there to see what had happened. After the arrival of the BDR, he went to the border area with the BDR members to see a dead body 20-30 yards inside the Indian border which was adjacent to Pillar 854/3S. Afterwards when the BDR members of the Sreerampur border camp contacted the BSF, it was learnt that the dead body was that of Mohammad Ali from his own village.

Mukul Hossain (30), Kisamat Nijjama, Patgram, Lalmonirhat; Neighbor of Mohammad Ali

Mukul Hossain told Odhikar that at 8.00 am on November 12, 2009 under the orders of BDR member Habildar Shahidul Islam, he identified the body of Mohammad Ali at the border in the presence of the BDR and BSF. The BSF members stopped Mukul when he tried to have a closer look at Ali's body. At 12.00 pm the BSF took Mohammad Ali's body into India and transferred it back to the BDR in the evening of the following day.

Shahidul Islam (20), Kisamat Nijjama, Patgram, Lalmonirhat; resident of the area where the incident took place

Shahidul Islam stated that he was at his home on the early morning of November 12, 2009 when three gun shots were fired. Hearing the gun shots, Shahidul went to the field adjacent to Pillar 854/3S to see four BSF members. He did not see any dead body there during that time. Shahidul left the scene soon after. After about half an hour, four BDR members arrived and established contact with the BSF. Later on he came to know that Mohammad Ali had been killed by the BSF. Shahidul could not however provide any information as to where exactly Mohammad Ali was killed.

Nayek Subedar Harunur Rashid, Commander, Sreerampur Boder Camp, 31 Rifles Battalion, Lalmonirhat

Nayek Subedar Harunur Rashid told Odhikar that at 4.45 am on November 12, 2009, after hearing the firing of three gun shots, a BDR patrol team of four led by Habildar Shahidul Islam left for the scene. The team learnt from the local residents that a man named Mohammad Ali from the village of Kismot Nijjama had been killed. Nayek Subedar went on to say that a letter was issued to the BSF of the Ratanpur Camp, 132 BSF Battalion protesting against the killing of Mohammad Ali and demanding the returning of his body. In response to the letter the BSF informed the BDR that Mohammad Ali has crossed the border in attempt to enter India. Ali refused to surrender when the BSF ordered him to do so and instead he attacked the BSF with a kitchen knife. This led the BSF to open fire in self-defense, which caused Ali's death.

BDR official Rashid stated further that the BSF returned Mohammad Ali's body at 3.45 pm on November 13, 2009. Afterwards the BDR handed the body over to the Police of the Patgram Police Station. There were single bullet wounds at the centre of Ali's chest, left armpit and left hand.

Lieutenant Colonel Md. Aslam Hossain, Commanding Officer, 31 Rifles Battalion, Lalmonirhat

Lieutenant Colonel Md. Aslam Hossain stated that the killing of Bangladeshi civilians at the border by the BSF is a gross violation of human rights. When a Bangladeshi citizen illegally enters into Indian territory the BSF has the right to arrest that person and take necessary legal measures against him. However the BSF does not at any point have the right to kill that person extra judicially. The BDR Official went on to say that from January to December of 2009, a total of 7 Bangladeshi citizens had been killed at various points along the border in Lalmonirhat by the BSF.

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