

Press release

Bangladesh: Civil society press conference to protest the killing of landless leader Bakul Begum in Bhola and the police not accepting the case

Wednesday 7 December 2022, by [HUDA Shamsul](#) (Date first published: 7 December 2022).

ALRD, TIB, Law and Arbitration Center, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bela, Blast, Human Rights Culture Foundation, Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Parishad, Bangladesh Krishok Federation organized the press conference protesting the brutal killing of landless women in Sikdar's Char in Charfashan upazila of Bhola district and not accepting the murder case by the police today at 11 am in the Abdus Salam Hall of the National Press Club of Dhaka.

ALRD Executive Director Shamsul Huda conducted the press conference, Advocate Rafiqu Ahmed Sirazi read out the written statement, BLAST Advocate SM Rezaul Karim Tuhin, Ram Nath Raha of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Kajal Debnath of Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, Bangladesh Krishok Federation President Badrul Alam and General Secretary Zayed Iqbal Khan, UP Member of Mujibnagar Union Parishad Abdul Malek Member spoke in the conference. Deceased Bakul's husband Alam Bachchu Melkar, his son Abu Bakkar, injured Mukul Begum's brother Solaiman Talukdar and Bellal Talukdar, Rajib and Dulal, Raj Azim Haider of ALRD, Rafiqu Islam Sujon, President of Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Labor Federation, Md. Baharane Sultan Bahar, President of Jago Bangladesh Garments Workers Federation, Leaders of Bangladesh Kishani Sabha Asha Moni and Rehena Begum, Joint General Secretary of National Domestic Workers Union Kazi Renu, Migrant Women Forum Convenor Mahinur Aktar Noori, among others, were present.



Leaders of Civil Society in the press conference protesting the killing of Bakul Begum on 6 December 2022

The leaders said in the press conference, about 900 landless families of Char Mujibnagar (Char Shikdar) under Charfashan Upazila of Bhola district have been struggling for settlement of Charland for the past 4 years. Earlier they got a one year lease in this Charland. Later they did not renew this settlement. A Writ Petition No: 3322/2018 was filed in Hon'ble High Court seeking settlement on behalf of Mujibnagar Union Landless Cooperative Society Ltd. The Hon'ble Court, after hearing both the parties, on 3rd April, 2018 directed the Bhola District Commissioner to address the issue of settlement within 1 month of receipt of the order. However, the then Deputy Commissioner did not

take any effective action in this regard. After the present Deputy Commissioner Mr. Md Taufiq-e-Ilahi joined, he took the initiative to address the issue. At that time, the big landowners and influential people who encroached Char created some fake documents and claimed this land as theirs which is not true at all. Because Char Mujibnagar is a land and since Diara survey has not been completed yet, there is no chance of it being in the name of any person. Thus the Upazila Nirbahi Officer and the court declared this document invalid.

On April 12, 2022, Bhola Revenue Deputy Collector, Muhammad Arafat Hussain directed Assistant Commissioner (Lands) to take effective measures for settlement. Accordingly, the erstwhile AC land asked the landless to cultivate the Char land and asked the illegal occupants to move out. As a result, the illegal encroachers of Char got angry with Alam Bachchu, the leader of Mujibnagar Union Landless Cooperative Society Ltd. and started threatening to kill him and his family. In view of this, Alam Bachchu's wife Bakul filed a complaint on 13/04/2022 at Dularhat Police Station seeking safety of her life. But if the Thana Police did not take any effective measures, he wrote a letter to Bhola District Commissioner and Bhola Superintendent of Police on 17/04/2022 asking for safety of his life. But still no effective action was taken by the police. On the contrary, false cases of tree cutting, theft cases, robbery cases etc. are filed against the landless people almost every month and in all these cases the local police are seen to be very active in arresting the accused. The landless are becoming helpless appearing in court.



Bakul Begum

Leaders said that last November 30, 2022 terrorists attacked Alam Bachchu's house with sharp weapons between 1:00 pm and 1:30 am. Alam Bachchu's wife Bakul and her elder sister Mukul were inside the house at that time. Mukul had come from Khulna to visit his sister's house a few days ago. Alam Bachchu was not at home that day as he went to attend the case in Bhola. The terrorists entered the house and used sharp weapons like Ram Da, nife etc. to attack Bakul and Mukul. Bakul's body was found with 22 wounds. In this, the bowels in her stomach comes out. Besides, they stabbed Mukul's neck. Three are marks on her hands and two on her head. The terrorists dragged them out of the house with their swords and left them in a bloody state. In this situation, Bakul says to his sister, "Don't stay here, I don't think I will survive, so you will tell Isa Moni's (daughter) father that you and I have been killed by Aslam Peyada, Bashir and Shahjahan Sardar's sons. Do not spare them." Saying this she wants to drink water. Mukul gave him water when he was injured and she died on the spot. Mukul also said that there were more than 10/12 members of the murderous group around the house.

Much later, the Dularhat police station appeared there at around 10 am. They prepared a report of

the body's condition and spoke to some eyewitnesses and arranged for the body to be sent for post-mortem. They started all the proceedings to file a complaint against the accused like the statement of Alam Bachchu's wife. Meanwhile, Bholar Tajumuddin (Circle) Additional Superintendent of Police Md. Masum Billah appeared on the scene. He kept trying to say that since the victim was dead, eyewitnesses would be needed to file charges against a particular person. The victims alleged that he did not want to hear any complaints from the victims. He also said that since Mukul, who was in the spot could not say any name, no one could be accused.

Around 5 pm, when Alam Bachchu, the husband of the deceased Bakul, went to file a case, the police said that no case can be filed against any person. Cases should be filed against unknown persons. Alam Bachchu repeatedly requested that Mukul tell them the names of those against whom the allegations were made. But the police told them that since Mukul did not name them in front of them, they cannot be named as accused. At one point, the police refused to take Alam Bachchu as the plaintiff and pressed Mukul's younger brother Solaiman Talukdar, who came from Khulna at around 12 o'clock in the night, to file the case as the plaintiff. When he asked Alam Bachchu to be the plaintiff instead of being the plaintiff himself, he started showing various fears. Additional Superintendent of Police of Bhola Tajumuddin Circle Md. Masum Billah was present at Dularhat Police Station all this time. Later, when the police started arresting Bakul's husband Alam Bachchu in an old case of cutting a tree, they left the police station and the police did not take up the murder case of the deceased Bakul. However, we came to know later that the police filed a murder case with the Chowkidar of the area accusing some unknown people, so as to hide the real criminals. All these identified criminals are getting away with the direct help of the police by filing such cases one after another. Even before this, in the case of Alam Bachchu's mother and father throwing acid on two people in 2006, no one has been arrested or it can be said that in this way justice has been blocked. But those against whom the complaint is made are roaming yet openly.

The leaders strongly condemned the behavior of the police and demanded strict action against such corrupt police officers through departmental action and immediate removal from Bhola for protecting the criminals instead of catching them.

They said, we want to remind that on the night of March 25, 1971, hundreds of policemen were martyred in the Rajarbagh police line to resist the invading forces. Among the current police force, Bhola Additional Superintendent of Police Masum Billah, Dularhat Police Station Officer-in-Charge, who do not accept complaints of torture and murder of poor, marginalized people from various areas or show interest in proper investigation of those complaints are not only neglecting their national duties, 71's martyred predecessor are disrespected by the policemen. They must be held accountable for this. Strict legal action should be taken against them.

Through this press conference the following clear demands were made by the civil society-

1. The trial of this case must be completed as soon as possible through the Women and Child Abuse Prevention Act Tribunal for the brutal torture and killing of landless women.
2. Dularhat Police Station and Bhola Tajumuddin Circle Additional Superintendent of Police Md. Masum Billah should take action against them through a departmental inquiry for their illegal efforts to protect the accused by not accepting the complaint of the plaintiff in the murder case and withdraw them from the said duty immediately. At the same time, an impartial investigation agency should complete the investigation of this murder.
3. Visible and effective measures must be taken to ensure the safety of all the landless including women and children living in char. If necessary, a special police outpost should be guaranteed in that area.

5. After completing the Diara survey in the said Char Mujibnagar, distribution of char among the landless including the affected families should be taken according to the Khasland settlement policy.

ALRD

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