

Indigenous Chakma woman allegedly murdered after gang rape in Khagrachari

On 15 February 2014, an indigenous Chakma woman named Sabita Chakma (30) was allegedly murdered after gang rape by a group of Bengali settlers at Chengi chor area of Kamalchari union under Khagrachari sadar upazila in Khgagrahari district.

It is learnt that, like any other day before, Sabita went out nearby the Chengi Riverto collect fodder for their cattle in the morning on the incident day. Her neighbours saw her in meadow while she was collecting grass before 12:00 noon. Sabita's neighbours including her husband went back home for a lunch break. In the mean time, Sabita's husband was worried when she was not coming back home even after lunch time. He along with the villagers started searching her and later at around 5.30 pm, the villagers spotted the naked, dead body of Sabita Chakma in a crop field nearby Chengi Chor. The police of Khagrachari sadar and military of Bhuachari camp jointly rescued the dead body from the spot of incident.

It is also learnt that, some Bengali labourers were loading up a truck with sand near the crop field at the time when the victim was last seen alive. The villagers alleged that these Bengali labourers killed Sabita Chakma after raping her one after another, because Sabita's stuffs were found near by the truck. After killing her, culprits dragged the dead body roughly 10/12 yards away from the spot. The Bengali settlers snatched the gold chain from Sabita's neck.

Police took the dead body to Khagrachari sadar hospital in the evening of the day for autopsy. Sabita's husband filed a case in this connection with Khagrachari police station against truck driver named Md. Nizam. Besides, the labourers who engaged in extracting sand during the incidents were identified as-

- (1) Md. Razzak, resident of Bhuachari cluster village (however staying at Ganja Para)
- (2) Ziaul Haque, resident of Bhuachari cluster village
- (3) Md. Anowar, resident of Bhuachari cluster village
- (4) Mr. Lasu Marma, resident of Ganja Para.

Police could not arrest anyone yet. Indigenous peoples organisations organised protest in Khagrachari, Rangamati, Chittagong and Dhaka and demanded to arrest culprits and to provide exemplary punishment to them, to provide adequate compensation to the victim's family, to rehabilitate Bengali settlers outside CHT with dignity and to implement CHT Accord in order to ensure security of indigenous women in CHT.

It is important to mention here that this type of sexual violence on the women of Kamalchari union is not an isolated incident. Another indigenous housewife was hacked to death after rape on 1 October 2011 in this area.

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