

ALLEGATIONS, EVIDENCE, & COMMUNAL CONTEXT

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF AKBAR MONDAL

PUNISOL VILLAGE INCIDENT:
A FACT-FINDING REPORT



Association for
Protection of
Civil Rights

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**ASSOCIATION FOR PROTECTION
OF CIVIL RIGHTS (APCR)**

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INTRODUCTION

On 17 June 2026 (Wednesday), a delegation of the Association for Protection of Civil Rights (APCR), West Bengal Chapter, conducted a fact-finding visit to Punisol village, Onda, Bankura, West Bengal, to document the circumstances surrounding the death of Akbar Ali Mondal, a 45-year-old itinerant hawker.

Akbar Ali Mondal was attacked on 9th June 2026, in Supordih village, Purulia district. It all started because he paid a lot for some goods. This incident is making people worried about the safety of traveling traders who belong to minority groups. It also shows that there is a pattern of violence against street vendors in that area. The attack on Akbar Ali Mondal is a concern for traders like him.

An APCR Fact-Finding team went to Punisol village to meet Akbar Ali Mondal's family. They spoke with community members. The team also spoke with the police. Looked at the information that is available to the public. They wanted to give a report on what happened and the broader picture.



METHODOLOGY

The fact-finding exercise was conducted through the following approaches:

01. Direct engagement with the immediate family members of the deceased, particularly his widow and adult son (Zulfiqar Ali Mondal), who witnessed or received information about the incident.
02. Interactions with residents of Punisol village and neighboring areas who knew the deceased, his livelihood, and the region's socio-economic conditions.
03. Conversations with individuals who witnessed the assault or possessed direct knowledge of the incident, including reference to a video recording of the incident.
04. Communication with police authorities regarding the investigation, the accused's arrest, and the status of legal proceedings.
05. Examination of any available documents, including FIR, medical reports, and statements related to the case.
06. Assessment of the wider social and communal context, including patterns of violence against itinerant traders and minority community members in the region.

Delegation Members:

- ◆ Umar Awais
- ◆ Syed Imtiaz
- ◆ Md. Javed Alam
- ◆ Md Iqbal
- ◆ Maulana Md Ashraf Ali
- ◆ Maulana Noorullah Javed
- ◆ Advocate Altamash Haider

BACKGROUND

Punisol village is located in Bankura district, West Bengal, a zone characterized by considerable economic backwardness and limited development. The village is among the most economically disadvantaged areas of the district, with limited access to formal employment and deficient infrastructure.

The primary livelihood for a large part of the village population is itinerant hawking—door-to-door vending and mobile trading. This occupational group is particularly vulnerable to economic fluctuation, health risks, and occasional violence in the course of their work.

The Deceased was named Akbar Ali Mondal and was approximately 45 years old. He was an itinerant hawker (hawking for 12–14 years before death).

He was survived by a Wife, one son (Zulfiqar Ali Mondal, 22 years old, Class XII education), and two daughters (one married, one unmarried, approximately 20 years old)

Akbar Ali Mondal spent over ten years selling things from place to place. He went to villages and districts in West Bengal and other nearby states to sell his goods. The money Akbar Ali Mondal made was what his family lived on. His family says Akbar Ali Mondal was never in fights or did anything wrong.

His death has left his family in severe financial distress, with imminent worries regarding the survival and prospects of his dependents, particularly his unmarried daughter and youngest son.

CHRONOLOGY AND FACTS OF THE INCIDENT

Date: **9 June 2026 (Sunday)**

Time: **Approximately 8:00 a.m.**

Location: **Supordih village, Purulia district, West Bengal**

On the morning of 9 June 2026, Akbar Ali Mondal was doing his hawking business in Supordih village, Purulia district, about 95 kilometers from his home village of Punisol in Bankura district. Akbar Ali Mondal had a lot of goods with him that he was selling from his stock. He was going around Supordih village to sell the goods that Akbar Ali Mondal had.

People who know Biswanath Mahato (S/O Bhairab Mahato, Village: Saga Suporuri, P.S: Bandwan, District: Purulia, West Bengal), as well as those who live in the area, say he took some items from Akbar Ali Mondal's store without asking. Biswanath Mahato tried to leave without paying for the items he had taken. Akbar Ali Mondal asked Biswanath Mahato to pay for the things. Biswanath Mahato said no. They started arguing with each other. Biswanath Mahato left the scene for a while, then returned with a stick. He used the stick to hit Akbar Ali Mondal many times, which hurt his head and face very badly. Akbar Ali Mondal got serious injuries, especially around his eyes. The attack was so bad that it caused injuries that could have killed him. That is what happened to Akbar Ali Mondal.

After this, Biswanath Mahato allegedly took Akbar Ali Mondal's body. He hid it in his cattle shed, which means he tried to hide what he did.

Police subsequently arrived at the scene, recovered the body, and initiated investigation procedures. The victim's family was informed of the incident through police channels.

The deceased (Akbar Mondal) was formally identified by his son, Zulfiqar Ali Mondal (22 years old). Police arrested Biswanath Mahato, who was reportedly attempting to flee from a local bus stand at the time of his apprehension.

A key piece of evidence in this case is a video that shows the assault. It was supposedly recorded by a woman who was at or near the scene. The video is very important for understanding what happened. The authorities have it right now and are still looking into things. They have not shared it yet.

TRIGGER WARNING



ACCOUNT OF THE VICTIM'S FAMILY

Widow's Statement

She said her husband was a hardworking man who never caused any trouble. He took care of the family for more than ten years. The money he made was not a lot. It was enough for the family to get by. The widow of Akbar Ali Mondal is very upset because her husband died suddenly and in a way. This has caused many problems for her and her children; they do not have money and are very sad. The widow of Akbar Ali Mondal and her children are struggling because of what happened to Akbar Ali Mondal.

She also stated that her husband had no known enemies or history of serious conflicts. His death appears to have resulted from a sudden, seemingly trivial dispute over payment that led to fatal violence.

Son's Account (Zulfiqar Ali Mondal, 22 years)

Zulfiqar Ali Mondal, the son of Akbar Mondal, who died, said he was not at the place where it happened in Supordih village. The police told him about his father's death. He quickly went to Purulia to see the body. He said his father sold things on the street and often went to districts for work. He said his father had no problems with anyone he knew of. He also said that he is worried his father might have been attacked because he was a street seller from a different village.

The family's situation after Akbar Ali Mondal's death shows they are in a tough spot financially:

- ◆ They have no income anymore.
- ◆ The unmarried 20-year-old daughter is worried about her future marriage and security.
- ◆ The widow and younger members are relying on help from their community and any government support they can get.
- ◆ The son's education and future are big concerns.

LOCAL INPUTS AND COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

Larger Pattern of Violence Against Hawkers

During the team's conversations with people from Punisol village and nearby areas, the team learned that traveling vendors have been treated poorly. These traveling vendors usually come from places. They have a lot of problems. People are harsh to them. They are not treated fairly. The team heard many stories about these incidents. It seems like traveling vendors from other places are the ones who get targeted. People from Punisol village and the surrounding areas told us what happened to them. They shared their stories with us. What they said showed that traveling vendors are often subjected to violence and harassment. Traveling vendors are facing many problems.

01. Several residents who live in the area said that street vendors, those from places where most people are Muslim or who look like they are Muslim, have been treated very badly by the people who live around Purulia and nearby areas. They have been yelled at and scared. Sometimes, even hurt by the people who live there. This is happening to street vendors in Purulia and the surrounding areas.
02. People who live in the area say that street vendors like Akbar Ali Mondal, who are clearly Muslim because of their names, the way they look, including having a beard, and the way they dress, are treated unfairly. They are closely scrutinized, and people are more suspicious of them than of street vendors from areas where most people are Hindu. Street vendors like Akbar Ali Mondal face significant hostility. This is not the same for street vendors who're from Hindu areas. The people say that street vendors, like Akbar Ali Mondal, are treated badly just because they are Muslim.
03. A consistent issue was that hawkers from "outside" villages, particularly those from Muslim-majority areas, were viewed with suspicion and treated differently from local vendors or hawkers from familiar communities.
04. Residents cited earlier episodes in the area of violence against members of minority communities, although the particulars were incomplete and needed to be confirmed.

Safety Concerns and Migration

Following Akbar Ali Mondal's death, the delegation learned that:

- ◆ An atmosphere of fear and insecurity has prevailed in the locality and among hawking communities in the region.

- ◆ Several hawkers from minority communities have reportedly returned to their native villages or suspended their trading activities due to safety concerns.
- ◆ There is reduced economic activity among the hawking community in the affected areas, with knock-on effects on families dependent on this livelihood.

Community Assistance and Solidarity

Despite concerns about intercommunal tensions, the delegation also observed:

- ◆ Residents, including some from the majority community, expressed sympathy and support for the bereaved family.
- ◆ There have been unofficial expressions of solidarity and material assistance to the family in the immediate aftermath of the incident.
- ◆ Community leaders have called for a fair investigation and justice without communal bias.



POLICE INVESTIGATION AND LEGAL STATUS

A First Information Report (FIR) was registered by the police following the incident on 9 June 2026. The FIR documents the allegations of assault leading to death and related charges under applicable BNS. Alleged Charges Against the Accused (Biswanath Mahato) likely invoke provisions under the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to:

Causing death by assault or criminal force

Murder or culpable homicide

Potential charges relating to the concealment of the crime

Status of Investigation

Police authorities are looking into this matter. Here is what has been done so far: Biswanath Mahato is now in police custody. The police caught him. The police are investigating him. The police are gathering evidence. They are checking the place where the assault happened, finding the weapon used, and talking to people who saw it happen. The police are also collecting statements from eyewitnesses.

Police have the video recording of the assault allegedly made by a woman at the scene. This is critical evidence for establishing the facts of the incident. Police officials have assured the victim's family that a fair and impartial investigation will be conducted without communal bias.

Challenges in Investigation

01. The victim's family is approximately 95 kilometers from both the police station and the incident site, limiting their direct involvement in the investigation.
02. The family's knowledge of the incident has largely depended on information provided by police authorities rather than on their own direct observation or investigation.
03. People who saw what happened are in the Purulia district, which makes it hard for the family to keep track of the investigation or provide more information later.

As of 17 June 2026, the police are still investigating what happened. The team trying to figure out what happened did not have access to all the papers, including the FIR, police reports, doctors' reports, and other investigative documents. It is really important to have these papers to understand what really happened. The investigation into the Purulia district case is still ongoing. The family wants to know what is happening with the investigation into the Purulia district.

COMMUNAL DIMENSIONS AND PUBLIC NARRATIVE

Though the immediate incident appears to have stemmed from a specific commercial dispute (non-payment for goods), the delegation's interactions revealed that it has been subject to communal interpretation in some local narratives.

Some people who live in the area think that something bad might have happened to Akbar Ali Mondal because he is a Muslim. After all, he has a beard, or because he is not from there. This incident is being talked about in the community as part of a problem of people being mean to minority community members and people who are not from the area. People who live in the area and some local groups are comparing this to times when minority community members were hurt in the same region, which shows that this is not the only time something like this has happened and that it is part of a bigger problem, with the way minority community members are treated.

The team stated that the incident received little media attention, with coverage mostly from local news outlets. Groups working for people's rights and community organizations have said this case highlights the broader problems minority traders and traveling workers face. These groups think that the incident is an example of the difficulties that minority traders and itinerant workers have to deal with.

The police have consistently tried to frame the incident as a commercial dispute that developed into criminal violence, without making explicit determinations regarding communal motivation. This framing demonstrates a careful investigative approach pending completion of the inquiry.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Based on the fact-finding visit, interviews with family members, interactions with residents, and examination of available information, the fact-finding team made the following observations:

Nature of the Incident

01. The incident appears to have originated from a dispute over payment for goods in a hawking transaction, a commercial disagreement that devolved into violent assault.
02. The assault resulted in serious injuries that caused Akbar Ali Mondal's death. The violence appears disproportionate to the initial commercial disagreement, pointing to either deliberate lethal intent or reckless disregard for human life.
03. The alleged placement of the body in a cattle shed suggests an attempt to conceal the crime, indicative of consciousness of guilt.

Identity and Targeting

01. Akbar Ali Mondal, as an itinerant hawker from a Muslim-majority village, operating outside his native area, may have faced greater vulnerability and a higher risk of violence than hawkers from majority communities or local traders.
02. People in the community say that there are a lot of incidents where minority community members and traders from outside the area are being harassed and sometimes even hurt. This makes us wonder whether what happened was a one-time thing or part of a bigger problem. Members of minority communities and outside traders are usually targeted. The community is concerned about the safety of minority community members and outside traders.

Family Impact

01. The death of Akbar Ali Mondal has created a situation of severe and instant monetary vulnerability for his widow and children, with no alternative source of livelihood.
02. The family has lost its sole breadwinner at a key point in the life cycle (an unmarried daughter approaching marriageable age, a younger son at an educational stage).
03. The family faces immediate needs for financial assistance, livelihood support, and counseling, for which existing social welfare mechanisms appear inadequate.

Investigation

01. The police investigation is ongoing. The crucial video evidence and forensic findings will be determinative in establishing the facts of the case.

02. The Police authorities have provided assurances regarding a fair investigation. Vigilance is required to ensure that investigative procedures remain unbiased and thorough.

03. The case against Biswanath Mahato appears strong based on available data. Pursuit of full criminal accountability through proper judicial process is essential.

Broader Dimensions

The incident illustrates the systemic vulnerability of itinerant traders, particularly those from minority communities, to violence and exploitation. The distance between the victim's village and the site of the incident has made it difficult for the family to access information, participate in the investigation, and pursue justice. Regardless of the specific motivation in this case, the incident has communal dimensions given the identity of the victim and the wider context of minority community members' vulnerability in the region.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Investigative and Legal Measures

01. The SIT or investigating authority must conduct a thorough, evidence-based investigation free of communal bias. The video recording of the assault must be analyzed and preserved.
02. Forensic examination of the weapon, scene evidence, and medical findings must be completed and documented.
03. Eyewitnesses, particularly the woman who recorded the video, must be protected from intimidation or retaliation.

Support for the Family

01. Emergency financial relief should be provided to the widow and children to meet immediate needs.
02. Long-term livelihood support for the family members, including skill development and employment assistance, should be arranged.
03. Assistance for the younger son's education and the unmarried daughter's security and prospects ought to be prioritized.
04. Counseling and psychological health support should be made available to family members to address trauma and grief.
05. Adequate compensation through legal proceedings or government schemes must be guaranteed.

Broader Protective Measures

01. Measures should be implemented to ensure the safety of itinerant traders, particularly those from minority communities, including through information campaigns and police coordination.
02. Schemes to provide economic security and formal recognition for hawkers should be strengthened.
03. Local authorities and civil society should undertake initiatives to address intercommunal tensions and promote intercommunity harmony.
04. If the inquiry reveals a pattern of hostility toward minority traders, systemic measures must be enforced to prevent such violence.

05. Government and civil society should strengthen mechanisms for victim support, legal aid, and compensation in cases of violence.



CONCLUSION

The death of Akbar Ali Mondal in Supordih village on 9 June 2026 represents far more than a tragic loss; it is a stark indictment of the vulnerabilities faced by itinerant traders from minority communities who navigate a landscape where economic struggle meets social suspicion and institutional neglect. As police undertake their investigation into the circumstances of his death, which emerged from what began as a commercial dispute but escalated into fatal violence, the broader truth cannot be overlooked: Akbar Ali Mondal lived in an environment where distrust, prejudice, and hatred toward minority traders run deep, where local power structures often fail to provide equal protection, and where disputes that might be resolved through law and reason instead become catalysts for deadly confrontation.

What happened to him reflects not an isolated incident but a systemic pattern of marginalization and vulnerability. Justice for Akbar Ali Mondal demands immediate accountability; the perpetrator or perpetrators must be identified, prosecuted, and held answerable in law, demonstrating that every life has value regardless of faith or economic station. But justice also demands that his grieving family receive genuine support and compensation, not as charity but as recognition of the state's failure to protect him.


Most critically, moving forward, authorities must act decisively to transform the conditions that made his death possible: police must respond promptly and fairly to complaints from minority traders, community leaders must counter narratives of suspicion and hatred, and systemic safeguards must be put in place to prevent exploitation and protect vulnerable populations before disputes turn deadly. Akbar Ali Mondal's death need not be the price paid for indifference; it can be the moment when those in power acknowledge that traders like him deserve safety, dignity, and equal treatment under law, and commit themselves to ensuring that no other family suffers the devastation his family now endures.

ANNEXURES

01. Copy of FIR

CCTNS FIR NO-32707008260036.

W.B. Form No. 27



FIRST INFORMATION REPORT

1486

(First Information of a cognizable crime reported under psection 173 B.N.S.S.)

1. (i) Dist. Purulia Sub. Divn. Mankazar P.S. Bandwan Year 2026 FIR No. 36/26 Date 09/06/2026.
2. (i) Act BNS Sections 103(1) (ii) Act X Sections X
- (ii) Other Acts and Sections X
3. a) General Diary Reference: Entry No. 407 Time 15:45hrs.
- b) Occurrence of offence: day Tuesday Date 09/06/2026 Time at about 11:00 hrs.
- c) Information received date 09/06/2026 Time 15:45h G.D. No. 407 at the police station.
4. Type of Information: Written / Oral/Electronic Communication Typed.
5. If registered after preliminary Enquiry, reference no. such enquiry:
6. Place of occurrence: (a) Direction and distance from P.S. Approx. 08km N (b) Address In front and inside the house of aed. person
North-West side from P.S.
 (c) In case outside limit of this police station, then the name of P.S. Saga Supnuri PS - Bandwan District Purulia (Anchal NO-01, JL NO-12)
7. Complainant/ Informant
 (a) Name Mahammad Jubbikar Mandal (b) Father's/Husband's name Akbar Mandal
 (c) Date/Year of Birth Not noted (d) Nationality Indian
 (e) Address Vill- Tunisole PS- Onda Dist- Bankura
 (f) Mobile no. 8670937939 (g) UID no./Any other ID no. Not noted
 (h) E-mail id Not noted
8. Details of known/suspected/unknown/accused with full particulars (attach separate sheet, if necessary)
Biswanath Mahato S/o- Bhairab Mahato of vill- Saga Supnuri PS- Bandwan Dist- Purulia.
9. Reasons for delay in reporting by the Complainant/Informant X
10. Particulars of properties stolen/involved. (Attach separate sheet, if necessary): X
11. Total value of properties stolen/involved: X
12. Inquest report/U.D. Case NO., if any: Bandwan PS UD Case No-21/26, Dt- 09/06/2026.
13. FIR contents: (Attach separate sheets, if required) Original typed Complaint of the Complainant which is treated as FIR is attached herewith.
14. Action taken: Since the above report reveals commission of offence(s) U/S 103(1) BNS.

Registered the case and ~~took up the investigation~~ / directed SI Submata Patra

To take up the investigation/transferred to P.S. X on point of jurisdiction. FIR read over to The Complainant/informant, admitted to be correctly recorded and a copy given to the complainant/informant

Free of cost.

Signature/thumb impression of the complainant/Informant: Mahammad Jubbikar Mandal

Signature of the officer-in-Charge, Police Station with Name: Mrinmay Bhakta
 Rank: SI of Police
 Officer-in-Charge if any: OC Bandwan P.S, Dist- Purulia
 BANDWAN P.S. PURULIA

02. Copy of Written Complaint by the deceased's Son.

C.C.T.H.S FIR NO - 32707008260036

To
The Officer In-Charge
Bandwan PS, Dist-Purulia

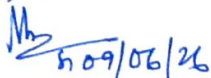
মহাশয়,
আমার বিনীত নিবেদন এই যে আমি মোহাম্মদ জুলফিকার মন্ডল পিতা- আকবর মন্ডল গ্রাম-
পুনিশোল, থানা-ওন্দা, জেলা বাঁকুড়া।

মহাশয় আমি ও আমার বাবা কমলপুর থানার অন্তর্গত কাটিনে ঘর ভাড়া করে থাকি এবং
সেখান থেকে বান্দোয়ান থানার অন্তর্গত বিভিন্ন জায়গা ও কাটিনের আশেপাশের জায়গায়
ফেরিওয়ালার কাজ করি। আজ (09.06.2026) আমার বাবা বান্দোয়ান থানার অন্তর্গত
সাগা সুপুরুরি গ্রামে ফেরি করতে যায়। আনুমানিক বারোটা নাগাদ খবর পাই সাগা সুপুরুরি
গ্রামে কোন ফেরিওয়ালার কে কেউ মার্ডার করেছে এবং উনাকে বান্দোয়ান হাসপাতালে নিয়ে
যাওয়া হয়েছে। খবর পেয়ে আমি বান্দোয়ান হাসপাতালে ছুটে যাই এবং আমার বাবা
আকবর মন্ডলকে (পিতা এমডি হোসেন মন্ডল) মৃত অবস্থায় দেখতে পাই। এরপর আমি
সাগা সুপুরুরি গ্রামে যাই এবং ওখানে গিয়ে জানতে পারি আনুমানিক এগারোটা সময়
পুরুলিয়া জেলার বান্দোয়ান থানার অন্তর্গত সাগা সুপুরুরি গ্রামের ভৈরব মাহাতোর ছেলে
বিশ্বনাথ মাহাতো লাঠি দিয়ে পিটিয়ে উনার বাড়ির সামনে আমার বাবাকে খুন করেছে ও
তারপর বাড়ির মধ্যে টেনে নিয়ে যায়।

আমার বাবার মৃতদেহের উপর আপনার থানা ময়নাতদন্ত শুরু করেছে যার নম্বর হলো
Bandwan PS UD Case No 21/26 Date - 09/06/2026.

মহাশয় আমার আপনার কাছে বিনীত নিবেদন আমার বাবাকে লাঠি দিয়ে পিটিয়ে খুন করার
জন্য পুরুলিয়া জেলার বান্দোয়ান থানার অন্তর্গত সাগা সুপুরুরি গ্রামের ভৈরব মাহাতোর
ছেলে বিশ্বনাথ মাহাতোর আইনানুগ চরমতম শাস্তি হয় তার আবেদন জানাই।

Received on 09/06/26 at 15:45 hrs. and
started Bandwan PS Case NO-36/26,
Dt- 09/06/26 U/S - 103(1) BNS.


09/06/26
Officer-in-Charge
BANDWAN P.S.
PURULIA

বিনীত
mohammed Julfikar mandal

09/06/2026

mob-8670937939



Association for
Protection of
Civil Rights

📍 E-57/1, 4th Floor, Hari Kothi Lane, Abul Fazal Enclave -1, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025

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