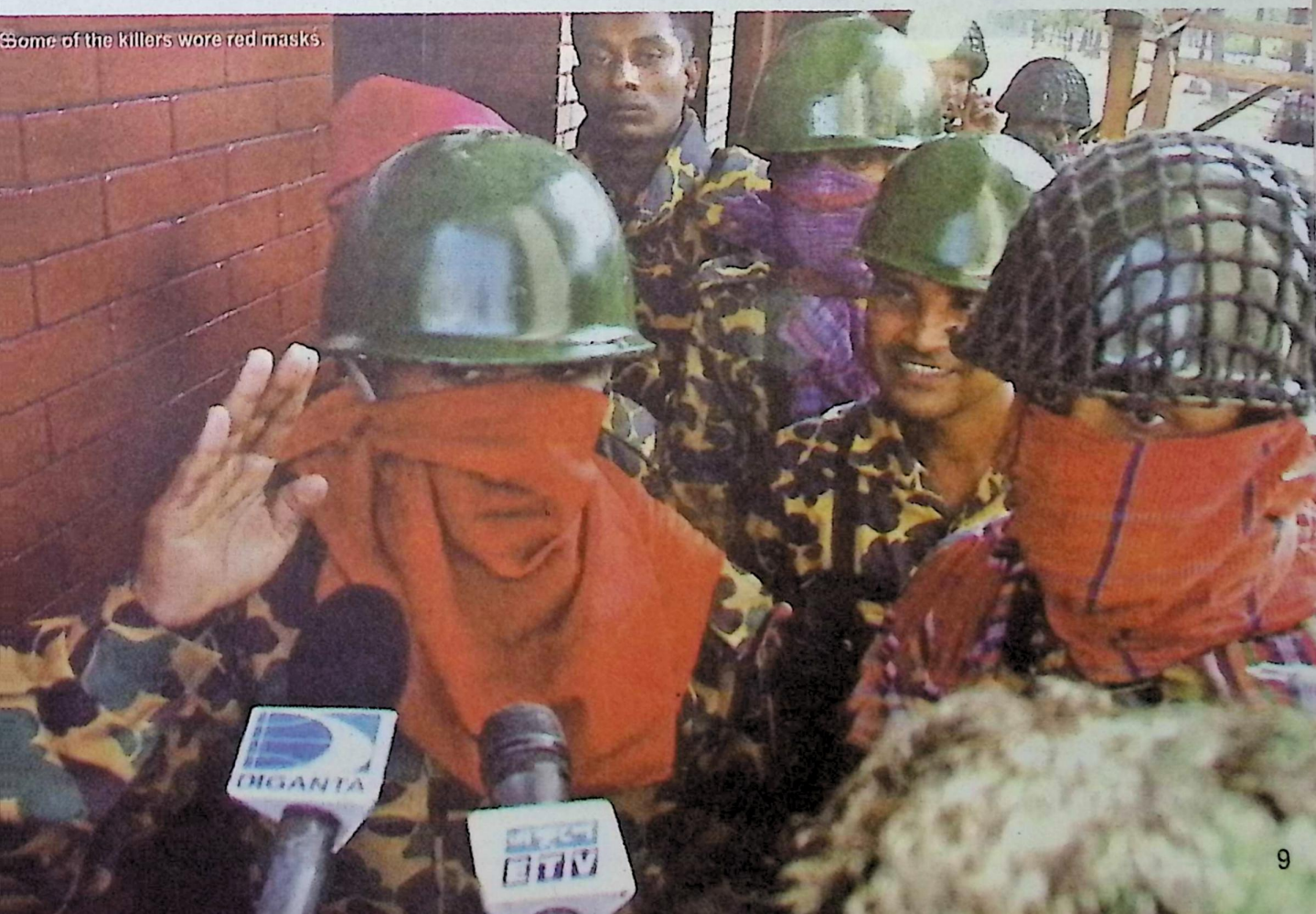
Though her life was saved for the time being, her son, as the gunshots were becoming even louder, hid himself behind the compressor of the AC in the back veranda. "I found one of our maids hiding there," he says, "In a few minutes I heard some footsteps and jumped onto the sunshade of the building. I clutched at her hand, trying to get her down to where I was. Later I let go of her because I realised that if tried further to get her to my side they would shoot at her."

Hiding on the sunshade, Nadeet saw the killers set fire to his room to bring him out to kill him. "The fire was spreading fast, and within a few minutes it reached the sunshade. It was so smoky, I could not see anything properly, I had to get up and find a shelter. Some of the killers who were standing in a building construction site, noticed me. They sprayed a few rounds at me as I ran for safety. I am lucky that I am alive and talking to you," he says in a voice choked with emotion. He broke the wire net of the kitchen and went into a room in the house and hid himself along with two others under the bed. Shaken, Nadeet does not want to name these two BDR-men who saved his life; when a few jawans turned up again in search of him, these two men, who do menial labour in the house, told the killers that "Col sahib's son" was not here.

General staff officer 1 (communication) of the BDR Lt Colonel Syed Kamruzzaman will never forget the last Darbar (durbar) of the BDR. The officer who had just taken part in the force's annual parade a day ago was sitting in the spacious hall of the BDR when immediately after the Director General (DG) of the paramilitary started his speech a young man, without his cap and belt went up to the dais.

Throughout the DG's speech, which was short-lived, there was commotion at the back of his audience. Some chanted slogans; some made catcalls. An officer and a non-commissioned officer jumped and accosted the young man in an attempt to stop him from reaching the DG. Shaken, the young man fell to the ground; while another man in BDR fatigues ran out of the Darbar. "Like magic, within a few seconds the whole darbar became empty," says Lt Colonel Kamruzzaman. There were gunshots. At around 9:45 in the morning, a group of mutineers, wearing red bandanas, came up with guns and ordered the 12 officers present to come out and walk in a line led by the DG. "As the DG climbed down the stairs of darbar hall, one jawan sprayed him with bullets. Soon the other jawans there started firing on us," he says.

Lt Colonel Kamruzzaman is lucky, so is Major Munir, who no sooner had the firing begun jumped into a sewer manhole. "It was dark and full of a foul smell. I kept the lid closed and could hear gunshots. I stayed there without any food and light. I could not separate day from night," he says. The marauding bunch of killers did not spare



Some of the killers wore red masks.