

# Death, genocide

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evidence to support the numbers [of death] claimed by the opposition and Hefajat leaders."

The report referred to the period between February and early May this year.

Hefajat leaders had claimed that the security forces on May 5 killed around 2,000 to 3,500 people and dumped the bodies outside the capital using garbage trucks, while some BNP leaders called the incident "genocide".

The government had termed the claims "grossly fabricated".

However, the evidence obtained by HRW suggests that the security forces committed serious human rights abuses and that some people were killed during the early hours of May 6.

It also said, "There is strong evidence to dispute the government assertion of a disciplined operation. Journalists and protestors who witnessed the event told Human Rights Watch that on several occasions the security forces opened fire at close range even after unarmed protestors had surrendered."

In total, based on hospital logs, eyewitness accounts, and well-sourced media reports, HRW believes that at least 58 people died, seven of whom were members of the security forces, on May 5 and 6.

The rights body also men-

tioned that the demonstrations centring a verdict of International Crimes Tribunal that awarded death sentence to Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee resulted in dozens of deaths of protesters, bystanders, and police officers in February.

It claims that the security forces frequently used excessive force in responding to street protests, killing at least 150 protesters and injuring at least 2,000 more since February.

The HRW urges the government to establish an impartial, transparent, and independent commission to investigate the large number of deaths and injuries that occurred in connection with protests between February and early May, 2013.

It also expressed concerns over the incidents of disappearances of people, arrest of four bloggers, and action against the opposition media.

The rights organisation also asked the opposition parties to take steps to deter their supporters from carrying out unlawful acts, including assaults on law enforcers and people with different political views.

It also recommends protecting children from taking part in political activities. At the same time it advises the government to order law enforcers to follow the United Nations Basic Principles on the use of force and firearms.



Workers removing rubble yesterday after an under-construction bridge on the Myne river in Khagrachhari collapsed on Tuesday night.

PHOTO: STAR

## 30,000 go to KL within 3 months

BSS, Dhaka

The government will send 30,000 workers to Kuala Lumpur within the next three months, officials told a parliamentary committee meeting yesterday.

The data of the workers will be forwarded to the Malaysian government by next month, they added.

The meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on expatriates welfare and overseas employment ministry was held at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with its chairman Anisul Islam Mahmud in the chair.

The meeting was informed that the ministry had already sent clean data for 8,391 workers out of 10,000 to the Malaysian government after their final selection.

The committee recommended that the ministry take quick and effective steps for sending workers to Kuala Lumpur and remove complexity in Iqama [work permit] transfer of illegal Bangladeshi migrants in Saudi Arabia.

The meeting was also informed that the government had provided assistance to 2,44,519 migrants in Saudi Arabia.

In the next session of parliament, a bill seeking to bring amendments to the Expatriate Welfare Fund Act-2002 would be passed after it was approved by the cabinet, it was told.

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain and other committee members were present at the meeting.

## ACC

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former BNP minister late Akbar Hossain, immediate past ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman told newsmen on the day at his office.

Incumbent ACC Chairman Mohammad Badiuzzaman yesterday said, "Ferdous had contributed to the recovery of the money and for that, we have decided to reward him with an amount which might not be exceeding 10 percent of the recovered amount."

"We have written to the finance ministry seeking its permission in this regard. Once we get the permission, we will disburse the amount immediately," he added.

Contacted, a high official at the finance ministry said they had received the ACC's letter and will take action by Sunday.

According to the ACC letter sent on July 7, the anti-graft body had appointed Octokhan, a chartered accountancy firm, to help bring back the money from Singapore.

Ferdous, a representative of Octokhan, helped in bringing back the amount and as per the deal. So he needed to be paid off 10 percent of the total amount.

ACC Deputy Director Abu Syeed on March 17, 2009 had sued Koko and Saimon for siphoning off more than Tk20 crore -- Singapore \$28,84,603.15 and US \$9,32,672.81.

Trying the two in absentia, a Dhaka court on June 23 last year had sentenced Koko and Saimon to six years' rigorous imprisonment each and fined them around Tk39 crore.

Koko had received the amount from the business firm Siemens and Habibur Rahman, a Bangladeshi living in Dubai, Syeed told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

The anti-graft body has recovered the amount that Habibur had sent to Fairhill Consulting's account with Singapore Overseas Bank from the Janata Bank's Dubai branch between 2004 and 2007.

An ACC probe had found Koko to be the owner of Fairhill.

## Karnaphuli

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feed on phytoplankton and zooplankton found on the surface of the water, which would be destroyed by such a volume of toxic oil spill.

It would take toll on the entire food chain of the aquatic creatures, he said, urging the authorities concerned to take measures to remove the oil immediately.

Black furnace oil, mainly used in industries including power plants, was seen floating in the canal adjacent to the derailment spot, and in the river Karnaphuli yesterday.

Karnaphuli researcher Muhammad Edris Ali, also an associate professor of Chittagong College, said the layer of oil in the river would affect the photosynthesis.

"The spill in the river will definitely cause a shortage of the dissolved oxygen," he said, adding that fishes would either die or migrate from the river under the impact.

The locals from adjacent Barua Para, Pathan Para, Sheikh Para and Jele Para were also seen collecting the oil from the canal and adjacent water bodies.

The railway officials were seen busy trying to salvage the derailed tanks. But no step was taken to stop the toxic oil from being spread into the river.

Sukumar Bhowmick, divisional railway manager, said they would decide about the removal of the oil after salvaging the derailed tanks.

The Bangladesh Railway (BR)-east zone has formed a three-member committee to probe into the matter.

The committee headed by Chittagong divisional transportation officer Zakir Hossain was asked to submit the report within three days, Sukumar added.

The railway officials primarily suspected the derailment had occurred due to the lack of maintenance of rail tracks, and the overweight of the cargo train.

A railway high official, on condition of anonymity, said the BR had been carrying 5 tanks of oil to Dohazari Peaking Power Plant on every alternative day since October 1, 2011.

Later the BR had to carry 8 tanks on every alternative day due to pressure from the power plant officials.

From this month, it has started carrying 8 tanks everyday to increase production of electricity to ease power crisis in the month of Ramadan.

Three tankers of a Dohazari-bound cargo train derailed at Baruapara area in Boalkhali upazila while carrying furnace oil for the peaking power plant.

## AL richest party

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Bangladesh, have sought additional time from the EC.

Asked about the four remaining registered parties, EC Secretary Muhammed Sadique said they would wait for a few days as the parties could have sent their reports by post. After that the commission will issue letters to the parties, asking for audit reports on their income and expenditure of 2012.

Regarding the extension of the deadline, he said the commission in previous years had extended the deadline by 15 days to one month. He, however, declined to say whether the deadline would be extended this time or when the EC would declare the extension.

The Daily Star correspondents managed to get the figures from sources in the political parties but could not get the details.

The numbers suggest that though the ruling Awami League earned more than the other major political parties, the main opposition BNP, its ally Jamaat-e-Islami and Jatiya Party (JP) had spent more than their incomes.

After submitting the party's audit report, AL Deputy Office Secretary Mrinal Kanti Das said their last year's earning and spending were higher than those of the previous year.

He, however, refused to disclose details of the report.

"It is up to the commis-

sion to publish details of the report," Mrinal said.

BNP Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi and former minister and Jatiya Party presidium member Tajul Islam Choudhury submitted reports on their parties' behalf.

Donations from BNP parliament members and well-wishers and monthly fees from leaders and activists at all levels were shown as the main sources of income in the report, Rizvi said.

Political programmes, birth and death anniversaries of the party's founder Ziaur Rahman and events organised on the national days were the sectors of the major expenditure, he said, adding the party had covered the income deficit with the interest it had received from bank deposits.

JP leader Tajul refused to say anything about the party's report.

The EC Secretariat issued letters to the political parties on July 11 to submit their reports by July 31.

As per the Representation of the People Order, all registered political parties are supposed to have their last year's income and expenditure audited and to submit the reports between January and July.

EC Secretary Muhammed Sadique told reporters that the commission would hold a meeting to decide whether it would make the reports public.

## Mammoth to be back

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Edinburgh-based stem cell scientist, whose team unveiled Dolly as the world's first cloned mammal in 1996.

Though it is unlikely that a mammoth could be cloned in the same way as Dolly, more modern techniques that convert tissue cells into stem cells could potentially achieve the feat, Wilmut said in an article yesterday for the academic journalism website, The Conversation.

Woolly mammoths roamed the Earth tens of thousands of years ago in a period called the late Pleistocene.

Their numbers began to fall in North America and on mainland Eurasia about 10,000 years ago. Some lived on for a further 6,000 years.

The prospect of raising woolly mammoths from the dead has gathered pace in recent years as the number of frozen bodies recovered from the Siberian permafrost has soared.

Earlier this month, the most complete woolly mammoth carcass ever recovered from Russia was unveiled at an exhibition in Yokohama, Japan.

"I've always been very sceptical about the whole idea, but it dawned on me

that if you could clear the first hurdle of getting viable cells from mammoths, you might be able to do something useful and interesting," Wilmut told the Guardian.

In his article for The Conversation, Wilmut explains the formidable hurdles that stand in the way of scientists who want to clone the beasts.

The technique requires scores of healthy mammoth cells and hundreds or thousands of eggs from a closely related species, such as the Asian elephant.

The most immediate problem is that mammoth cells must survive with

their DNA intact. In practice, they degenerate quickly at the temperature of melting snow and ice, when most remains are found.

If good-quality cells can be extracted from mammoth remains, they could be reprogrammed into stem cells using modern procedures. These could then be turned into other kinds of cell, including sperm and eggs.

But the scientist said it could be 50 years before the techniques for resurrecting the woolly mammoth were perfected.

## Judgment on Jamaat today

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not believe in independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh.

Belayet Hossain, a counsel for Jamaat, told The Daily Star that the HC bench of Justice M Moazzam Husain, Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque will deliver the verdict at 2:00pm today.

The bench yesterday recorded the case in its cause list for the verdict, he said.

On June 12, the bench concluded hearing on the petition, saying it would deliver its verdict any day.

On November 14, 2008, the Election Commission (EC) listed Jamaat as a registered political party in violation of the

Constitution and the spirit of the Representation of People Order (RPO) Ordinance, 2008, petitioners said.

On January 27, 2009, the HC had issued the rule asking Jamaat's chief and its secretary general, and the EC to explain why the party's registration should not be declared illegal.

In reply to the rule, the EC told the HC that some provisions of Jamaat's charter were against the country's constitution and RPO, while Jamaat said the EC had not done any illegality by registering the party.

During the hearing on the petition, petitioners' lawyer Tania Amir told the court that some provisions of Jamaat-e-Islami's char-

ter are contrary to Bangladesh's constitution, the RPO, and the Charter of Medina.

The Charter of Medina, signed and executed by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and representatives of other religions around 1,400 years ago, was inherently secular and essentially democratic, she added.

Tania also said the EC's decision to register Jamaat-e-Islami as a political party was illegal and unconstitutional, as Jamaat is a communal political party and does not believe in Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty.

As per the constitution, Bangladesh's political parties cannot have an office abroad, but Jamaat

was floated in India and has offices abroad, she said.

Meanwhile, Jamaat's chief counsel Abdur Razzaq argued that the writ petition was not acceptable, since Bangladesh Tariqat Federation, which the petitioners belong to, is a religion-based party and not a secular political party.

They cannot challenge the legality of any other political party's registration, he said, adding that Jamaat-e-Islami is a democratic political party.

The EC has not committed any illegality while registering Jamaat-e-Islami as a political party, since the commission has done it to uphold its democratic norms, Razzaq added.

## Mueen the man

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gave a heart-wrenching description of how Al-Badr men abducted his brother from their home on December 11, 1971.

He spoke of their search for him and what his death had done to the family.

"My father got bedridden after my brother was abducted by Al-Badr and he couldn't stand up since. He died in September, 1973," said emotion-choked Dulu appealing for justice for the killing of his brother and other intellectuals.

During his one-and-a-half-hours testimony, the 65-year-old said his elder brother Mostafa was a senior journalist and literary editor of Purbadesh. He also worked for Sangbad and Azad and was involved in left-wing politics.

"My brother used to write for the liberation movement, and for this he had an ideo-

logical rivalry with Chowdhury Mueen Uddin, who was a staff reporter of Purbadesh," said Dulu, now an employee at a private firm.

Around 6:00am on December 11, 1971, a group of Al-Badr men and militia men went to their Gopibagh home. Mostafa had opened the door, said Dulu adding that two to three of them were masked.

Making sure that he was indeed Mostafa, they took his brother away saying that he would be taken to the Purbadesh office and let go within a short time, he said.

Dulu said he went to the Purbadesh office around 8:30am, as his brother had not returned. He informed Atiqur Rahman, a senior staff reporter, of the matter, who in turn apprised then news editor Ehtesham Haydar Chowdhury.

At the office, Dulu learnt that the Al-Badr had also

abducted journalists Serajuddin Hossain and Syed Nazmul Haque in similar fashion.

News editor Ehtesham then called editor of the paper Mahbubul Haque over the phone in Dulu's presence. Dulu said over the phone Ehtesham told the editor, "Chowdhury Mueen Uddin had done all these..."

Dulu said it was the first time he had ever heard of Chowdhury Mueen Uddin.

Ehtesham then asked Atiqur to call in Mueen and when Mueen Uddin showed up within half an hour, he was asked to take Dulu with him and look for Mostafa.

"Being sceptical, Atiqur Bhui said, 'what is the necessity of Dulu going with [Mueen Uddin]'. I think Atiqur Bhui didn't want me in any danger," said Dulu adding that he went with Mueen.

Mueen and Dulu went to a building at Purana Paltan on a rickshaw. Keeping Dulu outside, Mueen went inside the building, which was the office Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami.

According to prosecution documents and a few tribunal verdicts, Islami Chhatra Sangha virtually turned into Al-Badr and got involved in numerous crimes, including the planned killing of intellectuals.

Mueen came out and said he had not found Mostafa there. He said the same coming out of Ramna Police Station where they went later on.

"We had information that detainees were kept and tortured at Mohammadpur Physical Training Centre and as I requested Mueen to go there, he hesitated but eventually agreed [to go there]," said Dulu.

Dulu was again kept wait-

ing outside as Mueen entered the training centre, historically known as the headquarters of Al-Badr. Guards stood in attention for Mueen as he went in, said Dulu.

Before going in, Mueen talked to a guard their and from their conversation Dulu first heard of Ashrafuzzaman.

Mueen went in and returned 15-20 minutes later. Mueen claimed to have not found Mostafa. The guards again stood in attention as he exited through the gate, Dulu said.

After that Mueen left Dulu and Dulu returned to the Purbadesh office, where he narrated everything to Atiqur Rahman.

From Atiqur, Dulu learnt that a week ago Mostafa was involved in an altercation with Mueen over the Liberation War and Jamaat's role. Mueen had threatened Mostafa of dire conse-

quences during the heated exchange of words, Atiqur told Dulu.

After victory in the war, Dulu and his family searched for Mostafa's body in Rayerbazar and other killing fields in Dhaka but could not find it, said Dulu.

Dulu said Mueen went into hiding after victory and Purbadesh published Mueen and Ashrafuzzaman Khan's photos mentioning them as the masterminds of the intellectual killings.

In February, 1972, Dulu joined Purbadesh and after getting information about Mueen from his colleagues, he realised that Mueen had faked the search for Mostafa with him.

State-appointed defence counsels Abdus Shukur Khan and Salma Hai Tuny cross-examined Dulu yesterday.

The tribunal allowed three more witnesses for the prosecution following a petition.