Since 2004 till date more than 2,000 people have been killed in such a manner.

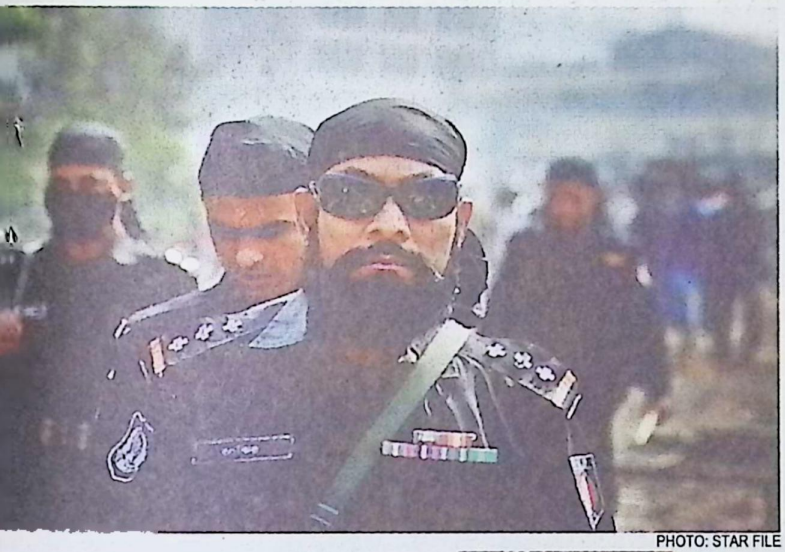


PHOTO: STAR FILE



PHOTO: DARSHAN CHAKMA

them dead bodies of four were recovered and two others returned, which is a miracle. The state could not find the rest.

If you are somehow protected from forced disappearances, there is no guarantee that you will not be a victim to the so-called 'crossfire' or 'shootout'. The way the extra-judicial killing by the law enforcers is increasing has already made people panic. Since 2004 till date more than 2,000 people have been killed in such a manner.

The highest number of people killed was in 2005 and 2006, during the last tenure of the BNP-Jamaat government, when the figures reached 377 and 362 respectively. At that time the Awami League was in opposition and its chief and the incumbent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and his party colleagues had strongly criticised the extra-judicial killings. And in the run up to the December 29, 2008 parliamentary polls, the AL had promised to stop such extra-judicial killings if it returned to power. But the extra-judicial deaths have not stopped even after AL came back to power. In 2009 the number was 229. It saw a decline to 99 in 2012 but regrettably shot up to 208 in 2013.

The failure to stop extra-judicial killing might have prompted the AL to refrain from making such pledges again in the run up to the latest parliamentary polls held on January 5 amid a boycott by the BNP-led alliance.

Article 27 of the constitution says all citizens are equal before law and are entitled to the equal protection of law. It has been guaranteed under Article 31 and the right to fair trial under Article 35 (3) of the Constitution are the inherent rights of every person accused of any crime, which cannot be denied by killing the accused person by the law enforcing agencies in the name of crossfire or encounter.

Assuming office on January 12 this year, some senior ministers of the Sheikh Hasina-led government have announced that they would put emphasis on establishing good governance in the country. But in the last two months, they could not come up with any significant initiatives towards establishing good governance. The government's move to implement some mega projects will in no way ensure it. Through the mega projects some new infrastructures will only be built. But to establish good governance, the government must take measures to honour people's constitutional rights to life and security. Rule of law and good governance hides its face in shame where there is no guarantee of life and protection of law.

The writer is Senior Reporter, The Daily Star.