

6 KILLERS OF BANGABANDHU

No progress in bringing them back

REZAUL KARIM & ASHUTOSH SARKAR

None of the six convicted fugitive killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman hiding abroad could be brought back home in spite of the government's special efforts.

Only two of them could be traced to two North American countries, but the government has yet to find out the whereabouts of the other four despite efforts made through diplomatic channels, intelligence and the Interpol.

The government insists on bringing the six fugitives back to the country and have them face justice and it a top-priority issue.

On November 19, 2009, the Supreme Court upheld a High Court verdict, confirming capital punishment of 12 people, including the six, for killing the Father of the Nation and most of his family members on August 15, 1975.

The six fugitives are: Col (dismissed) Khandaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col (relieved) Shariful Haque Dalim, Maj (ret'd) Noor Chowdhury, Maj (ret'd) Rashed Chowdhury, Capt Abdul Majed and Risaldar Moslehuddin Khan.

Five of the convicts -- Syed Farooq Rahman, Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Bazlul Huda, AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed, and Mohiuddin Ahmed -- were executed on January 27, 2010. The other killer, Aziz Pasha, died in

Zimbabwe in 2001.

"Our diplomatic efforts are on. This is one of our top priority assignments," Law Minister Anisul Huq said, adding, "We have located two fugitive killers of the Father of the Nation."

Noor is in Canada and Rashed in the USA, he said.

The government has been deeply engaged and continued discussion with the US and the Canadian governments about extradition of the two killers, but they have not yet agreed to extradite them because of "legal complexities".

The government has repeatedly asked the US government to extradite Rashed, cancelling his political asylum.

Noor is now in Canada without any legal papers. The country has so far refused to deport him, as its policies do not approve sending back a person to a country that has the provision for death sentence.

Canada, however, did not accept Noor's application for political asylum, official sources said. In 2011, the government appointed a Canadian law firm to help the government bring back Noor.

On Sunday when outgoing Canadian High Commissioner Benoit-Pierre Laramée made a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the premier reiterated Bangladesh's call to

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VICTIMS OF AUGUST 15 TRAGEDY



Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



Fazilatunnesa Mujib



Sheikh Kamal



Sheikh Jamal



Sultana Kamal



Sheikh Russell



Sheikh Naser



Abdur Rab Serniabat



Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni



Rosy Jamal



Colonel Jamil Uddin Ahmed



Shaheed Serniabat



Baby



Arzu Moni



Arif



Sukanta



Rintu

let the legacy

FROM PAGE 1

He was in his prime of life, in his mid-fifties, when he was so brutally killed. He had just fulfilled his life's dream of freeing his people and giving them an independent country. He was now working to lead them towards a development that would benefit the toiling masses who so selflessly followed his every word. He was perhaps also dreaming of spending a little bit more time with his family -- now grown with grandchildren from her elder daughter and the two newlywed wives of his two sons. But that was not to be.

Not only that the assassins killed the Father of our Nation but also his life's partner, Fazilatunnesa Mujib, two sons and their wives and the third son, a child of mere 10, Sheikh Russell. That his two daughters -- Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana -- escaped was only a matter of luck as they were abroad.

The brutality of the act, the ferocity of the mission and the coldblooded nature of its execution truly boggles the mind. How could this happen and why? And here the executioners' brief must have been the undoing of the independent Bangladesh, for nothing in Bangabandhu's life and work could provoke such cruelty. So our Founder's fault was in founding the Bangladesh that we today are so proud of.

There is of course the deep mourning at his sad and bloody demise. There is also the sense of gratitude for the fact that his life's work has left us free. But, thirdly, there is the task of making his sacrifice become truly worthy and the killers aim a total failure by building the Sonar Bangla of his dreams.

Legacy of Bangabandhu can only be a democratic and prosperous Bangladesh and nothing else.

In pain, in anger

FROM PAGE 1

with other guards arrived at the residence as it was the time for changing the guard.

They were hoisting the national flag to the tune of bugle and it was then they heard gunshots coming from the lakeside.

Nurul heard the voice of Bangabandhu on the first floor. They guessed the Father of the Nation was getting down hurriedly.

Bangabandhu reached the ground floor and tried to call somebody on the telephone at the receptionist's room.

Just then a hail of bullets slammed the room and smashed the window-panes. As Nurul asked the sentries where the bullets were coming from, they replied it was from outside. He ordered them to fire back.

The building seemed trembling with rumbles of heavy gunshots and cannon shells from outside. The firing stopped around five minutes later.

Bangabandhu came out on the

veranda. Nurul and a police sergeant stood by him.

"Why so much firing?" Bangabandhu asked them. "Sir, there has been an attack," replied Nurul.

Bangabandhu asked the security guards outside the gate the same question. A sepoy gave a similar answer.

Right at the moment, some people in army dress were crawling towards the southern part of the residence. There were some others from eastern-south and eastern-north sides.

Little did Bangabandhu know that the assassination attempt had begun.

He went back to his room. After a while, Sheikh Kamal came downstairs and stood on the veranda of the drawing room. He asked Nurul whether the army had come. As he nodded, Kamal joyfully said: "Brothers from the army! Come inside!" Kamal said this twice loudly.

There was an eerie silence for a minute.

Just then five to six army men in

khaki and black fatigues appeared holding SMCs in their hands. One of them had a sten gun. They barged into the residence and shouted: "Hands up!"

Bangabandhu's PS Mohitul was standing at the drawing room's door. Dumbfounded, Kamal said: "I am Sheikh Mujib's son."

Havildar Quddus saw Captain Bazlul Huda, Major Nur and Major Mohiuddin at the gate.

Without any warning, Huda shot Kamal in the leg. Kamal jumped to Mohitul's side.

Two bullets were fired at Nurul -- one struck just above his right knee while the other pierced his right shoe and hit a finger.

The killers went upstairs. Around 20-25 more people in army uniform joined them.

Meanwhile, Nurul went to a room next to the drawing room with his bullet-hit leg. He saw two police officials there and then heard gunshots

and screams of women. Mohitul was also dragged into the room.

Huda and Nur ordered Havildar Quddus to follow as they headed to the first floor along with their force.

As they walked up to the landing of the staircase, they saw Major Mohiuddin and his soldiers were taking Bangabandhu down.

"What do you want?" Bangabandhu asked.

Nobody answered. Suddenly, Huda and Nur pulled the triggers, and bullets from their Sten guns rained down on Bangabandhu.

The president collapsed on the stairs and breathed his last with blood flowing down the stairs.

The killers now ran riot at the house. The other members of the family took shelter inside the bathroom attached to the main bedroom. But that did not help.

As the soldiers fired at the door, Begum Mujib opened it.

The killers sprayed bullets at Begum

Mujib, Sheikh Jamal, his wife Rosy, and Kamal's wife Sultana.

On the ground floor, an army man went to the room where Nurul and others were staying and asked them to come out. They were lined up.

The officer then shouted at Nurul, "We will kill you as you issued the order to fire." He was dragged out through the main gate towards an armed vehicle. The man then informed his superior about Nurul but the superior asked him to go away.

Nurul went inside the house and he was again made to stand in a line. He was then taken to the reception room where he saw Sheikh Naser lying in a pool of blood. Within moments, Nurul heard gunshots and groaning.

After a while, the killers brought Bangabandhu's 10-year-old son Sheikh Russell and a house help to the ground floor.

Shivering in fright, Russell ran to Mohitul.

Holding Mohitul, he asked: "Will

they kill me too?"

"They won't kill you," replied Mohitul.

One of the soldiers took Russell away from Mohitul. Russell then asked the man whether they would kill him and cried to be taken to his mother.

The kid was taken upstairs. Then came a burst of gunshots and screams.

Around 6:00am, some army men came out of the house, walked towards the gate and talked to the army personnel waiting outside.

"All are finished," one of them said.

[Based on the deposition Nurul and Quddus gave as prosecution witness before the trial court in Bangabandhu murder case. We collected the deposition from the book "Bangabandhu Hatya Mamlā" by advocate Shahida Begum. Injured on August 15, Nurul took treatment first at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and then at his village home. Three months later, he rejoined his service.]

Largest volcanic region found

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100m to 3,850m in a massive region known as the West Antarctic Rift System.

Geologists and ice experts say the range has similarities to east Africa's volcanic ridge, currently acknowl-

edged to be the densest concentration of volcanoes in the world.

Researchers from the University of Edinburgh remotely surveyed the underside of the ice sheet for hidden peaks of basalt rock, like those of other volcanoes in the region whose tips

push above the ice.

They analysed the shape of the land beneath using measurements from ice-penetrating radar, and compared the findings with satellite and database records, as well as geological information from aerial surveys.

Food import to double

FROM PAGE 1

increased by 47 percent than that of last year, ministry sources said.

The Food Planning and Monitoring Committee is comprised of ministers for food, finance, commerce, agriculture, LGRD, and disaster management and relief, and 10 secretaries, including the cabinet secretary.

It is the committee's responsibility to monitor food security with secretarial and policy support from the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU) of the food ministry.

Worried over food security and feeling the need for an urgent stocktaking ahead of what appears to be a devastating flood, the FPMU held an appraisal session yesterday, a government holiday for Janmashtami.

After the June 20 decision to cut rice import duty to 10 percent from 28 percent, as much as 2.5 lakh tonnes have been imported by traders.

It is projected that until the next rice crop (Aman) is harvested in November, private traders would import up to 15 lakh tonnes, the sources said.

The prime minister also hinted more imports. Speaking on Sunday at the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council meeting in Dhaka, Sheikh Hasina said the government was procuring food grains from the international market to face the challenges caused by the ongoing flood.

"We've already procured food grains from various countries and more are coming...," she said.

Tomorrow's meeting would review the current flood situation. Rice-price volatility would largely depend on the next harvest of the staple and if the flood prolongs, Aman crops would be hurt, sources said.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told this correspondent on Sunday that a good harvest of rainfed Aus rice is expected to make at least 27 lakh tonnes of rice available in the

market soon.

She hoped for a good Aman harvest as well, provided floods do not do major damages.

Director General of the FPMU, Naser Farid, told The Daily Star that if the floodwater receded by August and the deluge did not drag on beyond the first week of September, farmers planting Aman would get a scope for recovering from earlier losses.

The decision to increase food grains import is being taken at a time when the government has a stock of 2.7 lakh tonnes of the staple but would have to distribute 4.5 lakh tonnes between September and November among 50 lakh ultra-poor under a programme.

Under the programme initiated late last year, the underprivileged are sold rice at Tk 10 per kg.

A food official said, "We're lining up rice and wheat imports in a way that allows us to deliver the 4.5 lakh tonnes to the ultra-poor, at least 50,000 tonnes more to people in the haors, and one lakh tonne as gratuitous relief [GR] to flood victims."

As the government's Boro procurement drive fell flat with only a fifth of the targeted 10 lakh tonnes achieved so far, the official said, it now needs to import more rice to keep a sufficient carryover stock for the future.

The sources said learning from 2016-17's low food stock, the food ministry was vouching for a better reserve so that year-end stock in public granaries remain close to 10 lakh tonnes. Last fiscal year, the year-end rice stock dropped below three lakh tonnes, the lowest in six years.

Market sources said prices continuously showed an upward trend since the flash flood in the haors. Traders and rice millers further pushed the prices up by refraining from importing rice with 28 percent duty.

The government then could not go for market intervention because of low

food stock.

Bangladesh, the world's fourth-biggest producer of rice with over 3.4 crore tonnes output, uses almost all its production to feed its population. It often requires imports to cope with shortages caused by natural disasters such as floods and droughts.

But since 2011, the government did not need to import rice although rice traders have done so, mostly from India.

However, since May, the food directorate has floated international tenders to buy 3.5 lakh tonnes of rice and had also made a deal with Vietnam government to bring in 2.5 lakh tonnes more.

The government has also signed two more memorandums of understanding (MoU) with Cambodia and Thailand but has not finalised the prices yet.

Sources yesterday told The Daily Star that the food ministry was expecting to strike a deal with Cambodia in the next 10 days.

Two Shibir men

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superintendent of Kushtia police.

Five petrol and 11 crude bombs, bomb-making materials, electronic equipment, CDs and sharp weapons were among the seized items, said a source of university proctor office.

However, most of IU unit's Shibir leaders, including president of the unit Hadiuzzaman, managed to flee the scene, said the SP.

A case was filed with Islamic University Police Station, accusing over 100 Shibir men, including Hadiuzzaman.

According to different sources, Islami Chhatra Shibir, pro-Jamaat-e-Islami student body, and its female wing Islami Chhatra Sangstha are secretly carrying out their activities at the university.

১৫ আগস্ট
জাতীয় শোক দিবস



যে মানুষ মরতে রাজি, তাকে কেউ মারতে পারেনা। আপনি একজন মানুষকে হত্যা করতে পারেন। সে তো তার দেহ। কিন্তু তার আত্মাকে কি আপনি হত্যা করতে পারবেন? না, তা কেউ পারেনা। এটাই আমার বিশ্বাস।

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