

February 5, 2005

Dhaka

### ***Appeal to Overseas Bangladesh Communities***

I write to you in a state of extreme grief. On 27 January 2005 my beloved husband, Shah AMS Kibria was taken away from me in a brutal grenade attack in Habiganj, Sylhet. Just last year the two of us celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

Even in my grief, so deep that it cannot be expressed in words, I know that I must now hold back my tears and devote myself to the task of ensuring that his killers do not escape unpunished. I will not rest until justice is done.

Today I need your support in my quest to bring the killers of my husband to justice. The people of Bangladesh are in the midst of a desperate struggle with the forces of greed, hatred and intolerance. They need help in their quest to build a just, genuinely free and democratic society, and in the days ahead they must brave great violence and oppression to achieve their goals. Please help us all in our time of need. You are the sons and daughters of Bangladesh. I know that Bangladesh, be it the land to which you will return or just the country of your forefathers, is still very much part of you, in your hearts and souls.

My late husband often spoke with great pride of the glorious role that was played by Bangalis everywhere in the 1971 Liberation War. I ask you to once again step forward and to take leadership in the struggle to free Bangladesh from the powerful dark forces that threaten it.

Those who know my family are well aware that I am not a political figure. I am an artist by profession and have never held a position of political power or public office. I have no great wealth or resources at my command. I am just a common citizen who must remain dependent on the help and goodwill of our friends and well-wishers in my campaign to bring the killers of my beloved husband to justice. We would ask everyone to pray to Almighty Allah to give me and my family the wisdom, courage and strength to succeed where so many others have failed.

I ask my friends here and in other expatriate communities around the world to use all their strength and resources to help us. We are asking that an independent international investigation team be immediately sent to Bangladesh to look into the attack of Shah AMS Kibria and the circumstances of his death. We must build up tide of public opinion through campaigns of letter-writing and telephone calls to elected representatives of the people in every country. Make every effort to ensure media coverage of what is happening in our country.

I also ask for your support and participation in various programs of non-violent protest that I will announce from time to time. On February 13<sup>th</sup>, at either 10 am or 4 pm, I ask that you stand together for one hour of silent protest in a public area, carrying black flags. New programs will be announced in due course.

Our methods of protest will be in keeping with my husband's deep commitment to peaceful democratic processes. Every community that wishes to help me and my family is requested to do the following:

- Every community, be it city or suburb, should as soon as possible set up a Coordination Committee for Action to bring the Killers of Kibria to Justice (CCAkkJ), working under the direction of the corresponding national Committees. I would expect that in many cases the leadership role would be taken by women (and men) who are already working on human rights issues;
- Sub-committees for the following should be formed –
  1. Coordination and Liaison (with me and with other branches, to develop joint programs and ensure coordination of activities);
  2. Representations to Elected Representatives (letter-writing, formal representations, telephone calls, black-badge and black-banner street demonstrations, etc);
  3. Media Campaign (radio, newspapers, internet and television);
  4. Strategy and Tactical Planning (providing advice to me on innovative and peaceful ways of mobilizing public opinion to achieve our objectives). Please do remember that a single clever and effective idea can be more powerful than the weapons of ten thousand terrorists).

Membership in these committees should be seen as a sacred trust – I beg of you not to let petty ambitions or rivalries distract you from the difficult task ahead.

My daughter, Dr. Nazli Kibria , who teaches at Boston University (nkibria@bu.edu) will be the overall coordinator of the international campaign and it is preferred that she should be contacted by email. However you are all welcome to contact me, my son Dr. Reza Kibria, or my daughter-in-law, Rina Sultana Kibria. I want my son to remain with me here right now but in due course he will begin making occasional trips overseas to meet our friends.

Often we as individuals grow despondent at the state of affairs in our country, and in our lonely helplessness we get angry and depressed. On our own we are indeed very weak in the face of rich, powerful and ruthless adversaries. However, I will show you that standing together we represent a force to be reckoned with, and that we will not only succeed in bringing the killers of my husband to justice, but by doing so we will also restore the hopes of freedom, tolerance, broadly-based prosperity and justice upon which our great Republic was founded.

**Mrs. Asma Kibria**