



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



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**"Common voters don't engage in violence. They want to cast votes, but are not allowed to do so."**  
BNP SECRETARY GENERAL MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR ON CHATTOGRAM-8 BY-POLLS HELD ON MONDAY (PAGE 3)

**"We did not expect this kind of verdict. It has shocked us."**  
HINDU-BUDDHA-CHRISTIAN-OKYA PARISHAD GENERAL SECRETARY RANA DASGUPTA ON HC'S REJECTION OF A WRIT PETITION FOR SHIFTING CITY POLLS DATE

**"If there was no escalation recently in the region, those Canadians would be right now home with their families."**  
CANADA PM JUSTIN TRUDEAU ON IRAN PLANE DOWNING (PAGE 8)

## That '48 hours' never ended

Years go by, justice not served in 4 sensational murder cases

MUNTAKIM SAAD

48 hours.

This was exactly the timeframe the then home minister Sahara Khatun had announced to catch the killers of journalist couple, Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi, hours after the gruesome murders in 2012.

But nearly eight years went by, investigators could not make headway. The Rapid Action Battalion and other agencies have taken 70 dates from the trial court to complete the investigation but failed to submit the probe report. All the investigators could do during every hearing was file a time petition.

This case is not an exception. The cases over three other much-talked-about killings -- of Taqi, Tonu and Mitu -- saw no visible progress in the investigation.

There are examples where sensational cases, like the one over the killing of Feni madrasa student Nusrat Jahana Rafi, were cracked in a short period of time. All the 16 accused were sentenced to death on October 24, 2019, just months after Nusrat was set on fire at a Feni madrasa.

But the slow pace of investigation in these four cases questions the integrity of the investigators, causing frustration in the victim families over getting justice.

"Justice will be served one day but perhaps I will not be able to see it in my lifetime," said a frustrated Saleha Munir, mother of Sagar Sarowar yesterday.

The 68-year-old mother alleged that it was the unwillingness of the law enforcers which is prolonging the investigation.

"What Sahara Khatun had said was right; they might have identified the killers in 48 hours. Our law enforcement agencies have the capacity to unearth everything, but it is their unwillingness that is holding them back to crack this case," she said.

She didn't even know who is the current IO of the case.

"Many IOs have been changed but there was no result ... It will never bring any result," she said, sobbing.

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## WHEN WILL THE WOUNDS HEAL?



**SAGAR SAROWAR**  
News editor at Maasranga Tv



**MEHERUN RUNI**  
Senior reporter at ATN Bangla

- » Killed on **February 11, 2012** at their rented flat in the capital's West Rajabazar.
- » Probe still on; Rab and other agencies sought time to complete probe **70** times.
- » Seven officers have investigated the case so far.

"Justice will be served one day but perhaps I will not be able to see it in my lifetime."

SALEHA MUNIR, MOTHER OF SAGAR SAROWAR

### TANWIR MUHAMMAD TAQI

Son of cultural activist Rafiur Rabbi of Narayanganj



- » Missing since on **March 6, 2013**. Body found in the Shitalakkhya on March 8.
- » Probe continues. Draft probe report revealed involvement of 11 people in the murder.



**SOHAGI JAHAN TONU**  
Student of Victoria College in Cumilla

- » Killed after rape. Body found inside Cumilla Cantonment on **March 20, 2016**.
- » Two autopsies could not determine the cause of her death. Probe still on.
- » Investigators took time from court **23** times.



**MAHMUDA KHANAM MITU**  
Wife of former SP Babul Akter

- » Murdered in broad day light in Chattogram city on **June 5, 2016**.
- » Probe still on. Police said investigation was almost complete a year ago.
- » Kamrul Islam Musa, an informant of Babul, led the attack on her, police said.

## Heavy fog disrupts flights

4 incoming flights diverted

UNB, Dhaka

Flight operations was disrupted at the capital's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday morning due to thick fog.

Flight operations on domestic and international routes remained suspended since 3:30am, Beni Madhab Biswas, deputy director of Dhaka airport, told UNB.

He said four international flights were diverted to Kolkata and no flight could take off from the airport till 9:25am.

Dense fog often disrupts flight operations at the country's airports during winter.

Meanwhile, the Met office yesterday said weather may remain dry across the country in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

It said moderate to thick fog may occur at places over the country from midnight to noon.

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## HC bins writ seeking city polls delay

Hindu community expresses disappointment as election date coincides with Saraswati Puja

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The High Court's rejection of a writ petition filed for shifting the date of two Dhaka city elections -- as the Saraswati Puja coincides with the voting day -- has shocked Hindu community members who are demanding deferral of the date.

The court decision received widespread social media criticism and sparked a protest at the capital's Shahbagh intersection organised by Dhaka University students.

A HC bench of Justice JBM Hassan and Justice Justice Md Khairul Alam yesterday rejected the writ petition seeking a directive to defer Dhaka North City Cooperation (DNCC) and Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) elections, scheduled to be held on January 30, for a week.

The court said the SSC examination will start across the country on February 1.

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## Kill rapists in 'crossfire'

Demand senior MPs in JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior lawmakers in parliament yesterday demanded that the law enforcement agencies kill rapists "in crossfire" to stop rape incidents, which have increased alarmingly in recent times.

Coming from both the treasury and the opposition benches, they also called on the government to amend the existing law to incorporate a provision for death penalty for rapists.

The MPs urged the Speaker to set a date to discuss how to end the scourge of rape and why such incidents have lately shot up.

Participating in an unscheduled discussion, Awami League MP Tofail Ahmed said, "It's true we need a tougher law. But if we can take instant actions through 'crossfire' on drug-related issues, then why can't we follow the same in case of rapists?"

He added, "The person who we know has committed this crime [rape] does not have any right to stay alive anymore."

Earlier, opposition Jatiya Party MP Mujibul Haque Chunnun, who first raised the issue, said that according to a Police Headquarters report, 2019 saw the highest number of rape incidents.

He demanded that Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, who was presiding over the sitting at that time, fix a date suspending all other businesses of the Jatiya Sangsad and hold discussions on how to root out rape.

Calling for amendments to the present law, the JP lawmaker said

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### BTRC'S AUDIT CLAIM

## Robi pays Tk 27.6cr

Axiata may explore other legal options

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robi yesterday deposited Tk 27.60 crore as their first payment of five instalments for the telecom regulator's claim against audit findings.

Following this payment, the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission has already withdrawn all restrictions against the mobile carrier just after they made the payment, said Md Jahurul Haque, chairman of the commission.

"According to the court order, we have already withdrawn all the restrictions against them and started to issue no objection certificates to them, which will go

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### PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT

## Land acquisition could drive up cost

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The cost of land acquisition for the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project is set to go up by Tk 780 crore, which is likely to escalate the project costs.

Of the amount, the government will spend around Tk 130 crore for acquiring around 100 more acres of private land for "some changes in route alignment" and pay Tk 650 crore to several government bodies, including the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and the Bangladesh Bridge Authority (BBA), for using their land.

Project officials, however, said they would manage the additional money for land acquisition from the project's existing funds and thus no additional funds would be required "at least for now".

The fresh escalation in costs came around one and a half years after the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) approved the revised Development Project Proforma

(DPP). At that time, the costs rose by more than Tk 4,200 crore as land acquisition expenditures escalated and project implementation got delayed.

The project costs climbed to Tk 39,246 crore from the original costs of Tk 34,989 crore.

The Ecne also extended two years for completing the project, setting the new deadline to June 2024.

Besides, the government has to spend more than Tk 100 crore from its own funds to provide project employees with facilities as Exim Bank of China, the lone lender of the project, has declined to fund this.

Project Director Golam Fakhruddin Ahmed Chowdhury, however, said, "Additional money would not be required [for the project] for at least two or three years."

There were some initial problems in the project, but those were overcome. The work has gained momentum, with 22 percent physical progress till December last year, he

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## BBPL Qualifier-2 Chattogram take on Rajshahi today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Chattogram Challengers are set to battle it out with Rajshahi Royals in the second qualifier match under lights at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today to decide which team will go through to the Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League (BBPL) final, scheduled for January 17 at the same venue.

The winners of today's fixture will face Khulna Tigers in the title decider. Khulna had earlier confirmed their place in the final with a win against Rajshahi in the first qualifier on Monday.

Chattogram will go into the match on the back of a commanding seven-wicket win over Dhaka

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Election Commission officials show a man how to vote using an Electronic Voting Machine. The returning officer's office of Dhaka South City Corporation organised the EVM show in the capital's Kakrail area yesterday ahead of the January 30 city polls.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## QUESTION LEAK, OTHER CRIMES DU to expel 67 students

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Disciplinary Board of Dhaka University yesterday recommended that the university's syndicate expel 67 students for their involvement in admission test forgery, drug abuse and possession of illegal arms.

Of the students, 63 were allegedly involved in question leak and digital forgery, while the rest possessed illegal arms and abused drug. Police last year had pressed charges against the 63 in a case filed over forgery in admission tests.

The board comprising DU Vice Chancellor Md Akhtaruzzaman, deans and provosts also made a recommendation for suspending nine students over admission forgery.

It also recommended suspension of 13 students for involvement in mugging and nine for admission forgery. They will be served show-cause notices to explain within seven days as to why they should not be expelled.

The board also made a recommendation for suspending two students for six months for attacking two journalists on the campus on September 23 last year.

The recommendations will soon be sent to the DU syndicate for approval.

Briefing journalists at his office, Proctor AKM Golam Rabbani said, "We will not spare the culprits... This is a question of the university's dignity."

He, however, did not disclose the identity of any of the 67 students.

On January 31 last year, the DU had expelled three students for their links to a digital forgery gang and 12 others who got admitted to the university through forgery in 2017.

The three are Mohiuddin Rana, student of physics

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