

## Schoolboy, 4 others killed in 24 hours in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five persons including a schoolboy were killed in separate incidents in the city in 24 hours till 6 pm yesterday.

The schoolboy, Suman Halder, was killed in cross fire between two groups of miscreants near Commerce College at Mirpur-2 at about 9 pm on Friday night.

Witnesses said Suman, an SSC examinee from Islami Adarsha High School, was bullet hit while returning from a mosque after offering tarabi prayers. He was rushed to  
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## Attacks on religious minorities

# Rule nisi on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Division Bench of the High Court yesterday issued a *rule nisi* asking the government to explain within four weeks why it should not be asked to take proper steps to protect the country's religious minorities from terrorist attacks and harassment.

The court will hear on Tuesday prayers for punishment of persons, identified in investigations, for perpetrating pre- and post-election attacks on the Hindu community and other incidents, following a petition by the state.

The bench comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice Marziul Huq

issued the rule on a writ petition filed by Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK). Dr. Kamal Hossain and Dr M Zahir moved the ASK petition.

The petition stated that since announcement of election schedule for the eighth parliament the religious minorities came under various threats, attacks and persecution and were subjected to looting of their properties. Women and children were also subjected to rape, it added.

The petition cited its own investigation and newspaper reports in this regard and sought the court's directive to the home ministry and police administration to perform their duties in view of their failure to

discharge constitutional obligations.

According to the writ petition, both the home ministry and the police administration failed to carry out their constitutional responsibilities by not taking necessary actions against atrocities against religious minorities. The court should instruct the authorities to take actions, the petition said.

It also pleaded with the court to instruct the authorities to provide appropriate compensation to the Hindu victims of terrorism and sought an investigation into the incidents of atrocity to identify the criminals.

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A convoy of several hundreds of Taliban evacuates their northern foothold of Kunduz to surrender to opposing Northern Alliance forces yesterday on the frontline of Khanabad.

## 2000 Taliban fighters surrender in Kunduz

AFP, Kabul

Taliban fighters guarding the ousted regime's last foothold in northern Afghanistan began to surrender en masse yesterday, amid reports of opposition victories further south in the militia's heartland.

Commanders from the Northern Alliance - a loose coalition of anti-Taliban factions - said that up to 2,000 Taliban fighters had surrendered and that opposition forces would take control of the town today.

The reported capitulation came as rival opposition leaders prepared for a conference on setting up a new broad-based government, and as a Pashtun tribal elder announced that a strategic southern town had also fallen.

"Tomorrow morning the handing over process will start. It will last until the afternoon," one Alliance commander, Haji Mohammad Muhaqiq, said.

Muhaqiq said some 700 Afghan Taliban and around  
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## Arrest of Shahriar Kabir Hearing on bail, remand petitions today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka will hear today the bail and remand petitions on the arrest of writer and columnist Shahriar Kabir.

Magistrate Kazi Meraj Hossain passed the order following submission of separate petitions for bail and remand of Shahriar Kabir, also the acting president of Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee. The Zia International Airport (ZIA) police submitted the prayer before the court to take Kabir on a three-day remand on Friday while the defence lawyers filed the bail petition.  
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## Govt explains detention

UNB, Dhaka

Two days after the arrest of journalist-turned-writer Shahriar Kabir, the government yesterday came up with an explanation for the detention.

Kabir was arrested on charge of carrying out seditious acts abroad.

An official release yesterday said that the government was aware that Shahriar Kabir has been engaged in "anti-state activities outside the country for quite some time".

On November 22, Customs authorities at Zia International Airport searched Kabir's luggage on his return from India, and seized  
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## Toll collection at 10 points in city

Each passenger vehicle pays Tk 300 everyday to 'transport union'

RAFIQ HASAN

Whenever a passenger vehicle reaches Azampur in Uttara, a group of young people, some wielding sticks, mobs it and demands toll from the driver.

Each vehicle has to pay to this group Tk 30 every day to operate on

the route but gets a 'money receipt' for Tk 5. One of the youths takes the money, another issues the receipt while a third jots down the licence number of the vehicle.

Earlier, the group used to charge Tk 50 per vehicle. The toll rate has been reduced after negotiations, according to drivers and conductors

of public transport operating on the route.

"We are helpless. If we refuse them the toll, they will not allow us to run the vehicle," said a bus driver. "They would block our path, and threaten to kill us if we refuse."

"The situation has become nearly unbearable. If it continues, we will have to close the service," said Sanwar, who owns two maxis (pickup vans remodelled for public transport).

The toll-collectors often claim themselves as representatives of Major (ret'd) Quamrul Islam, a

newly elected Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) lawmaker of the area, some bus drivers said.

Islam, however, denied any link with the extortionists.

"An organised gang is involved in this and using the name of the BNP on purpose," he told The Daily Star.

Toll collection takes place at least at ten points on the Dhaka-Gazipur route - Motijheel, Farmgate, Mohakhali, New Airport, Azampur, Tongi Bazar, Station Road, Board  
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CITY CELL

## Araihazar incident Two police officers closed for 'negligence of duty'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Two more police officers were closed yesterday following the Araihazar tragedy on Thursday.

SI Shahed and ASI Berek of Araihazar thana were closed for "negligence of duty" yesterday as police lodged two different cases.

The three men killed in the incident were buried yesterday afternoon.

Locals are still angry as high officials from the administration or  
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## Hosts turn back to experience

2nd ODI against Zimbabwe today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are set to make three changes in the squad for the second one-day match of the Coca-Cola Series against Zimbabwe.

The home side, desperately looking for their first win against the Southern African nation to square the three-match rubber, revert to the experience of Javed Omar, Monjurul Islam and Hasibul Hossain.

The day-night match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium gets underway at 1.30pm. Bangladesh Television and private channel Ekushey Television will cover the over-limit game live. Bangladesh Betar will also provide ball-by-ball commentary from the big bowl.

Although the final eleven would be announced before the match, it was learnt that young batsman Tushar Imran and Sanwar Hossain will be excluded. It is also very unlikely for paceman Mohammed Sharif, who fell ill before the practice session yesterday, to play in the match. In that case experienced right-arm seamer Hasibul Hossain will replace him.

Tushar scored only six on his debut in Chittagong on Friday. Sanwar has also failed in his comeback match. He made just five.

Bangladesh lost the first one-day by five wickets. But skipper Khaled  
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ACI  
Iftar

### Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
9	25	-	5-14
10	26	4-57	5-14
11	27	4-58	5-14

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