

**SEX ASSAULTS**  
**Another rally slams police nonchalance**  
 DU CORRESPONDENT

Several rights and socio-political organisations at a rally yesterday protested repeated incidents of sexual assault on females, including the gang-rape of a Garo woman in a microbus in the capital on May 21.

Demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment for those who raped the Garo woman, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum organised the rally on the Central Shaheed Minar premises.

They also demanded that the government ensure security for all indigenous females and take responsibility for the incidents.

Around 50 organisations, including Garo Student Union, Pahari Chhatra Parishad, Ain o Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, and Nari Pakkha, expressed solidarity with the forum.

Rights activist Khushi Kabir condemned irresponsibility of police that allow repeated rape incidents to take place.

She claimed police arrest rapists only after getting a green signal from higher authorities, and not before.

Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University urged the prime minister take all responsibilities of the Garo woman.

Jouno Nipiron Birodhi Nirdolio Chhatra Jote, a students' alliance against sexual harassment, announced that they would march to the Prime Minister's Office today to give a memorandum to the prime minister to dispose of the rape case quickly.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra Union also organised a rally on the DU campus demanding immediate arrest of criminals who molested females, including those responsible for the mass molestation of females on the campus during Pehela Baishakh celebrations.



**Rights and socio-political organisations and cultural personalities yesterday protested sexual assaults on women, including the gang-rape of a Garo woman on May 21, at a rally organised by Bangladesh Adivasi Forum on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the capital yesterday.**  
 PHOTO: STAR

**JATIYA PRESS CLUB**  
**New team claims to have taken charge**  
*Incumbents dismiss it*  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new managing committee of Jatiya Press Club, formed through an impromptu "election", claimed to have taken charge yesterday.

Ashraf Ali, new joint secretary, in a press release said the new management also held a meeting with new president Muhammad Shafiqur Rahman in the chair and discussed elaborately the overall aspects of the club. The meeting was adjourned till 11:00am today.

Meanwhile, incumbent general secretary Syed Abdal Ahmed yesterday protested the claim of the "so-called" new committee taking office, saying the club's constitution had a provision of handing over charge to the elected committee through an election.

However, neither did the new president nor the new general secretary sit on their designated chairs yesterday, said journalists. Only the new president and the new treasurer got keys of their office rooms yesterday from the club staff, they said.

As the key of the general secretary's room was with Abdal Ahmed, some new officer bearers tried to enter the office of general secretary using a duplicate key, but finally they did not due to the new president's intervention.

The 17-member new team comprising pro-Awami League and pro-BNP journalists was announced after an effort to form a committee on consensus failed. There has been a stalemate at the club for the last five months over

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**North Dhaka will be clean in 6 months**  
**Mayor Annisul tells campaign inauguration**  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The capital will emerge as a completely clean city in the next two and a half years, said Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Annisul Huq while inaugurating a rally in Farmgate yesterday to raise awareness on a special cleanliness campaign.

"A visible change...will be there in the next six months...But we need complete public support to achieve the goal," he said.

Talking to The Daily Star later, Annisul said innumerable illegal billboards have not only made the city ugly but also unsafe for dwellers.

"Hundreds of riskily installed gigantic billboards may collapse and endanger public life...Most of the government machineries want the city to be safe and clean, only a handful of errant ones bring disgrace and embarrassment for the government," he said.

DNCC organised the rally, as did that in the south, to raise awareness on stopping littering with the slogan "Gomi Zero", keeping with the Japanese campaign against waste.

Gomi stands for garbage in Japanese. It also means 5 (Go), that is May, and 3 (Mi), a date. So, Gomi Zero together otherwise symbolises May 30, the day of public campaign for zero waste across Japan.

DNCC officials called upon dwellers to keep the city and their homes clean by refraining from littering on the roads and drains and help practice 3Rs -- reduce, reuse and recycle -- in waste management.

On how the campaign will be successful with hardly any

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**3 branches of state should cooperate**  
**Says chief justice**  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha yesterday sought the law ministry's cooperation in giving the judiciary an institutional form.

"Judges will not present their demands like trade unions...but judges have some rightful demands to uphold the independence and dignity of the judiciary," he said while addressing an event organised by Bangladesh Mahila Judges Association to felicitate him. The event was held in the capital's Judicial Administration Training Institute.

Addressing Law Minister Anisul Huq, he said, "We do not deny the (importance of) government's two other bodies. But without cooperation of the judiciary, the administrative and executive divisions of the government cannot function."

Commenting on how the judiciary is lacking in several institutional aspects, he said, the ministry unlike others does not have any database on the manpower working in the judiciary.

"For this reason, it takes almost six months to appoint people in vacant posts in

the lower court. As a consequence, the piles of cases get bigger. Vacant posts should be filled immediately," he said.

While commending the government for its "digital Bangladesh" initiatives, the chief justice said the justice department was lagging behind the "digitalisation" that has swept most government offices.

He assured that laptops would be given to every judge in three months.

"Verdicts will be written on a computer. Moreover, if the testimonies are recorded, the judges will be spared from writing by hand. And it will mean the end of forging documents."

Some female judges demanded day care centres on the court premises for their children.

"An initiative to open a day care centre in the Supreme Court has been taken. The facility will be available not only for the judges but for all women officers and staff," he said.

He, however, asked judges present there to consider if opening day care centres was realistic.

He also hailed the presence of women in the judiciary. While only 10 percent of judges in England are women, in Bangladesh it is 19 percent, he said.

**SA initiative against terrorism sought**  
**Sammilita Samajik Andolon also demands banning of Jamaat-Shibir**  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

South Asian countries should undertake comprehensive initiatives to combat militancy and terrorism in the region, said Sammilita Samajik Andolon, a citizens' body of pro-liberation and progressive forces.

Although fundamentalism and militancy are rising trends in Bangladesh as part of a global phenomenon, the government's role to prevent the nuisance is not firm enough, it viewed.

The platform announced this through a statement presented at a discussion, "Form resistance against chauvinistic religious communalism and fundamentalism", it organised in the capital's Liberation War Museum.

Reading out the statement, Liberation War Museum Trustee Ziauddin Tariq Ali urged the government to take a bold stance against militancy.

He also demanded banning Jamaat-e-Islami and pro-Jamaat student body Islami Chhatra Shibir and trying killers of bloggers, including Avijit Roy.

Former deputy speaker in parliament Shawkat Ali said militancy and fundamentalism could be resisted more effectively if law enforcers and other government agencies played a more active role.

On Hafajat-e-Islam, he said a situation resembling a ceasefire was prevailing between the government and Hafajat. "I think fundamentalism can not be resisted through a compromise," he viewed.

Chairing the function, veteran left politician Ajoy Roy emphasised creating greater unity between pro-liberation and progressive forces to combat militancy.

Liberation War Museum Trustee Sarwar Ali stressed the need for launching a cultural movement to awaken the young generation in fighting fundamentalism and communalism.

"The prime minister has shown her courage and

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**UP accountability meetings flouting law**  
**Seminar told**  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Union parishads are not holding meetings with participation of women and underprivileged people for ensuring accountability, although the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009 stipulates to do so, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

In many cases, meetings are held without any agenda and guidelines, they added. The seminar on social accountability of union parishad was organised by the Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) and HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation in the capital's Cirdap Auditorium.

Presenting the key-note paper, Dr Tofail Ahmed, honorary fellow at BIGD, said union parishads do not have enough competent people to form budgets for themselves.

Nazrul Islam of United Nations Development Programme and Arif H Khan of Manusher Jonno Foundation presented two papers at the event.

**BNP-Jamaat hartals**

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people's support, I did not want to risk the lives of SSC examinees. I told the education minister to schedule these exams when there is no blockade and hartal," she said.

Hasina said students suffered a huge loss as the BNP-Jamaat alliance resorted to their "evil activities" right when discipline was brought in the country's academic activities.

"I had hoped that the results would be better than the previous year," she said. This year, the overall pass rate was 87.04 percent. It was 93 percent last year.

However, she said it was a great achievement considering obstructions caused by the BNP-Jamaat alliance's destructive politics.

Strongly warning the BNP-Jamaat alliance to refrain from playing with people's fate, she said no perpetrator would be spared and shown mercy.

Politicians serve the people, work for their welfare, change their fate and resolve their problems. "This is the main goal of independence," she said.

Hasina also said she had never seen politics where the aim was to kill and burn people.

"I was involved in movements all the time but have never seen this kind of movement to kill those people for whom we are engaged in politics...Why will they kill people? Why will they hurl bombs?"

She said of having no idea on the kind of patriotism that leads to killing and burning people and destroying state property.

Hasina recalled the Pakistani occupation army's tactics during the 1971 Liberation War.

"The Pakistani occupation army wanted the land only, not its people. Now we saw such an attitude from (BNP Chairperson) Khaleda Zia. It seemed that she never wanted the people of the country; that's why she gave the order to kill people," Hasina said.

Later, she held a videoconference with local leaders and government officials in Rangamati and Nilphamari districts.

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