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Editor (Star Weekend)

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"The best thing one can do when it's raining is to let it rain."

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, poet and educator

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ROAD 79

Road 79

Last issue of the *Star Weekend* dated July 15, 2016 was a highly evocative issue with the pithy theme "Road 79" set by the Editor Elita Karim. The imaginative layout with the photos showing the heart-wrenching grief of the ordinary folk at the terrible events on the 1st of July, their stoic resistance to terror and the solidarity shown by foreign friends embellishes the quality of the production. The articles relating to the theme are well-written and make us aware of the different issues arising out of the incident. The 'Open letter to Bangladeshis from an Indo-Pak American Girl' was indeed heart-warming. A good job. Anwarul Amin Gulshan, Dhaka

The Airport Warriors

The article titled "The Airport Warriors" (published on July 01, 2016) gave me immense pleasure. While I was reading it, I got astonished to see how the complicated challenges of an airport can be changed within such a short time. We know we can change our society to a great extent, if we wish. Two executive magistrates of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport are the best examples of it. The news about the airport has raised hope among us when we are accustomed to get bad news every day. I found it really innovative that the magistrates have taken the help of social media like Facebook where they have ensured that their service is accessible to everyone. We need a lot of dedicated people like these magistrates who will work selflessly and honestly for a positive change in our beloved country. Md Sayedur Rahman Zatrabari, Dhaka

Gulshan Massacre and the Collapse of Theories

I would like to thank Dr Shafiqul Alam for his timely article titled "Gulshan Massacre and the Collapse of Theories" Published in the *Star Weekend* on July 15, 2016. Personally I think, in our country whenever there is a terrorist attack, it is the madrasa students who are blamed first by a particular group of people. Sometimes this biased blame deviates the course of investigation and creates complexity in the process. As a result, main culprits escape the spot and remain beyond control. This is why the same thing has been happening again and again. However, it has become a fact that we hardly pay proper attention to our own children and we do not know what they are doing in their educational institutions and who their friends are. Therefore, our youths have become vulnerable to misguidance by such terrorist outfits. If we want to save our children, we should give them more quality time and make them familiar with Bangladesh's history and culture. Enam Hasan Madaninagar, Narayanganj



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

The opinions expressed in these letters do not necessarily represent the views of the *Star Weekend*.

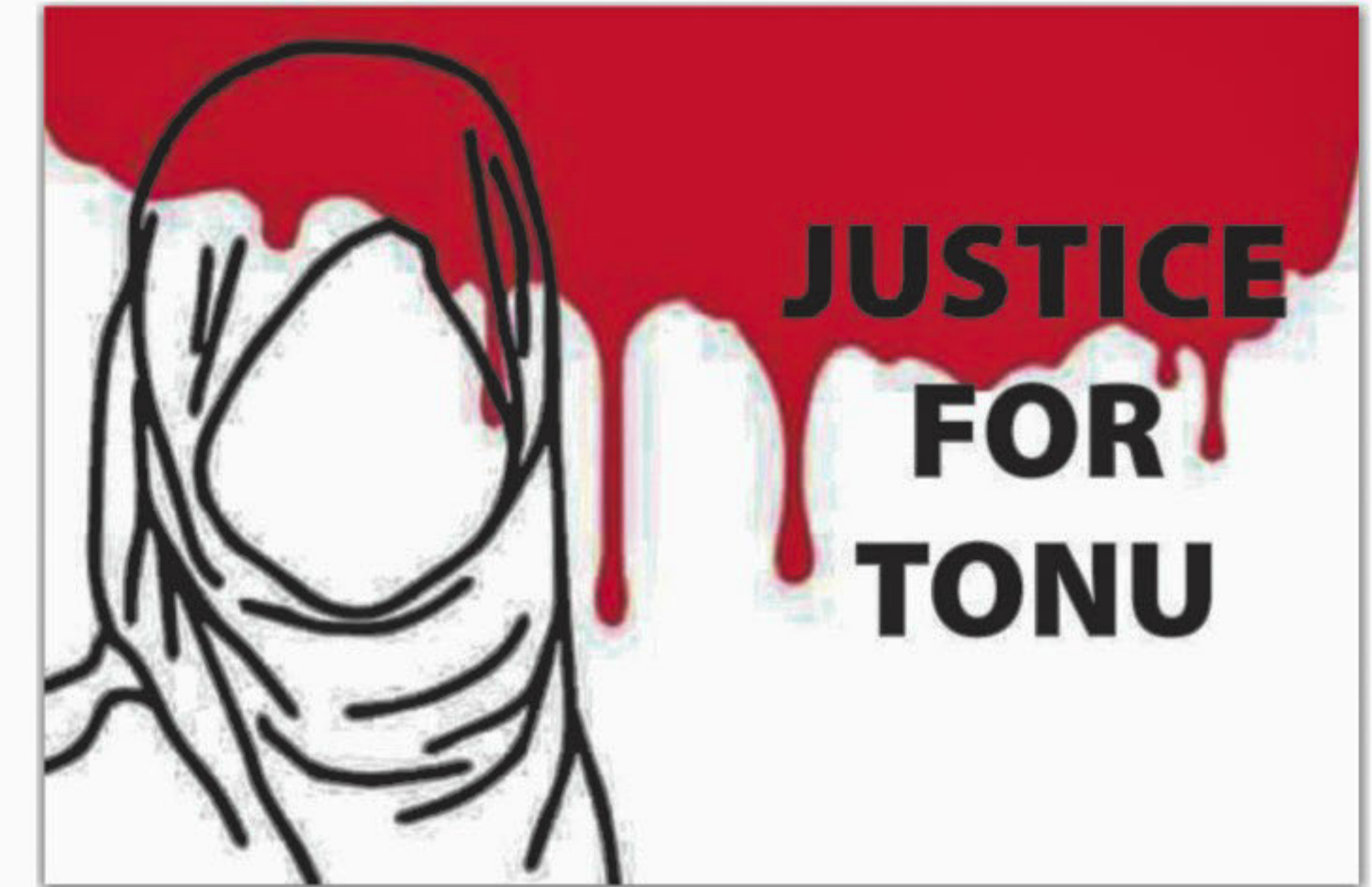
OPINION

An old man of around eighty years of age is often seen crying. Sitting at the balcony of their small apartment, the heartbroken old man is waiting, in vain, for his only granddaughter—who was raped and killed four months ago. "I believe Tonu has not died. She is still alive. Please bring her back to me. If they bring her back I promise you, we will leave the cantonment area," he cries. Even his family members, such as Tonu's mother and father, who are also equally broken at their core, could not soothe this old man. Unfortunately all their tears have gone in vain.

On March 20, the mutilated, lifeless body of Sohagi Jahan Tonu, a 19 year old student of Comilla Victoria College was found in Moinamoti cantonment area. The autopsy was performed on the day after Tonu was murdered. However, it took

autopsy also said, "The body was highly decomposed so the cause of death could be determined by circumstantial evidences and further investigation (The Daily Star, June 12, 2016)." However, it was published in the autopsy report that spermatozoa of three different men were found on her body, but, nowhere in the report it was said that Tonu was raped and murdered.

So it has become evident that after two phases of autopsy the doctors could not identify how Tonu was murdered. And, the second autopsy report was fashioned in a way that it would look like Tonu was not raped, rather she was having sexual intercourse with three men! Is this not a very blatant way of hiding evidence and a heinous attempt to divert the course of investigation? The entire nation has been shocked to see such indifference of the responsible authorities.



LET'S NOT FORGET HER CRY

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

fifteen days to publish the autopsy report which only said that the cause of Tonu's death could not be identified. And, the report also said that there was no evidence of rape on Tonu's body.

Meanwhile, the spot where Tonu's body was found was mysteriously cleared. The Chairman of National Human Rights Commission, Professor Dr Mizanur Rahman said that he saw grass and bushes in the first photo of the spot; however, when he visited the area he noticed that all the grasses and bushes were completely removed (The Daily Prothom Alo, March 31, 2016).

Then, seven days after the first autopsy, Tonu's body was exhumed and the second autopsy was performed. At that time on March 30, police superintendent of Comilla district told Prothom Alo that there was no doubt that Tonu was murdered and from the condition of the dead body it looked like she was raped (Prothom Alo, April 4, 2016). After a three-month long period of procrastination, the report of the second autopsy was published only to say that doctors found evidence of "sexual intercourse" on Tonu's body. Dr Kamoda Prashad Saha who headed the second



PHOTO: STAR FILE

Now, Tonu's parents are not only aggrieved, but also they are frightened. Tonu's mother Anwara Begum said, "Tonu's father was prohibited from speaking to the media. The army has seized all the possessions of Tonu from our home. We don't even have any photograph of her in our home through which we could remember her."

"Several attempts to kill Tonu's father

were made. Tonu's elder brother cannot come home in fear of attack and harassment. Can't we get justice only because we are poor?" cries Tonu's helpless mother. However, public relation office of Bangladesh army denied such a claim, terming it baseless (Daily Prothom Alo, June 11, 2016).

Tonu's murder had infuriated the entire nation. Outraged people from all walks of

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life organised protests all over the country. As the days go by, the protest of Bangladeshis demanding justice for Tonu has lost its momentum and the helpless cry of Tonu's family members do not move people anymore. However, if we cannot ensure justice for Tonu and her family members, despite such a strong nationwide protest, it will be a historic shame for Bangladesh and its people. ■



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