

## Man killed

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 close range and eight bullets hit his body.

Assistant Commissioner of Gulshan zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Rafiqul Islam said that when they tried to retrieve CCTV footage of the incident, they found the camera was disconnected at that time. Locals said they saw the attackers shoot at the camera before entering the premises although there was no sign of this. A vegetable seller of a grocery shop placed on the ground floor of the mosque said he witnessed one man run out of the building after the incident.

AC Rafiqul further said there was a murder case against Nasir with Badda Police Station.

Nasir was in jail for a year in connection to the murder of BM Khaleque in 2004, informed Nasir's family members. "He had some enemies. We have given names of some suspects to the police," said Rezaul, Nasir's brother-in-law.

## ACC

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 two years' activities of ACC. He, however, said, "We think the commission has a dedicated offline when it comes to the cases of high-profile people or corruption in the financial sector." Asked about the TIB's observations, Iqbal said ACC does not show discrimination in conducting investigations into corruption against anyone. "Be them powerful or powerless, we donot look at the faces of people in case of corruption allegations," he observed.

"I can say we have not done any inquiry or investigation against anyone on the basis of political, social or economic identity in last two years," Iqbal added. Asked why ACC is taking time in bringing former Basic Bank chairman Abdul Hye Bacchu to book, he once again said money was laundered in different layers and the commission is trying to find out those layers.

"Certainly it [finding out layers] will take more time," he noted.

## Opening

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 also organising secretary of Patuakhali AL, said witnesses. Visibly angry, supporters of Feroz tried to stop them, leading to a violent scuffle between the two groups. The AL men also vandalised some chairs and threw a few at each other.

At least 10 local AL men, including Reaz, Kabir, Nasir, Kamal, Rahat and Anisur, were injured in the incident. However, it could not be immediately confirmed which faction they belonged to.

On-duty policemen brought the situation under control after baton-charging the crowd, said witnesses.

Motaleb Hawlader, secretary of Bauphal AL and also a close aide to Feroz, said some people created an unpleasant situation over the peaceful programme. He termed those people "enemy of the party".

Motaleb also alleged that Jewel's supporters attacked the programme.

Contacted, Jewel denied the allegation. "The attackers are not from our faction".

Mahfuzur Rahman, additional superintendent of police in the district, said the incident happened over a "misunderstanding" between the supporters of Feroz and Jewel, who is seeking AL nomination to vie in the upcoming general elections.

"But we brought the situation under control immediately," he said.

After the scuffle, the home minister joined a views exchange meeting as the chief guest with locals on the premises of the police station.

Among others, Feroz, Border Guard Bangladesh Director General Abul Hossain and Deputy Director General of Police (Barisal range) Shafiqul Islam spoke at the meeting.

Earlier, the minister reached Bauphal upazila town from the capital city by a helicopter.

The Public Works Department (PWD) constructed the 4-storey building at a cost of Tk 6.43 crore.

## SC asks HC

FROM PAGE 1  
 Following three writ petitions, the HC issued three rules on January 17 and 18, asking the government and the EC to explain why the schedule for holding the by-polls to the DNCC mayoral post and elections in the new wards in DNCC and Dhaka South City Corporation should not be declared illegal.

It also stated the election schedule for six months.

The by-polls to the DNCC mayoral post and the elections to 36 councillor posts in the 36 new wards -- 18 in DNCC and 18 in DSCC -- were scheduled to be held today.

The DNCC mayoral post fell vacant with the death of Annisul Huq on November 30 last year.

## 7 held by Rab

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 radical group Ansarullah Bangla Team to carry out the killing mission.

Towhidur and six others -- Shafiuil Rahman Farabi, Sadekur Rahman Mithu, Alimul Mallik, Abul Bashar, Julhaj Biswas and Jafran Al Hasan -- were arrested at different times in 2015.

On February 26 that year, the five operatives -- Mithu, Ramjan alias Siam, Nayeem, Julhash and Jafran -- gathered on the playground of Mohsin Hall [of Dhaka University] three hours before the murder of Avijit, said Mufti.

They attacked and killed Avijit as instructed, the Rab official told the media.

Abul Bashar, brother of Ansarullah Bangla Team's spiritual leader Jashim Uddin Rahmani, died in jail custody while undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in December 2016.

Towhidur, Mithu, Julhaj and Jafran are on bail.

Yesterday, Monirul Islam, chief of CTTC unit, said they have found involvement of Major (sacked) Syed Ziaul Haque, militant wing chief of Ansar Al Islam, and eight operatives of the militant body in the killing.

Ansar Al Islam was previously known as Ansarullah Bangla Team.

The CTTC officials arrested three of the nine in November last year while five others including Maj (sacked) Zia are still on the run. The other was killed in a "shootout" in 2016, Monirul said.

Zia masterminded the attack and he himself was present on the scene at the time of killing, said the official.

The three arrested by the CTTC unit are Abu Siddique Soheli alias Sakib alias Sajid, student of Government Titumir College; Mozammel Hossain alias Saimon, student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology; and Arafat Rahman alias Siam alias Sazzad.

CTTC officials, who took over the investigation from the Detective Branch three months ago, said these suspects were identified from CCTV footage of the book fair.

Sharif alias Saleh alias Arif alias Hadi, another suspect in the Avijit murder, was killed reportedly in a "gunfight" with law enforcers in the city's Khilgaon on June 19, 2016.

"I am not bothered about what Rab or counterterrorism unit says. I just want killers of Avijit to be identified

through proper investigation and brought to book," Avijit's father Prof Ajoy Roy told The Daily Star yesterday.

Sharing the news of Mozammel's arrest by CTTC officials, Avijit's wife Bonya, in her Facebook post on November 19 last year, wrote, "Great! We have another 'REAL' killer AGAIN. Let's do the DNA analysis before you kill him in 'Crossfire' while he is in police custody and confirm it."

Contacted, human rights activist Nur Khan Liton said the unethical competition between the law enforcement agencies for claiming success often calls into question the entire investigation.

Sometimes, the way investigating agency presents an incident just to get praise doesn't go with subsequent findings, he added.

Nur Khan further said contradictory statements give a wrong message to the nation and create dissatisfaction among the victims' families.

**DELAY IN CHARGE SHEET SUBMISSION**  
 Monirul yesterday also said they will submit the charge sheet once they can arrest at least two out of the five fugitives.

"If it takes too much time to arrest all the five, we may not wait as we already have enough evidence, witness accounts and confessional statement of the three arrestees to go to the court," he said.

But for a successful probe, all the five are needed to be arrested, he added.

About the delay, Avijit's father said, "It's the negligence of investigators and lack of skill of police for which the investigation into a sensational murder like that of Avijit is not complete yet."

CTTC officials, however, claimed to have made major progress in investigation.

"We have identities of two of the five but need to verify that of three others to complete the investigation," said an official of the unit.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court has rescheduled the submission date for the Avijit murder case investigation report for March 15 after the investigation officer failed to submit the report on February 13.

With this, the investigators on 35 occasions got time extension for submitting the progress report of the probe, court sources said.

## Xi set for long rule

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 covers the vice president position.

Xi, 64, is currently required by China's constitution to step down as president after two five-year terms. Nearing the end of his first term, he will be formally elected to a second at the annual meeting of China's largely rubber-stamp parliament opening on March 5.

There is no limit on his tenure as the party and military chief, though a maximum 10-year term is the norm. He began his second term as head of the party and military in October at the end of a party congress held once every five years.

Zhang Lifan, a historian and political commentator, said the news was not unexpected, and it was hard to predict exactly how long Xi could stay on in power.

"In theory he could serve longer than Mugabe but in reality, no one is sure exactly what will happen," Zhang said, referring to Zimbabwe's former president whose four decades in office ended in November, after the army and his former political allies moved to force him out.

Though positive remarks filled the comments section under the pages of main state media outlets like the People's Daily, the move was not welcomed by everyone on China's Twitter-like Weibo service.

"If two terms are not enough, then they can write in a third term, but there needs to be a limit. Getting rid of it is not good!," wrote one Weibo user.

**EMPEROR XI**

Constitutional reform needs to be approved by parliament, which is stacked with members chosen for their loyalty to the party - meaning the reform will not be blocked.

There has been persistent speculation that Xi wants to stay on in office past the customary two five-year terms.

The October party congress ended without appointing a clear eventual successor for Xi.

However, the role of party chief is more senior than that of president. At some point, Xi could be given a party position that also enables him to stay on as long as he likes.

Xi is currently the party's general secretary, but not chairman. China's first three leaders after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 all carried the title party chairman - Mao Zedong, Hua Guofeng and then Hu Yaobang. It has not been used since.

"Whether Xi ends up being Party Chairman or just remains Party Secretary doesn't really matter. What matters is whether he holds onto power," said Zhang Ming, a professor

of political science at Renmin University of China in Beijing.

"Titles don't matter as much in China as they do in the West. Here what matters is whether you are the emperor," he added. "In China, ordinary people already consider Xi Jinping to be the emperor."

**EYES ON VICE PRESIDENT**

Mao, the founder of Communist China and still held in god-like awe by many Chinese, died while still Communist Party chairman in 1976, having never retired.

State media has also increasingly been using the term "lingxiu" to refer to Xi, which means "leader". Distinct from the standard usage of "lingdao" for leader, "lingxiu" evokes grander, almost spiritual, connotations.

Mao, for example, was referred to as "lingxiu", but Xi's two immediate predecessors, Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin, were not.

In a commentary on its WeChat account, state television said: "The people love the people's 'lingxiu'!", above a picture of Xi being greeted by an adoring crowd in Sichuan province earlier this month.

The move to lift the presidential term limits is not unexpected. The party has been laying the groundwork for Xi not to have to go.

One of Xi's closest political allies, former top graft buster Wang Qishan, stepped down from the party's Standing Committee - the seven-man body that runs China - in October.

Aged 69, Wang had reached the age at which top officials tend to retire. But he has been chosen as a parliament delegate this year and is likely to become vice president, sources with ties to the leadership and diplomats say.

The move is significant because if Wang does not retire, that would set a precedent for Xi to stay on in power too after he reaches what is normally considered retirement age.

The Central Committee also proposed other changes to the country's constitution, including inserting "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" into the constitution, referring to Xi's rather wordy guiding political thought that is already in the party constitution.

The constitution will further ensure that party control over the country is not in any doubt, too, strengthening existing clauses about the leading role of the Communist Party in China. "The leadership of the Communist Party of China is the defining feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics," Xinhua cited one of the proposed new clauses as saying.

## Merkel to appoint key party critic to cabinet: reports

AFP, Berlin

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has decided to give a cabinet role to an outspoken critic within her conservative party, as she looks to quell surging discontent in the right wing of the group, local media reported.

Merkel is tipped to name 37-year-old Jens Spahn as health minister in her new cabinet yesterday, according to reports in daily newspapers Bild and Suddeutsche Zeitung, as well as German news agency DPA.

The German leader has been stung by criticism from within the ranks of her Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party after a tricky September election left her struggling to secure a continued "grand coalition" that would enable her to launch a fourth term governing Europe's biggest economy.

Spahn has been at the forefront of the backlash, slamming Merkel's centrist policies, particularly on immigration, and advocating a sharp conservative shift, as the country's major parties face pressure from the far-right AfD party which has railed against a mass influx of refugees that peaked in 2015.

The potential inclusion of Spahn in her cabinet line-up could help to defuse the internal rebellion ahead of a CDU congress set for today.

Merkel's conservatives have had to relinquish key cabinet positions -- including Finance and Foreign Affairs -- to convince the Social Democrats (SPD) to again govern in coalition.

## Corporations key to rescuing nature Says WWF chief

AFP, Paris

A generation ago, the idea of a veteran international banker leading a global organisation charged with saving the planet's dwindling and besieged wildlife would have seemed far-fetched.

For some, it still does. Even Pavan Sukhdev -- recently appointed president of World Wildlife Fund International after a quarter century at ANZ Banking and Deutsche Bank, followed by a decade working with the UN -- didn't see it coming.

"Today, I realise this is a natural place for me to be," he told AFP during an interview at the headquarters of WWF France, on the outskirts of Paris.

"Ten years ago, I didn't". Sukhdev, 57, no longer manages money markets or conjures up derivatives, but he has not turn his back on the business world. Indeed, the Indian-born economist is convinced that it holds the key to saving the environment -- and our place in it.

"Corporations are the single most important institution of our times," he said, noting they account for two-thirds of global economy, and an equal share of jobs.

"Their leaders -- CEOs, CFOs, CMOs, the 'C-suite' generally -- are setting the direction in which we are driving."

Up to now, Sukhdev acknowledges, that direction has mostly taken us down the road to environmental ruin.

Our species is emptying the sea of fish, disgorging 40 billion tonnes of planet-warming CO2 into the atmosphere each year, and relentlessly polluting soil, sea and air.

When it comes to wildlife, humanity's appetites and expanding footprint have triggered the first mass extinction event since a giant meteorite wiped out terrestrial dinosaurs more than 65 million years ago.

## Congress

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 China, aiming to keep the area unsettled.

AIUDF President Badruddin Ajmal had alleged that Rawat had overstepped his "constitutional jurisdiction" while making the remarks.

## College girl

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 Mirpur-12 area.

She left her home around 11:00am on Saturday after receiving a phone call and had been traceless since, Nurul said.

The family filed a missing person case with the local police station yesterday morning.

Her relatives identified the body at Dhaka Medical College morgue yesterday afternoon, morgue sources said, adding that she might have been strangled to death and that they had found evidence of rape.

## 22 districts

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 Netrakona, Satkhira, Shariatpur, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Rangamati, Cox's Bazar, Jhenidah, Bhola, Kurigram, Narsingdi and Habiganj are the other districts.

## N Korea willing

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cooperation have been realized and the Olympics took place successfully by the inter-Korean collaboration," the North's KCNA state news agency said, citing North Korea's ministry of foreign affairs.

"On the eve of closing of the Olympics, United States is running amok to bring another dark cloud of confrontation and war over the Korean peninsula by announcing enormous sanctions against the DPRK," it said, using the initials of the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Earlier, about 100 conservative South Korean lawmakers and activists staged a sit-in near the border with North Korea, facing off against about 2,500 South Korean police to protest against the arrival of a northern delegation led by Kim Yong Chol, an official accused of being behind a deadly 2010 attack on a South Korean warship.

The delegation took a different route, prompting the opposition Korea Liberty Party to accuse President Moon Jae-in's administration of "abuse of power and an act of treason" by re-routing the motorcade to shield it from the protest.

Moon met Kim in Pyeongchang, where the Olympics are being held, before the closing ceremony, the South Korean government said in a statement.

The North's decision to send former military intelligence chief Kim Yong Chol as delegation leader to the closing ceremony has enraged families of 46 sailors killed in the torpedo attack on their ship and threatens the mood of rapprochement that Seoul wants to create at what it calls the "Peace

Games".

North Korea has denied its involvement in the sinking.

**TRUMP WARNING**

For the opening ceremony, the North sent Kim Yo Jong, the younger sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

She was the centre of a frenzy of attention, especially when she appeared at the opening ceremony and stood only a few feet from US Vice President Mike Pence. They did not speak together.

Kim Yo Jong and the North's nominal head of state were the most senior North Korean officials to visit the South in more than a decade. The North Korean leader later said he wanted to boost a "warm climate of reconciliation and dialogue".

US President Donald Trump, in announcing the new sanctions on Friday, warned of a "phase two" that could be "very, very unfortunate for the world" if the sanctions did not work.

North Korea denounced the sanctions in a statement carried on its state media and said a blockade by the United States would be considered an act of war.

China also reacted angrily to the new US measures, saying on Saturday the unilateral targeting of Chinese firms and people risked harming cooperation on North Korea.

Trump's daughter, Ivanka Trump, a senior White House adviser, met Moon on Friday as part of a weekend trip to lead the US delegation to the closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics, but no official meeting between the American and North Korean delegations was planned.

Moon won election last year promising to try to improve relations with the North.

## Inaction kills

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would look into documents and see what could be done to save the canal.

The portion of Dumni canal being filled is not in the cadastral survey (CS) and revised survey (RS) records, he said, "But we can act to save the canal under the wetland conservation law."

The Dhaka district administration in September 2016 identified Dumni as a 5km stagnant canal filled up by Bashundhara housing authority in Kathaldia and recorded it in the state acquisition (SA) and RS Khatian.

The canal originates from the Balu River in the north of Dumni mouja and winds its way through Dumni, Kathaldia and Gajaria villages to converge with the same river in the south, according to district administration records.

In December 2017, the HC gave the government time until July this year to prepare an action plan with a list of land grabbers and demarcate the area to recover 50 canals in Dhaka city.

Environment department's Masud Iqbal in early January told this correspondent that his officials would talk to the local residents and real estate developers and then take a decision.

But on February 14, he said that it did not happen due to a change of the department's director general. Asked whether he as a director could hold the meeting, Masud said he could but would not do it until a new director

## A superstar like

FROM PAGE 16  
 was a devotional film Thunaivan, but it was also the beginning of the fascination with the celluloid world. After working in different regional languages, she debuted in Hindi with Julie (1975).

She was meant for bigger things, things that would go on to impress and influence millions. 13 wasn't a ripe age to start working as a female lead, but she did. The film was Tamil project Moondru Mudichu (1976). In the next two years, she did films like 16 Vayathinile and Sigappu Rojakkal.

Solva Saavan (1978) was her launching pad in Hindi, but it was a natural transition for her. Sridevi had already become a big, probably the biggest female star in the Tamil film industry. She was working with Kamal Haasan and Rajinikanth in all the films that mattered, at the box office and otherwise.

However, she was yet to gain an unprecedented popularity that no Hindi film heroine had seen before. The year was 1983 when Himmatwala hit the screens. Sridevi became an overnight sensation. The film went on to become the biggest hit of the year. Something similar happened with Tohfa that released next year.

Sridevi was keeping it very interesting. She was doing author-backed roles and she was also doing films that earned the producers millions.

It couldn't be better for an actor to have both, Sadma and Himmatwala, released in the same year. A nice mix of critical and commercial success.

By the time Nagina, Karma and Jaanbaaz came out, Sridevi was unquestionably the number 1 actor in India. There wasn't anyone, not even a male star, who could come close to her reach and popularity in Bollywood. Amitabh Bachchan was already on a

general took over.

Likewise, Chairman of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk), Abdur Rahman, had earlier said he would assign a field enquiry to know how and why the canal is being filled up.

But in mid January he said he was not aware if any action had been taken.

The DAP, of which Rajuk is the custodian, earmarks Dumni as a 120-foot wide canal in light of a 2006 study by British Halcrow Group on flood management in the city's eastern fringes.

Ironically, it is Rajuk that has narrowed the canal to 10 feet with a box culvert underneath the 300-foot wide Purbachal highway.

The HC on February 13 also issued a rule asking respondents to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to restore the canal and bring it back to its original state.

Secretaries to the ministries of environment and forests, and land, Dhaka North City Corporation mayor, Rajuk as well as its chairman, and officer-in-charge of Khilkhet Police Station are the respondents.

Locals said half a dozen land claimants -- three real estate developers, two individuals and a government organisation -- have so far either blocked and filled up parts of the canal or narrowed it down to one-twelfth of its original width since 2009.

## sabbatical, Anil Kapoor and Mithu

Chakraborty were trying to fill the void at the top and no new potential superstars were in sight.

Sridevi had filled in the place vacated by Hema Malini. In fact, she was the first female superstar of the Hindi films in the true sense. Her position could be matched only by Madhuri Dixit years later.

In 1987, when Mr India released, Sridevi was the biggest draw and she proved her worth when Hawa Hawaai took India by storm. Every loud-speaker, every house party and every wedding witnessed people dancing to her tunes.

Producers were literally lining up outside her house in Mumbai. Between 1983 and 1987, she was seen in 33 films in Hindi alone. Almost a film every month. Imagine the pace at which she was working.

Her stardom spilled into the '90s with all sizeable stars working opposite her.

In 1997, after the success of Judaai, Sridevi said goodbye to Bollywood. She had married to producer Boney Kapoor and wanted to focus on her family.

It was an interval.

Like films, she returned for the second half in 2012. Her film English Vinglish showed how she hadn't aged in all these years. She won hearts with her nuanced performance of a person living with a deep complex. Some believed it was her best performance till date.

Last time, she was seen in Mom, a film her husband produced. Again, she was liked by all.

Sridevi was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian award, for her services to the film industry.