

"They [the government] have not disclosed the agenda of the [tea] party. We will not go there to give the farcical election legitimacy."
 CPB PRESIDENT MUJAHIDUL ISLAM SELIM

"BNP's decision to not respond to the prime minister's invitation has manifested the party's old negative attitude."
 AWAMI LEAGUE GENERAL SECRETARY OBAIDUL QUADER

"I think when President Xi and I meet, every point will be agreed to."
 TRUMP ON ENDING TRADE FEUD WITH CHINA (PAGE 8)

Murder, not suicide

PBI findings contradict autopsy reports; expose weakness of forensic tests

BISHAKHA DEVNATH

Depending entirely on the autopsy report, detectives had been claiming that Nilufa Akhter died by suicide in February 2016. The focus of Nilufa's case had shifted to suicide from murder after police got the forensic results.

However, a fresh probe of Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) found evidence pointing to murder.

This is not an isolated incident. PBI found at least 13 other cases, filed between 2012 and 2017, which were thought to be suicides but turned out to be murder cases after reinvestigation.

The 25-year-old mother of three lived with her in-laws in Sreenagar, Munshiganj while her husband worked in Malaysia. Ever since her husband began to work abroad, her brother-in-law Shafique Khan allegedly tried to get intimate with her. To escape his advances, Nilufa went to her parents' home, about a week before her murder.

Her mother-in-law Sufia Khatun brought her back on February 8, assuring her that she would stay safe with her children there.

Three days later, Shafique "sneaked" into Nilufa's bedroom just after midnight. As Nilufa tried to shove Shafique away, her nine-year-old daughter Muskan woke up. Shafique threatened to kill the girl if she made any noise.

Nilufa screamed; Shafique grabbed a pillow and held it down on her face. Moments later, she lay motionless and he left the room.

Amid the scuffle and shouts, Sufia and Muskan's twin brother Zihan came into the room and learned about what happened on Muskan. Later, Zihan gave a detailed witness account of the killing to the PBI.

Before the PBI took over the case, the Criminal Investigation Department filed a charge sheet against Shafique, 28, and his mother in January, 2017.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina flicks through a book at a stall on the Bangla Academy premises after inaugurating the month-long Amar Ekushey Book Fair yesterday. Bangla Academy President Prof Anisuzzaman, among other dignitaries, accompanied her as she visited different stalls at the fair.

PHOTO: BSS

Know your history well

PM urges young generation as she opens Ekushey book fair

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the new generation to know the real history of the nation that had earned the independence and right to speak in their mother tongue through huge sacrifices and struggles.

"The history of Bangladesh is the history of sacrifice, and all of our achievements have been gained through that sacrifice."

The PM was addressing a programme marking the inauguration of the month-long Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela-2019 on the Bangla Academy premises and at adjoining Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital.

The theme of this year's book fair is "Bijoy: 1952 to 1971 Ebong Noboporjaj".

Mentioning that the book fair is not a place for

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Dhaka's rope running out

SPORTS REPORTER

Shakib al Hasan's Dhaka Dynamites seem to have lost the spark with which they began the sixth edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) as they lost their fifth consecutive match at the business end of the tournament yesterday.

In the first match of the third Dhaka leg, the home side lost to Comilla Victorians by a solitary run at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. In the day's second match, Sylhet Sixers -- already eliminated from the playoff race --

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Legal battle begins

BB sues Rizal Bank in US court to recover \$66m from the Philippines bank; Rizal terms lawsuit 'political stunt'

TIMELINE	FEBRUARY 4, 2016	FEBRUARY 11, 2016	FEBRUARY 17, 2016
	\$101 million stolen from Bangladesh Bank reserve.	Anti-Money Laundering Council learns \$81 million from BB reserve transferred to other places from Philippines.	Sri Lanka's Pan Asia Banking returns \$20 million to BB's New York Fed account. SEE PAGE 2

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

With the help of Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Bangladesh yesterday launched a legal battle to recover the full amount stolen from its central bank's reserve.

The move came nearly three years after hackers stole \$81 million from a Bangladesh bank account with the NY Fed.

The BB filed a case with the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York around 7:00am (NY time 8:00pm) against Philippines' Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) and others, including several top executives,

for their involvement in a "massive and multi-year conspiracy" to steal its money.

The case was lodged online with the court at Manhattan in New York City and the court accepted the lawsuit immediately, Abu Hena Mohd Razee Hassan, head of BB's Bangladesh Finance Intelligence Unit (BIFU), told The Daily Star.

"The Federal Reserve Bank of New York will extend its full cooperation in the legal process and in recovering the money," he said.

Meanwhile, in a joint statement, BB and NY Fed said they were committed to work together to recover the stolen funds of BB

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Oikyafront won't go for tea with PM

Parties in ruling alliance to attend

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Oikyafront leaders will not attend the prime minister's tea party today.

In a letter sent to the Gono Bhaban, the BNP-led alliance yesterday said its leaders will not attend the party.

A three-member delegation of the alliance handed the letter to an employee of the Gono Bhaban, Jahangir Alam Mintu, media coordinator of the alliance, told The Daily Star.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is hosting the event to exchange greetings with leaders of 75 political parties and alliances.

The PM had held dialogue with leaders of these parties before the election.

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Who is this Hercules?

Third rape suspect found dead with note hanging around neck

STAR REPORT

Police yesterday "found" the body of another rape suspect with a note hanging around his neck in Jhalakathi's Rajapur upazila, in third such incident.

This time, the note reads, "I am Rakib. I am the rapist of a madrasa girl... of Bhandaria. This is the consequence of a rapist. Be aware rapists... Hercules."

The dead, Rakib Hossain, 20, stood accused in a case filed with Bhandaria Police Station in connection with the gang rape of a madrasa student.

Md Jahidul Islam, officer-in-charge of Rajapur Police Station, said the body was found with bullet injuries on the head.

"Rakib might have been shot in the early hours," he added.

Rakib was a law student at a private university in the capital and a resident of Bhandaria.

Asked, OC Jahidul said he was clueless about "Hercules", adding they were investigating the murder.

The body was sent to Jhalakathi Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy, the OC added.

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Ex-BCL leader 'picked up' from home

Family points finger at law enforcers; police deny role

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Locals yesterday formed a human chain on Natore-Rajshahi highway demanding release of a former Chhatra League leader who was allegedly picked up by law enforcers in the early hours of the same day.

Around 1:00am, some plainclothes men introducing themselves as law enforcers picked up Jamil Hossain Milon, 30, son of Emdadul Haque Miazi, of the district's Sadar upazila, alleged his family members at a press conference in Natore Press Club.

Natore Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Kazi Jalal Uddin, however, said they did not pick anyone

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At first sight, they look like vehicles from post-apocalyptic movies. With no doors, no working headlights, no rearview mirrors, no registration plates and no indicators to say the least, these rundown improvised human hauliers transport people between Jurain-Postogola and Dhaka match factory area in Narayanganj. About 70 such vehicles ply the route, according to sources at the Postogola stand where the photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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