



Gourab 71 formed a human chain in front of National Museum yesterday, demanding capital punishment for those responsible for the death of Nusrat Jahan Rafi.

PHOTO: STAR

# JUSTICE FOR NUSRAT Ensure this brutality is never repeated: protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Protests demanding justice for Nusrat Jahan Rafi -- a madrasa student of Feni who was brutally burnt, eventually leading to her death -- continued in different parts of the country yesterday.

People from different walks of life, including academicians, cultural activists and students, formed separate human chains and staged protest rallies demanding exemplary punishment for the murderers and their accomplices.

On Wednesday, 18-year-old Nusrat lost her battle for life, five days after she had been set on fire at an Alim [equivalent to HSC] exam hall in Feni -- an incident that sparked protests across the country.

A group of four unidentified persons allegedly carried out the heinous crime for refusing to withdraw a case against the principal of Sonagazi Islamia Senior Fazil Madrasa, Maulana Siraj Ud Doula, over sexual assault on

her last month.

In Dhaka, civil society representatives at a human chain -- organised by Gourab 71, a civic platform -- in front of the National Museum, demanded proper trial of the Feni madrasa principal and his associates.

They also demanded that the government bring the officials and law enforcers, who neglected their duties regarding the killing, under trial immediately.

Speaking at the human chain, Dhaka University Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Muhammad Samad said not just the madrasa principal, all those who were involved in the murder should be given exemplary punishment so that no one dares to repeat such brutality.

Sammilita Sangskritik Jote President Golam Kuddus said the authorities have to carry out legal proceedings of such murder cases through forming a separate tribunal, which should remain

responsible to deliver verdict within a short deadline.

"If we cannot protect women of our country, whatever development we aim for will stumble in the end," said Kuddus.

The participants of the human chain later brought out a procession that paraded towards the Central Shaheed Minar.

Meanwhile, in the afternoon, a group of students from different colleges and universities in the capital formed a human chain at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture -- demanding justice for Nusrat.

"Many of the girls in Feni could not pursue higher education as they felt insecure. We demand ensuring proper security for these girls," said Rafi Ahmed, a law student of Dhaka University.

The protesters later brought out a procession from the spot, which moved through Shahbagh intersection.

# Red carpet rolled out for Bhutanese PM

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh rolled out the red carpet for Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering as he arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning on a four-day official visit.

The Bhutanese PM is making the visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, aiming to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in trade, inland waterways, health and agriculture sectors.

Hasina welcomed her Bhutanese counterpart at the VVIP terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport when the special flight of Royal Bhutan Airlines landed at 8:15am.

A child presented him a bouquet.

A joint contingent of army, navy and air force gave Tshering a guard of honour and state salute. National anthems of the two countries were played on the occasion.

Afterwards, the Bhutanese PM was taken to the InterContinental Dhaka where he and his entourage will stay during the visit.

Later in the day, he paid tributes to the Liberation War martyrs at the National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar.

He also paid tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreaths at his portrait at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in Dhanmondi.

On the first day, Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen called on the Bhutanese PM at the Inter Continental.

In the afternoon, Tshering held a meeting with leaders of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries

(FBCCI).

Today, Tshering will attend a bilateral meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart at the Prime Minister's Office.

After the meeting, a number of bilateral instruments are expected to be signed by the two sides. They are -- cooperation on inland waterways for cargo transportation, cooperation in health and agriculture sectors and cooperation between public administration training centres of the two countries for exchange of faculty members as well as training and capacity building.

Tshering will meet President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban in the evening, and attend a banquet to be hosted by the PM at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka.

Tomorrow, which is the first day of Bangla calendar, he will attend a New Year celebration, to be organised by Surer Dhara at Bangabandhu International Conference Center.

Later, Tshering, an alumnus of Mymensingh Medical College, will fly to the district to visit his alma mater. He will address students there.

He will return to Dhaka the same day and meet Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi and Health and Family Welfare Minister Zahid Maleque separately in the afternoon.

Tshering is also scheduled to visit Square Pharmaceuticals factory in Gazipur, Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery Complex and Bhutanese embassy in Dhaka.

He is scheduled to have breakfast with Bhutanese students and citizens before leaving on Monday morning.



## PHOTO OF THE DAY

RASHED SHUMON



What looks like a power grid is actually someone's home in Old Dhaka's Islambagh area. Multiple transformers and electrical wires have been set up haphazardly in the area within close proximity to residences. This photo of a girl about to climb down a ladder in this hazardous setting was taken recently.

# WOMEN-ONLY BUS Not a solution to harassment but a means of relief

JULEKHA PARVIN

It was the day the first nor'wester of the season hit the city. Jhuma was in Farmgate, desperately looking for any kind of transport to return home after work. Waiting for over half an hour, a bus pulled up in front of her. She boarded the bus, amazed to find that it was a women-only bus.

Dolonchapa women-only bus service was launched in June last year by Rangs Group and Volvo Eicher Commercial Vehicles.

The service is providing a sense of relief to women on two routes -- from ECB Chattar to Azimpur and from Mirpur 12 to Motijheel.

Four Dolonchapa buses are carrying passengers on the routes at Tk 5-25.

A regular passenger of Dolonchapa,



FILE PHOTO

Roni, on her way back home last week, said it was comfortable travelling in all-women buses. "I don't have to constantly be on my guard, worrying about unwanted grabbing and harassment that women often face in crowded local buses."

A recent Brac study reveals that 94 percent of sexual harassment happens in public transports.

Roni was seemingly relaxed and listening to music during her commute. Other passengers seemed at ease as well -- some were talking on the phone, some browsing Facebook, while others trying to take a nap.

More than reaffirming testimonials, their attitude and actions were validating that this kind of service should be increased so that more women can safely travel in the capital.

The helper, Shanta Begum, was collecting bus fare while also having casual chitchats with passengers.

Shanta Begum, who started assisting the driver four months ago, said she liked the work because she did not feel intimidated -- dealing with women.

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PHOTO: COLLECTED

Each Dolonchapa bus has 36 seats with nine reserved for physically challenged and pregnant women.

# An inclusive Baishakhi celebration

SHOAIB AHMED SAYAM

On the occasion of Pehela Baishakh, InclusionX -- an organisation that aims to foster a healthy relationship between the intellectually disabled and abled -- arranged a programme open to all at EMK Center on Thursday.

The event started with a brief introduction by Labib Tazwar Rahman, CEO of InclusionX. Soon after, Silvia Tahsin Mahbub, vice president of the organisation, talked about their very first project, "Connecting Circles".

"We never planned forming an organisation," she said. "One day, Labib suggested that we visit a school for the intellectually disabled and interact with them. We realised what's so wonderful about them is how easily they can open up to others."

Riasat Salekin, a coordinator of the

organisation, talked about another significant project called "Joy of Computing".

"We are not doing this for monetary gains or exposure. If you observe the student-volunteer relationship, you'll realise just how pure the process is," he said.

"At the start, we taught them basic computer skills, which they had no prior knowledge of, but now they are learning 3D modelling," he added.

At the programme, some of the students danced while others sang to their heart's content for the audience. Slideshows and presentations were shown to highlight the organisation's journey with the students, parents and teachers.

Later on, Labib talked about their upcoming project as part of which they plan going to schools and informing teachers

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# Bangladesh received \$12b remittance in 9 months

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladeshi expatriates sent nearly US \$12 billion remittance in the first nine months of the current fiscal 2018-19 -- highest in the last three years.

During the July-March period in the current fiscal, they had sent \$11.87 billion, 10.30 percent higher than the amount received in the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal.

According to Bangladesh Bank, the country received \$10.76 billion remittance during July-March period of 2017-18 financial year while \$9.19 billion in 2016-17, \$11.06 billion in 2015-16 and \$11.26 billion

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## DHAKA TODAY

### COMEDY & MUSIC

Stand up Dhaka at the Old Street  
Organiser: Stand up Dhaka  
Venue: The Old Street, Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi  
Time: 5:30pm

### THEATRE

Mukti  
Organiser: Theatre School  
Venue: Bangladesh Mahila Samity, Baily Road  
Time: 7pm

### MUSICAL SHOW

Chaitra Sankranti  
Organiser: Shurer Dhara  
Venue: Bangabandhu International Convention Centre  
Time: 6pm

### TALK SERIES

Bangladeshi Innovators Tales  
Episode: 2,  
Dr Sayeba Akhter  
Organiser: EMK Center  
Venue: EMK Center  
Time: 5pm

### CONCERT

Mojo Baishakhi Concert  
Venue: Mall Chattar, Dhaka University  
Time: 10am

### MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

Chaitra Sankranti  
Organiser: Mon Kohuwar Gaan  
Venue: Sangskriti Bikash Kendra, Paribag  
Time: 5pm



## HEALTH HACK

Stay cool on Pehela Baishakh: With temperature going above 30 degree Celsius on April 14, don't let the heat dampen your Baishakhi celebration. Here's what you can do to keep your cool:

1. Drink more water. Whenever your body heats up, your internal air conditioner turns on and you begin to sweat. And when your air conditioner is using its coolant (your sweat), it is important to refill the tank by drinking lots of water.
2. Be an early bird. Go out after break of dawn and try to wrap up the outdoor part of your celebration by 12pm. You can always bring the celebration indoor and have a great time.
3. Know your cooling points e.g., your wrist and neck. If you are stuck in the heat and cannot get to a cooler place, apply ice (or any other cold object) to these pulse points; you will cool down more quickly and effectively.
4. Eat cooling foods. Consuming food items that keep your body cool from within certainly helps. In other words, panta bhaat is a winner.