IT'S MURDER

Say family members of student killed in Khagrachhari crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

With a blank expression, not long after he landed in Chattogram from Qatar, Lokman Hossain sat on a chair at his home and stared into the ambulance where the dead body of his 18-year-old daughter was kept in a coffin.

The 60-year-old expatriate returned to Chattogram around 11:00am yesterday to bid his daughter Nisha Moni a final goodbye after learning that she, along with 16-year-old Mishu Akter, had died when a speeding jeep ran them over in the district's Fatikchhari upazila on Wednesday.

Police said yesterday that the jeep, known locally as chander gari, did not have valid documents.

"Oh, my daughter please come back. How can we live without you? How do I live with this pain?" Lokman sobbed as Nisha's mother cried helplessly following her the namaz-ejanaza around 3:30pm.

Nisha and Mishu were both SSC candidates from Haidchakia High School and the accident on the Chattogram-Khagrachhari highway's Felagazi area left two families bereft, a day after five brothers were killed in a road crash in Chakaria.

We demand justice ... it is not an accident; it is a murder," said Md Ayub Ali, Mishu's uncle.

Md Robiul Islam, officerin-charge of Fatickchari Police Station, said Ayub Ali filed a case against jeep driver Mohammad Alauddin and other unnamed accused with the station, but police were yet to make an arrest.

OC Robiul told this newspaper that the jeep was plying the road without valid documents.

According to the case statement, Highway Police Traffic Inspector (TI) Nikhil Chakma, and Traffic Sergeant Alamin had signalled the paddy-laden jeep to stop, and when the driver tried to flee, the vehicle ran over the two students, killing them on the spot.



Holding placards with images of violence unleashed on students on January 16, students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology bring out a procession on the campus yesterday. They continued their demo demanding resignation of VC Farid Uddin Ahmed. Later in the day, the university's Proctor Prof Md Alamgir Kabir was relieved from the post.

Introduce death penalty for graft

HC suggests in full verdict on Haji Salim, asks the lawmaker to surrender before the trial court in 30 days

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Corruption is a mental disease that cannot be cured only by corporal punishment, the High Court said in the full text of a verdict in a graft case recommending introduction of the death penalty for such offences.

Upholding 10 years' imprisonment of Haji Md Salim, Awami League lawmaker from Dhaka-7, for amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 14.65 crore, the court also directed him to surrender before the trial court concerned within 30 days.

The countdown of the 30 days will start from the day the trial court receives the copy of the HC judgment.

The HC blasted the Anti-Corruption Commission for its failure to take appropriate action against corruption and for its dependence on media coverage.

"We are ashamed of our rank because of some corrupt persons who have managed to set themselves up in every sector in disguise with mental illnesses.

"They are powerful, organised and syndicated, therefore, on the basis of seriousness, arrogant and protracted offenders of corruption, capital punishment could be introduced," the bench of Justice Md Moinul Islam Chowdhury and Justice AKM Zahirul Hug observed in the 66-page full text of judgment which was released yesterday.

About the HC's suggestion for introducing capital punishment for corruption, Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star that he could not make comments on this issue as he was yet to read the full verdict. He also declined to comment on

whether Salim can hold the office of parliamentary membership following the HC verdict. But ACC's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan

said Salim is no more a Jatiya Sangsad member as per article (2) (d) of the constitution from the moment the HC delivered the verdict.

In the full text of the judgment, the HC judges said, "We have cautiously noticed that the commission [ACC] still does not have capacity or courage to form such kind of belief even there are thousands of apparent corrupt persons possessing properties and money, but hardly at its own initiatives, rather, unfortunately still depends upon media coverage to form its belief for taking action under sections 26 and 27 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Ain, 2004.

'We desire to see a commission which must be effective and active in finding out root of all corruption within the holders of constitutional post and nonconstitutional ordinary servants of the

"We know that it will be a difficult and dismissing an appeal of Salim.

risky task because an honest person may fall prey to a corrupt person, but we have to start from somewhere to be a civilised and a corruption free nation," the HC bench observed.

The HC upheld the lower court's judgment that convicted and sentenced Salim to 10 years in prison in the case filed by the ACC during the militarybacked caretaker government in 2007.

ACC lawyer Khurshid said the trial court will send Salim to jail if he surrenders before it.

Salim will have to seek bail from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court after going to jail in this case, he added.

Salim's lawyer Sayed Ahmed Raza, however, said his client would move an appeal before the Appellate Division challenging the HC verdict.

Salim is unwell and therefore, he will seek bail from the trial court after surrendering to it, he added.

"Disqualification under the constitution to be a member of parliament will depend on the result of the appeal. Because the conviction will be under challenge before the Appellate Division. When the conviction is under challenge, it [conviction] cannot be termed final," the lawyer said.

On March 9 last year, the HC ench delivered the verdict in the case

SUST proctor relieved on personal grounds

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Professor Md Alamgir Kabir, proctor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, was relieved from his position yesterday due to personal grounds, said a circular signed by SUST Registrar Mohd Ishfaqul Hussain.

Associate Professor Md Ishrat Ibne Ismail was appointed as the new proctor, it said. The anti-VC movement also demanded

Alamgir's termination from the post. Earlier on Sunday, Professor Zahir Uddin Ahmed, director of Students Counselling and Guidance of the

university was relieved from his position. Meanwhile, Education Minister Dipu Moni will meet the protesting students at the university this afternoon. According to a schedule signed by the minister's personal secretary Abu Ali Md Sazzad

Hossain, the minister will reach at 8:00am. She will hold meetings with students, teachers and representatives of different organisations of the university.

Acid attack victim dies, ex-husband iailed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

An acid attack victim died early vesterday after in the capitals Sheikh Hasina Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Sathi Akhter, 19, a garment's worker, succumbed to her injuries after she was attacked with acid, allegedly by her ex-husband, in Manikganj's Saturia upazila on January 28, said Ashraful Álam, OC of Paturia police.

She was first admitted to Manikgani General Hospital and later shifted to Dhaka after her condition deteriorated. Sathi's ex-husband Naeem Mollick was

arrested and sent to jail by a court.

BCL beats man for 'giving info to journos'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A shopkeeper was beaten up allegedly by BCL men in Tangail's Basail upazila yesterday. Injured Mamun Miah, 28, told reporters Sumon Miah, general secretary of Kanchanpur union BCL, and some others had been lifting sand from Jhenai river for the past one month.

"As this news was published, Sumon and three others beat me and accused me of giving information to journalists." Harunur Rashid, OC of Basail police, said

action will be taken after a case is filed.

Bike thief killed by mob OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A bike thief was killed by a mob in Dinajpur

Rabiúl Islam, 40, was accused in multiple cases for stealing bikes. Police said on Wednesday around 8:00pm,

villagers of Sadarpur caught Rabiul in the act and beat him. As he fainted at one point, police came and took him to M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital for treatment, where he died on Thursday morning.

Rabiul's body was handed over to his family after an autopsy, said Md Asaduzzaman, inspector (Investigation) of Dinajpur Sadar police. Full versions of the stories can be found under

the same headlines on www.thedailystar.net

BBS to make database

in mind that the project has to be done perfectly," the minister added.

The country's all other databases, including the National Identity (NID) Card database of the Election Commission, will be linked with NPR through application programming interface (API).

Dr Shahadat told The Daily Star that they have already preliminary prepared development project proposal (DPP) for the NPR project which will be implemented in the next five years.

The DPP will be sent to the planning ministry soon for its approval, he said, adding the project's implementation will start after the approval.

He also said once the raised that real beneficiaries

They said until yesterday,

the Awami League did not

submit its nominations

while the BNP said it would

not send any nominations to

submitting the nominations

for political parties is

"We have submitted in

person 10 names, including

those of women, to the

search committee today

[Thursday]," GM Quader,

chairman of Jatiya Party,

and requested the search

proposed names be not

made public," Hasanul Haq

Inu, president of JSD, told

"We sent the names

that

told The Daily Star.

committee

The Daily Star.

deadline

the search committee.

5:00pm today.

FROM PAGE 1

They all long to be in EC

database is created, it will be operated under the government's revenue budget and will be updated annually. According to Shahadat's

presentation, BBS has been working for the project since 2010. three pilot Already,

projects in this regard were Bangladesh. held in three upazilas. State Minister

said the project was going to be a good initiative of the government, stressing the need for implementing it on time. various There

allegations of fraudulence regarding distributions of allowances under the social safety net schemes, he said.

At times, allegation was

to submit their CVs to the

search

Election

cabinet division either by

committees were formed

in 2012 and in 2017, those

committees never asked

individuals to submit their

This search committee

was formed on February 5

in accordance with the law

styled "Appointments of the

Chief Election Commissioner

The cabinet division is

giving secretarial support

to the search committee

and the committee has until

February 24 to propose 10

names to the president, who

would make the final picks,

according to the law.

other

Commissioners Act-2022."

email or in person.

own names.

Although EC

were not included but those who were not eligible got the allowance, he added.

Once the NPR is implemented, such issues will be resolved, he said, adding that it would also help address land-related issues and statistics on foreign nationals living in

The objective of NPR is to create and regularly Planning Shamsul Alam updating mechanism of a comprehensive identity database incorporating all demographic and biometric credentials.

Registering name in NPR will not be mandatory but a must for getting any type of benefits and services.

Once data of a person is recorded it will be preserved permanently even after death of that person.

Hassan, includes HC judge Kuddus Zaman; Comptroller Auditor General Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury; Public Service Commission Chairman Md Sohorab Hossain; former election commissioner Hussain; Sohul and psychiatrist and

Anwara Syed Haq. The search committee also invited around 60 civil society members, election experts and media personalities to the Supreme Court Judges Lounge on Saturday and Sunday to get their suggestions and proposals on the formation

of the next EC. The president held talks with 25 political parties from December 20 to January 17 on forming the new EC. Seven other parties, including the BNP, did not participate in the dialogue, terming it "meaningless".

87,600 hours investigation in the state of t

He also said they were hardly contacted by those investigating the "They tried to do their job in the first one or two years, but what they did later was nothing but an eyewash.

"I doubt if the Rab officials currently probing the case have any clues. They rarely contact us and whenever they do, they ask us silly questions," he said.

Roman also criticised the role of journalist organisations, alleging that some journalist leaders actually sabotaged their agitation seeking justice.

"People in general, including many journalists, are sympathetic towards Sagar-Runi, but journalist platforms do not do anything apart from holding some yearly programmes," he said.

NO HEADWAY IN SIGHT Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station and the Detective Branch of police failed to solve the case, Rab was tasked with the investigation on April

In November 2019, the High Court expressed disappointment at the slow pace of the Rab investigation.

At least eight suspects, including Rafiqul Islam, Bakul Miah, Masum Mintu, Kamrul Islam alias Arun, Abu Sayeed, two security guards of the couple's house Palash Rudra Paul and Enayet Ahmed, and the couple's "friend" Tanveer Rahman Khan arrested after the killing. Tanveer and Palash are

now on bail. The others are behind bars. Rab IO Khandaker Md Shafiqul Alam is the seventh

investigation officer in the case. He was given the job on July 4, 2019.

On October 7, 2020, he submitted a progress report into the double murder. He sought time extensions eight times last year to

submit the probe report. In the progress report, he said evidence seized from the crime scene was sent to the Independent Forensic Service (IFS), USA for DNA

The IFS identified the DNA of two unidentified men. Later, another US DNA lab, Parabon Snapshot, communicated for identifying the two, according to the report.

On January 24 this year, the Rab official once again failed to submit the probe report and then again filed for time extension. The court then set February 23 for the submission.

Contacted, IO Shafiqul said he would not make any comment for the "sake of investigation". Home Minister

Asaduzzaman Khan did not respond to our phone calls for comment yesterday. Noted rights activist

Nur Khan termed it a

"total failure" of the law

enforcement agencies. "From the beginning of this case, the investigation agency tried to convey a wrong message to the people that the investigation is almost done. In reality, it is the complete opposite. They gave false promises,"

"The investigation agency is also not communicating with the victims' families. A perception has been created among people that some influential people are involved here," he added.

Power cost keeps spiralling

which is receiving capacity payments whilst half the plant stands idle because of insufficient transmission infrastructure.

The Payra plant is the "largest single contributor to the increase", it said, adding that the cost of each unit of power purchased from the plant increased 36.5 percent year-on-year to Tk 8.6/kWh in fiscal

2020-21. Only two out of seven towers of the Dhaka-Payra power transmission line have so far been installed in the Padma river, said Golam Kibria, managing director of Power Grid Company of Bangladesh.

Installation of the rest of the five will be completed by June. However, setting up of the transmission cables will not be done before December, he added.

The BPDB is paying Tk 130 crore a month in capacity charges to the Payra power station, the study said.

Thanks to the BPDB's very large operating loss, the government's subsidy bill hit a record Tk 11,780 crores in fiscal 2020-21, fiscal 2024-25, the overall prices," he added.

up from Tk 7,440 crore the power capacity utilisation previous year.

And the total capacity payments increased a whooping 76 percent to Tk 13,200 crore in fiscal 2020-

The IEEFA projected that with more coal-based IPPs under construction and with large capacity LNG-based IPPs planned, the BPDB's IPP cost is likely to continue going up significantly.

According to the BPDB, 12,967 megawatts (MW) of new power capacity is under construction and 19,651 MW more is planned to be added by the end of fiscal 2024-25.

Power plants with a total capacity of 3,990MW would be shut down by fiscal 2024-25, according to the BPDB's annual report for fiscal 2020-21.

Overall power plant utilisation will drop further by fiscal 2024-25 as a result of these large capacity additions, the report said.

The IEEFA said even if power generation grows percent per annum until

may drop to just 38 percent. The report said though

the power utilisation saw a slight improvement last year, it remains very low at 41.7 percent.

In January, the BPDB proposed a bulk power tariff increase by up to 64 percent to cover its shortfall of Tk 32,500 crore.

Khondaker Moazzem, research director at the Centre Policy Dialogue, said capacity payments are increasing due to decreasing utilisation of the power plants'.

this, Despite government is approving new power plants. As a result, capacity charges and subsequent subsidies are swelling which have become a headache for the government, he told The Daily Star.

Such waste of revenue led to the hike in power price, Moazzem said.

"But we think the liability of these ineptness shouldn't be justified by at a very high rate of 12 burdening the consumers

12 hurt in foiled Huthi drone attack on Saudi airport

AFP, Riyadh

Twelve people were injured by falling debris yesterday when the Saudi military blew up a Yemeni rebel drone targeting an airport close to the border, officials said.

Fragments fell to the ground after the interception of the drone over Abha International Airport, which has previously been targeted in similar assaults by the Huthi rebels. The Huthis claimed

responsibility for the attack in a tweet, saying they had targeted an

action against Yemen" and warning citizens to "stay away" from such sites. "Saudi defence forces

airport "used for military

destroyed a drone launched towards Abha International Airport," the official Saudi Press Agency said in a tweet.

tenure of the The six-member search incumbent EC is going to committee after its first expire on February 14. meeting on February 6 The search committee, asked willing individuals led by Justice Obaidul