



Brick chips are piled up on one side of the road beside Dhaka Shishu Hospital as development work goes on. As a result, vehicles pass from both directions on the other side of the road, resulting in traffic congestion, much to the dismay of patients and their attendees. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

No accountability unless polls are fair

Says Prof Rehman Sobhan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

If the authority wants to continue performing its duties, it must do so by following the democratic process. Those contesting in elections will have to do so in a free and fair manner, without spending crores and using muscle power, said Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairman of Centre for Policy Dialogue, yesterday.

"If they [authorities] are pressed to come to power through a contest, they will know that they will not get votes if people's problems are not resolved during their five-year tenure," Rehman said.

The CPD chairman said, "If they are not concerned about votes and think that they will resolve problems using money and arms, then there will be no accountability."

He said this while presiding over the "Public Hearing: National Development and Local Realities", organised as part of various initiatives of Citizen's Platform for SDGs.

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Chairman of Centre for Policy Dialogue

The programme was held at the capital's Krishibid Institution Bangladesh.

Around 35 men and women from different parts of the country, most of whom are from marginalised communities, raised their voices at the public hearing on various problems they are facing daily.

Rehman said, "It cannot be denied that a lot of development works have been done in recent years... But there is a disparity between marginalised people's claims of struggling to get government services and what the minister [Tazul Islam] is saying in response."

Rehman, also director general of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, said the problems raised yesterday by the marginalised groups have been in place for years. "But why haven't these problems been resolved yet?"

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Mystery still shrouds Fardin's death

DB looking into whether Buet student died in accident, by suicide

SHARIFUL ISLAM and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Failing to get any evidence of murder during the month-long investigation, Detective Brach of police is now also looking into whether Buet student Fardin Noor Parash was killed in an accident, or whether he committed suicide.

"In the last one month, we did not get any evidence of his [Fardin] murder. So now we are looking into whether any accident caused his death, or whether he died by suicide," Rajib Al Masud, deputy commissioner of DB (Motijheel) told The Daily Star on Friday night.

He, however, said they are still not ruling out the possibility that the Buet student was murdered. "We are still conducting the investigation keeping all possibilities in mind," Masud said.

Fardin's father Kazi Nooruddin, however, said that his son could not have committed suicide.

"Fardin saw ups and downs in the family and tackled every situation head on. He is a fighter. A boy like him can never do something like that," he said.

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Deputy commissioner of DB (Motijheel)

tasked with the investigation, different agencies, including Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), are conducting shadow investigation.

Fardin's death stirred huge outrage and demand for vengeance on social media.

Asked about the deceased's autopsy report, which said injury marks were found in the body and pointed to murder, the DB official said they are now taking opinions from forensic experts to know whether it is possible to detect injury marks on a body that had been decomposing for three days.

After a board of three physicians of Narayanganj General Hospital conducted an autopsy, a doctor said Fardin had injury marks on his head and other body parts.

"The actual cause of death can be ascertained after receiving the viscera report, but it is certain that he was a victim of murder," the

doctor told media on November 7.

DC Rajib Al Masud said the autopsy report of Awami League leader Duronto Biplob had also said that he was murdered as doctors found injuries. But investigators finally found that he drowned after a boat accident.

Duronto's body was found floating in Buriganga river, near Pagla, on November 10. The back of his head had been bashed in, and there were several injury marks on his chest. Later, doctors at Narayanganj General Hospital conducted an autopsy on the body.

Khandaker Al Moïn, legal and media wing director of Rab, said they are yet to get any concrete evidence about Fardin's death.

The law enforcers are still analysing the information they have gathered to crack the mystery, he told The Daily Star on Friday night.

Asked about Rab's earlier claim that Fardin might have been killed in Narayanganj's Chonpara by local drug dealer Raihan Mahmud and his gang members, the Rab director said based on information collected through digital technology, they had made the statement.

"Mobile towers usually cover a radius of five to six kilometres. So, we had said that Fardin was last located somewhere near Chonpara. Raihan and his gang members came under radar because they are involved in keeping people hostage for money among other crimes," he added.

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No one should face such a horrible fate

Family in shock after Rubina Akhter's death on DU campus

STAR REPORT

Rubina Akhter was heading to a family programme at her parents' house to spend some time with her loved ones. But on that day, she met the most gruesome fate, one no person should face.

This is what Rubina's elder brother Zakir Hossain had to say to The Daily Star.

On Friday, a former Dhaka University (DU) assistant professor Azhar Jafar Shah rammed a bike carrying Rubina, 45, who then fell and got stuck under the car's wheels and was dragged along the road for a kilometre. She had no chance to survive.

Onlookers kept screaming for the driver to stop but the vehicle kept moving.

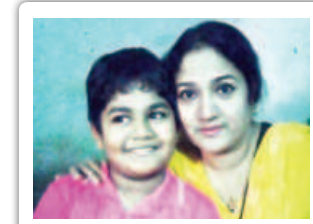
Recalling the horror, Zakir told this newspaper, "We seven siblings, five sisters and two brothers, were supposed to hold a family gathering that day at our house at Hazaribagh, like we do every Friday."

"Rubina was on her way to meet us from

Tejgaon. But she couldn't do so. And our smiles turned into tears," he said.

Zakir said the incident started as an accident but ended as murder, as the driver dragged Rubina under his car, ignoring the shouting pedestrians.

"If the driver had stopped, then we could've saved our sister; we could've kept our family intact," Zakir added.



Rubina and her son Arafat

According to family sources, Rubina got married around 17 years ago. But her happiness did not last long, as her husband, who was suffering from diabetes and kidney-related diseases, died last year.

She was about to observe her husband's first death anniversary on December 17.

When this reporter visited the family's house at the capital's Hazaribagh, Rubina's only son Arafat, 13, was seen crying for her mother. He repeatedly asked for her mother to come back.

"She used to cook food for me. She

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VIOLENCE IN MYANMAR

Influx of people taking risks to cross Andaman sea

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The UN has issued an alert over the dramatic increase in the number of people trying to cross the Andaman Sea from Bangladesh and Myanmar, amid escalation of violence in the Southeast Asian nation.

UN refugee agency, UNHCR, on Friday, said more than 1,900 people have already made the journey since January – six times more than in 2020.

"Tragically, 119 people have been reported dead or missing on these journeys, this year alone," said UNHCR Spokesperson Shabia Mantoo in a statement.

Mantoo said more than a million Rohingyas now live in Bangladesh and not a single of them returned to Rakhine State, adding conditions in the refugee camps weren't safe and conducive yet.

Meanwhile, the situation in Myanmar has deteriorated since the military takeover in February last year and more so recently in Rakhine State where the Arakan Army and Myanmar military are fighting each other.

In an appeal for help from governments in the region, UNHCR said that the most recent arrivals included over 200 people in North Aceh, Indonesia, where the authorities allowed them to disembark and provided shelter.

UNHCR has also received unverified reports of more boats with desperate individuals, adrift at sea. With increasing levels of desperation and vulnerability forcing more refugees to make these deadly journeys, UNHCR and humanitarian partners have emphasised on increased regional and international cooperation to save lives and share responsibility.

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'BNP rally must be at Suhrawardy Udyan'

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal yesterday said it is the DMP commissioner's responsibility to make Dhaka liveable for the two crore residents, as BNP has threatened to bring down the government by making the city come to a standstill on December 10.

BNP said many people would gather to support it, and that's why the police commissioner has allocated Suhrawardy Udyan for its rally, Kamal said while addressing reporters after the inauguration of the newly-built Shaistaganj police station building in Habiganj.

"If BNP people gather in front of the party office in Nayapaltan, defying the police commissioner ban, then the commissioner will take necessary action," he said.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun yesterday said they believe that BNP will hold the programme at the venue for which the authorities have given permission.

He came up with the remark while replying to a

the commissioner will take necessary action.

ASADUZZAMAN KHAN KAMAL, home minister

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The empty spaces underneath Mayor Hanif Flyover seems to be up for grabs for anyone to use. Before, there used to be barricades preventing people from using this space. But now, horses are kept there and the local businessmen have turned the space into a makeshift stable. This photo was taken in Gulistan area yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



Dengue death toll **254**

Total number of patients **58,209**

1,710 still undergoing treatment

Number of recovered patients **56,245**

351 more hospitalised yesterday

SOURCE: DGHS

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 4

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-45 3-45 5-19 7-00
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION