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Schoolboys pedal through a veil of morning fog in Tetulia, Panchagarh, yesterday as winter begins to make its presence felt in the northern border district. The thick mist and early morning chill offer a glimpse of the colder days ahead. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

'Govts change, but state repression persists'

Speakers say extrajudicial killings continue under successive administrations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Governments change, but the state's methods of repression remain unchanged, allowing extrajudicial killings to continue under successive administrations, historian and researcher Mohiuddin Ahmad said at a discussion in Dhaka yesterday.

"Governments come and go, but the character of the state does not change. It functions in the same way through the same forces," he said at a seminar titled "Rakkhi Bahini and Extrajudicial Killings", organised by the July Mass Uprising Memorial Museum.

Rights organisation Odhikar documented 45 alleged extrajudicial killings between August 9, 2024, and December 31, 2025, during the interim government's tenure. Of the victims, 20 were shot dead, 18 died from torture, and seven were beaten to death.

The discussion came a week after Inspector General of Police Md Ali Hossain Fakir said police would resort to "crossfire" wherever necessary if the government permitted it.

Asked by The Daily Star about the government's response, rights activist Nur Khan Liton questioned whether the IGP had the legal or moral authority to make such a statement.

"As long as the Constitution, the Police Regulations of Bengal and criminal laws are in force, there is no scope for making such a statement," he said.

"Can the government give such permission? It cannot."

Odhikar documented 45 alleged extrajudicial killings between August 9, 2024, and December 31, 2025, during the interim government's tenure. Of the victims, 20 were shot dead, 18 died from torture, and seven were beaten to death.

Liton said rights activists expected the government to prevent statements by senior officials that could encourage extrajudicial killings.

"Unfortunately, we have not seen any visible action so far," he said.

Police Headquarters and the Bangladesh

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'Whom should I turn to for justice?'

Sagar's mother asks as probe stays unfinished nearly 15yrs on

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and ASHUTOSH SARKAR



"Governments keep changing one after another, but there has been no progress. Whom should I turn to for justice?" said Saleha Monir, 74, breaking down in tears as she spoke of her son, Sagar Sarowar, and daughter-in-law, Meherun Runi, who were murdered nearly 15 years ago.

Despite 131 deadlines having passed and a 132nd being set, investigators have yet to complete the probe.

"So many years have passed, yet nothing has been uncovered yet," Saleha said when contacted by phone on Sunday.

She said her only wish was to see those responsible brought to justice before her death.

Saleha said she had learnt from news reports that the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) task force had been granted another six months to complete the probe, but no one from the team had contacted her recently.

Nowsher Alam Roman, Runi's brother, who filed the case,

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Plan to split NBR back on the table

Proposed structure separates policy, implementation; reform bill likely in next JS session

New revenue reform bill likely in upcoming JS session

Revenue Implementation Division to be headed by secretary-rank chairman

General cadre officer to lead Revenue Policy Division

Reform remains key condition of IMF's $5.5bn loan programme

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Despite persistent uncertainty over the restructuring of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), sources in the Finance Division have indicated that the agency may eventually be split into two separate departments.

Based on the recommendations of a high-level government committee, a bill proposing the formation of the two divisions is likely to be placed before the upcoming session of parliament.

Under the new proposal, the Revenue Implementation Division will be headed by a chairman with the rank of secretary, alongside several other secretaries appointed from within the NBR.

The structure is similar to that of the ministries of foreign affairs and planning, both of which have multiple officials holding secretary rank.

Meanwhile, the secretary of the Revenue Policy Division will be appointed from among existing general cadre officers.

The division will include experts from various fields, including economists, chartered accountants and legal professionals.

On May 1, the government formed a committee to review the widely discussed revenue reform ordinances introduced by the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim administration.

The Revenue Policy and Revenue Management Ordinance and its subsequent amendment, along with 12 other ordinances, lost validity after parliament failed to ratify them within the constitutionally mandated 30-day period from its first sitting on March 12.

According to a Cabinet Division notification issued on April 28, the nine-member committee -- headed by Ismail Zabiullah, the prime minister's

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

IN FOCUS

PM for coordinated quake preparedness

UNB, *Dhaka*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday ordered the authorities concerned to take comprehensive preparations to deal with potential earthquake risks, identify vulnerable buildings and strengthen emergency rescue capabilities.

He gave the directives at a meeting on earthquake preparedness and response at the Prime Minister's Office at the Bangladesh Secretariat, said PM's Deputy Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu.

The prime minister stressed the need for a coordinated action plan to ensure public safety in Dhaka and other earthquake-prone areas across the country.

He also called for identifying vulnerable and old buildings, ensuring compliance with the National Building Code in construction and enhancing the capacity to conduct swift rescue operations during emergencies.

TAHSIF SOURI'S DEATH

Police analysing footage from eight CCTV cameras

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

River Police are analysing footage from at least eight CCTV cameras to reconstruct the final movements of former Bangladesh Air Force officer KM Tahsif Souri, whose body was recovered from the Turag river last week.



Investigators are examining the footage to trace Tahsif's movements from his Uttara residence to Mazarbasti in Tongi and identify those who accompanied or came into contact with him, said Inspector Firoz Uddin, the investigation officer.

However, what happened during Tahsif's nearly two-hour stay in Mazarbasti remains unclear.

Ahmed Shahriar Reza Dip, an acquaintance of Tahsif, and another female friend, who were with him that night, have been arrested and are being questioned.

Investigators are cross-checking their statements against CCTV footage and other digital evidence, including what they did and consumed at a bar and how they decided on their next destination, Firoz said.

Tahsif left his Uttara Sector 18 residence on a motorcycle on October 27 evening. His body was recovered from the Turag the following afternoon.

According to investigation sources and CCTV footage, Tahsif left home at 6:31pm on October 27, accompanied by Dip on separate motorcycles.

Between 6:32pm and 10:15pm, they were seen

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Star pays tribute to Sohrab Hossain

Colleagues remember his dedication to journalism, humility and sincerity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star paid heartfelt tributes to late district correspondent Sohrab Hossain yesterday, remembering him as a dedicated journalist, a humble person and a cherished member of the newspaper family.

Sohrab Hossain, Patuakhali correspondent of The Daily Star for more than 22 years, died at Patuakhali Medical College Hospital on October 20. He was 55.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said Sohrab's death was an irreparable loss for the organisation.

Describing district correspondents as the newspaper's eyes and ears across the country, Mahfuz Anam said Sohrab's departure felt like a light going out across an entire region.

He recalled Sohrab's sincerity, commitment to journalism and deep affection for the organisation.

He also expressed solidarity with Sohrab's bereaved family and assured them that the newspaper's colleagues would always stand beside them.

Kamal Ahmed, consulting editor at The Daily Star, recalled that one of Sohrab's reports on the clearing of a protected forest

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam hands over a commemorative crest to the family of the newspaper's late Patuakhali correspondent Sohrab Hossain during a memorial programme yesterday. PHOTO: STAR