

# Taliban killed, injured over 400 Afghan forces in one week: gov't

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

The Taliban has killed or wounded more than 400 Afghan security personnel over the past week, the interior ministry said, accusing the group of increasing attacks in the run-up to expected peace talks.

Violence dropped across much of Afghanistan since the Taliban announced a three-day ceasefire on May 24 to mark the Muslim Eid al-Fitr celebration, but officials have accused the group of stepping up attacks in recent days.

"In the past one week, the Taliban carried out 222 attacks against the Afghan security forces, resulting in the death and injury of 422" personnel, interior ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said at a news conference yesterday.

He also accused the Taliban of targeting religious scholars in a bid to put "psychological pressure" on the Afghan government.

## Another killing

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Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said she had accepted the prompt resignation of police chief Shields.

"I do not believe that this was a justified use of deadly force and have called for the immediate termination of the officer," Bottoms said at an afternoon news conference.

Brooks was the father of a young daughter who was celebrating her birthday on Saturday, his lawyers said.

Near the scene of the shooting, street protests began on Saturday, with more than 100 people calling for the officers to be charged criminally in the case.

### PARKING LOT

Friday's shooting came after police were called to the Wendy's over reports that Brooks had fallen asleep in the drive-thru line. Officers attempted to take him into custody after he failed a field sobriety test, according to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

A bystander's video showed Brooks struggling with two officers on the ground outside the Wendy's before breaking free and running across the parking lot with what appears to be a police TASER in his hand.

A second videotape from the restaurant's cameras shows Brooks turning as he runs and possibly aiming the TASER at the pursuing officers before one of them fires his gun and Brooks falls to the ground.

Brooks ran the length of about six cars when he turned back toward an officer and pointed what he had in his hand at the policeman, Vic Reynolds, director of the GBI, told a press conference.

"At that point, the Atlanta officer reaches down and retrieves his weapon from his holster, discharges it, strikes Mr. Brooks there on the parking lot and he goes down," Reynolds said.

Lawyers representing the family of Brooks told reporters that Atlanta police had no right to use deadly force even if he had fired the TASER, a non-lethal weapon, in their direction.

"You can't shoot somebody unless they are pointing a gun at you," attorney Chris Stewart said.

Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard, Jr., said in an emailed statement that his office "has already launched an intense, independent investigation of the incident" while it awaits the findings of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

Bottoms said Shields, a white woman appointed police chief in December 2016, would be replaced by deputy chief Rodney Bryant, a black man who will serve as interim chief.

## War crimes trial

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Liberation War. His songs inspired millions of Bangladeshes during the war.

### STRONG TIES WITH NEPAL

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad today calls on Nepalese King Birendra at his palace. In the 40-minute meeting they discuss various bilateral issues including trade, cultural exchange and resumption of civil aviation services. The King also assures Nepal's support for Bangladesh's candidacy in the UN.

### GENERAL NIAZI'S CONFESSION

It is reported in Indian newspaper Vikrant that General Niazi has confessed about the atrocities perpetrated by the Pakistan army during the Liberation War in his book written during his confinement in India as a prison of war. He accuses General Yahya Khan of the bloodshed in former East Pakistan. He also provides gory details of mass murder and brutality orchestrated by General Tikka Khan. Niazi reveals in his book that General Yahya insisted repeatedly that China send troops to the Western Front but China declined that request in fear of possible intervention by the Soviet Union in favour of India.

SOURCES: June 16, 1972 issue of Purbodesh.

## Teacher held

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about Nasim on her Facebook page soon after he died on Saturday.

She deleted the post soon afterwards and apologised for it in another post.

Police received a screenshot of the first post as evidence.



Tourists are seen at the Caffè Quadri at St Mark's Square yesterday, a day before Italy and neighbouring EU countries open up borders for the first time since the coronavirus outbreak.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Family planning disrupted

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month. "We tried our best to use protection every time, but I don't know how the barrier failed."

Afia said having another child now is not an option with a young baby and with no domestic help at home. "At the same time, I cannot think of an abortion as I had one just two months ago."

This has also created tensions between her and her husband, she said, and affected their relationship.

Afia's situation depicts how the Covid-19 outbreak and shutdown has impacted family planning and women's reproductive health.

In April, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) projections predicted that more than 47 million women in low- and middle-income countries will be unable to access modern contraceptives, leading to seven million additional unintended pregnancies, as a result of lockdown-related disruptions to health services over six months.

During the shutdown, fear of contracting the virus by visiting health facilities or urgent domestic and financial concerns, meant many women went without contraception.

This correspondent spoke to several women who said their birth control methods were interrupted during the

shutdown.

Five of seven women who use the injection method -- which needs to be taken every three months -- said they didn't go to a health facility for their shots in April and May.

Of them, 38-year-old Rahima Begum, mother of four, didn't go get her injection in April and is uneasy because she missed her last period.

"I didn't take any other precautions as I had too many worries," she said.

As a domestic help in Kazipara, Mirpur, she lost her position in several homes at the time as employers didn't want outsiders coming in to work in their homes and other families returned to their village homes during the shutdown.

Worried about how to pay rent and afford food at home, she neglected her birth control.

"If I get pregnant now, I won't be able to show my face to my grown sons. I would also have to give up my income," said Rahima.

Marie Stopes Bangladesh, a well-known organisation providing reproductive health and family planning services, noted that the number of people accessing services declined drastically during the Covid-19 shutdown.

According to the organisation, the

average number of patients visiting its facilities before the shutdown was 23,000 per month; during the shutdown, this figure was 7,000.

This is despite the fact that most of its 49 clinics countrywide were open during the shutdown, according to the organisation, though these were not fully operational, especially in April.

The situation is likely to be as grave in rural areas, say NGO medical officers, where facilities are fewer and further away for villagers.

On a popular pregnancy support group with over 56,000 members on Facebook, "Pregnancy journey & motherhood", several women spoke about their unintended pregnancies and asked advice on what options they had and where they could seek safe abortions amidst the shutdown. Members include women from across the country -- in both cities and villages.

Some said they resorted to using abortion pills at home, though they would have preferred a safer, supervised procedure, due to restrictions on mobility and fear of visiting crowded health facilities.

Tawfika, who got pregnant in April, took abortion pills which eventually didn't work and she was uncertain of what to do next. She can't take the

pills again and now that three months have passed, she cannot have an MR procedure performed.

She is keeping the baby for now but is worried of the effects of the abortion pills on the development of the fetus.

Two newly married women who learned they were pregnant said they were unable to consult a gynecologist about family planning before the shutdown.

Both women said they were financially and mentally unprepared to have a child now -- one woman is currently an undergraduate student, while the other's husband is uncertain of his job and receiving half-pay at the moment.

Family planning should be ensured as an essential service amidst this fear of coronavirus so people aren't deterred from accessing these services right now, said Monjun Nahar, advocacy and communication manager at Marie Stopes Bangladesh.

Widespread awareness campaigns about the importance of family planning should be undertaken and protective gear issued to field workers so they can continue to promote family planning services especially in urban slums and rural areas, she said.

[Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the interviewees]

## Isolation unit had no Rajuk approval

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Fire Service and Civil Defence said in its report that there were no staff members on duty to ensure fire safety when the fire broke out in the isolation unit of the hospital.

Most of the fire extinguishers had already passed their expiry dates, Talukder said, adding that the Fire Service and Civil Defence found that there was an approval from the Directorate General of Health Services to build the Corona Isolation Unit at United Hospital.

DMP found that the authorities concerned of United Hospital had not taken proper steps to rescue the victims and douse the fire, although the victims had sought help, DAG Talukder added, citing the DMP probe

report.

Meanwhile, United Hospital authorities submitted their report to the High Court through their lawyers Barrister Mustafizur Rahman Khan and Barrister Kazi Ershadul Alam, saying that the fire at the Corona Isolation Unit of United Hospital was merely an accident and there was no negligence on the part of the hospital.

Barrister Mustafizur Rahman Khan told The Daily Star that a criminal case has been filed on June 3 in connection with the fire.

An investigation officer has been conducting the investigation into the case, he said, adding that the investigation will uncover the reasons for the fire.

The barrister also told this

newspaper that United Hospital's authorities could not take permission from Rajuk to build its Corona Isolation Unit because of time constraints as the unit was built in quick time to provide urgent treatment to Covid-19 patients.

The authorities had tried to install adequate fire extinguishers in the unit but could not find technicians instantly due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the lawyer added.

On June 2, the same High Court bench sought separate probe reports -- from Rajuk, Fire Service and Civil Defence, DMP and United Hospital. They were ordered to submit their respective probe reports to the court by yesterday.

The HC bench issued the order following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court Lawyer Niaz Mohammad Mahboob seeking necessary orders.

Advocate Niaz Mohammad submitted the writ petition as a public interest litigation to the High Court on May 31, seeking its directives on the authorities concerned to give Tk 5 crore to the family of each victim and to take necessary action against the persons responsible for the incident.

In the petition, the lawyer included the reports published in The Daily Star and the Prothom Alo, saying that there was negligence on part of the authorities concerned in rescuing the victims.

## Protecting people

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina said deaths of her two co-fighters -- Nasim and Abdullah -- were very much painful to her as both of them were always beside her in all movements and struggles.

She said Covid-19 brought the whole world to a standstill.

"The world is now under the grip of panic of death. This is very much strange. We've never seen this kind of situation in the past," she said.

In this connection, she said when she was coming to parliament yesterday, many of her well-wishers requested her not to go there.

But she turned down their requests, saying that she had faced bullets, bombs and grenades, and she would not sit idle, fearing the virus.

"This fear has clutched the whole world, whether it is a developed, developing, poor country or a powerful one in terms of arms and money. The situation is the same everywhere," she said.

The PM said the spread of this virus and deaths started to go up in one place and then it stopped at one stage.

"The wave of this virus has entered South Asia after travelling to western countries," she said.

She mentioned that the government was trying its best to convince the people to maintain health guidelines properly.

"This is a deadly infectious virus; all have to follow the health guidelines to save themselves," she said.

Hasina said this was the reality that people could not be left out without feeding them in fear of coronavirus. "We have to look after their livelihoods."

"We have decided to lockdown the particular places where the infection spread widely so that this spreading could not infect new places," she said.

In an emotion-choked voice, the PM recalled her memories with Nasim and Abdullah. She termed their deaths irreplaceable loss for the country and AL.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition GM Quader, Matia Chowdhury, Kazi Firoze Rashid, Mrinal Kanti Das, Mostafa Lutfullah, and M Habibe Millat also participated in the condolence motion.

A one-minute silence was observed and a munajat offered seeking eternal peace of the departed souls. Deputy Speaker M Fazle Rabbi Miah conducted the munajat.

## BSMMU

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Asked whether they would conduct the performance trial of antigen kit if the organisation resubmits samples with modification, the VC said, adding that they were unlikely to do that.

"They [Gonosasthaya] submitted the kit on May 20 and withdrew it on June 2. We won't wait for an unlimited time."

According to Gonosasthaya, its antibody kit will help identify whether people have been infected with coronavirus in the past and the presence of antibodies or resistance power in their bodies. It will also help collect plasma of those who have recovered.

In a press release on June 2, the organisation requested the BSMMU authorities to suspend the performance study of its coronavirus-testing antigen kit due to the detection of some inconsistencies in sample collection procedure.

The organisation added that it was upgrading the sample collection process.

On March 17, Gonosasthaya announced that they developed a testing kit that could examine samples to detect Covid-19 within 15 minutes, but the kit was still not approved by the authorities concerned.

The DGDA on April 30 permitted Gonosasthaya to get its kits tested. The DGDA informed Gonosasthaya that the performance study of the kits could be done either at the BSMMU or IEDCR.

## Radar reveals

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The technology can "see" beneath the surface using a radar antenna that sends a pulsed radio signal into the ground and listens for the echoes bouncing off objects. The GPR equipment was pulled over the surface using an all-terrain vehicle.

"This took one person about three to four months in the field," said Martin Millett, a University of Cambridge classical archaeology professor who helped lead the study published in the journal Antiquity. "This really does change how we can study and understand Roman towns - the way of the future for archaeology."

## Actor Sushant

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Bollywood with director Abhishek Kapoor's KaiPoChhe, based on the book by Chetan Bhagat.

His stardom came with MS Dhoni: The Untold Story, in which he played former India cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Soon after the actor's sudden demise, his friends from the industry took to social media to express shock and condole Rajput's death.

Singer and music composer Vishal Dadlani and actor Riteish Deshmukh were among the first ones to share the news on Twitter.

Rajput was seen in the Netflix film Drive.