



## ‘Stop bloodshed, people are not your opponent’

Activists, teachers, guardians urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cultural activists, teachers and guardians at separate rallies yesterday urged the government to stop the bloodshed and not to consider people, including students, its opponent.

“We took to the street to stand by the students. We are calling upon the government to stop bloodshed... Do not consider people including the students as your [government’s] opponent,” said Prachyanat activist Toufiqul Islam Imon.

He said this while reading out a written statement at a protest gathering held in

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## Journo killed in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A journalist was killed in Sylhet yesterday while covering the students’ “complete shutdown” programme demanding reforms of quota system in government jobs.

ATM Turab, bureau chief of Naya Diganta in Sylhet and staff reporter of Daily Jalalabad, succumbed to his injuries in the afternoon at a private hospital in Sylhet city.

He suffered shotgun pellet wounds during a clash between police and BNP members around 2:00pm in Bamdarbaraz area.

Arif Mohammad Reza, duty doctor at the ICU of Ibn Sina Hospital, said he died of excessive bleeding due to pellet wounds.

## People suffer for government’s wrong decisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to the government’s stubbornness and wrong decisions, people are suffering in the country, said Opposition Leader and Jatiyo Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday.



He demanded an immediate end to the countrywide anarchy and killings.

The JP chief said this in a statement sent to different media through text messages.

“It’s very unfortunate that bullets are being fired on general people. It is the responsibility of the law enforcement agencies to ensure security of people’s lives and properties,” he said.

He also said people are the owner of the country and it is normal that the government will play a role to implement their will.

“It’s not the task of the government to impose its own idea and will on people through gagging their voice and repression,” GM Quader said.

## COUNTRYWIDE VIOLENCE Clashes rage on for the fourth day

STAR REPORT

The ongoing protests showed no signs of abetting yesterday as clashes continued across the country for the fourth day in different cities and districts, alongside the capital.

At least 10 people died and over several hundreds were injured in these clashes that took place between protesters, law enforcers, and ruling party members.

In Rangpur, four persons were killed during a clash between protesters and police in the City Bazar area in the evening.

The deceased were identified as Sazzad Hossain and Moslem Uddin. Both were hit by rubber bullets, said Ashikur Rahman of Rangpur Medical College Hospital. The other two victims are Murad Hossain, 25, and Makbul Hossain, 60.

Meanwhile, a private clinic in the city was torched. Md Moniruzzaman, commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police, said the protesters attacked many police establishments.

In Narsingdi, two people were killed while in a clash between

protesters and police and AL men. One of the deceased is Shaon, 20.

Witnesses said a section of protesters torched Madhabdi municipal office around 4:00pm. Then they locked into a clash with the municipal mayor’s men and police, in which the two died.

Confirming the deaths, Mahmudul Kabir Bashar, RMO of Narsingdi Sadar Hospital, said they were hit by bullets.

At least 45 people took treatment with bullet injuries at Narsingdi District Hospital.

Panchadhana police outpost also came under attack around 8:30pm, said SI Anwar Hossain of Madhabdi police.

In Savar, a protester was shot dead when they clashed with police and BGB in Radio Colony area around 4:00pm.

The deceased is Al Amin, 24, an honours student at Bangladesh Open University.

Amin, who was brought dead, suffered bullet injuries, said Ezazur Rahman, a doctor of Enam Medical College Hospital.

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## Attackers to blame for casualties

Says Arafat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Muhammad Ali Arafat yesterday warned that it won’t even take half an hour to control the unruly mob if the government applies five percent of its capacity.

“But it may increase c a s u a l t y, which is why the government is showing restraint,” said Arafat while speaking at a press conference held at the Dhaka North City Corporation office.

“We cannot go for action if there are children at some places. The miscreants can do whatever they wish, but the government cannot,” he said in response to a journalist’s query.

“We also believe that students have no involvement in the



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The Moghbazar-Mouchak flyover wore a deserted look yesterday amid the ongoing clashes between the protesters and law enforcement agencies. The photo was taken in Kakrail area in the afternoon.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN

The ongoing clashes between protesters and law enforcement agencies, which ignited over the quota reform protests, brought Dhaka to a standstill yesterday.

Due to unavailability of public transport, essential services and shutdown of all sorts of businesses, people had to suffer immensely.

Moreover, countrywide internet shutdown since July 18 have added another layer of uncertainty and suffering to the ongoing crisis.

As violence escalated in most of the major roads in the city, shops, markets, and office establishments along these streets remained mostly closed for the last few days.

In many areas, residents could not even access essential services like hospitals and diagnostic centres. People from low income groups, daily wage earners and small business owners were the most affected.

Zahid Hasan, a driver of a city bus that runs from Mohammadpur to Sadarghat, said, “If I complete a full trip, I earn around Tk 300. In the last one week, I could only make three to four trips. I have to support a family of seven. Now I don’t have any money to buy food for my children.”

Unavailability of public transport has also affected commuters who are venturing out for essential activities.

Sharnali Saha, an employee of a healthcare organisation, said, “As I work for a healthcare organisation, I have to go to my office no matter what is happening on the streets. Without any transport, I have to walk for miles daily to reach my workplace. Even rickshaws cannot pass through blocked roads. Doctors and patients are also suffering while trying to reach healthcare centres.”

“If this continues for a few more days, I shall not be able to attend my office anymore,” she said.

The sufferings of patients and healthcare providers can be clearly seen in front of the gates of major hospitals like Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

As there is no public transport, and very few rickshaws and taxis are on the roads, patients have to walk a long way to get medical services.

Jahanara Begum, a cancer patient, was trying to visit a treatment centre in Shyamoli from the Mohammadpur area.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Finding no transport in the morning, her son had to take her there in a wheelchair, walking all the way to the hospital.

Her son, Murshidul Hasan, said, “This has become unbearable. The government cannot disable the entire country for their failure to deal with a justified movement.”

Terrified by the violence, very few people are coming out of their homes. As a result, the once busy streets, restaurants and market places all over the city lie mostly empty, even during Friday afternoon.

Md Arafat, a restaurant manager at

Dhanmondi’s Shimanto Square, said, “Our business has completely stopped. People are too afraid to come out of their homes. Who will go for shopping and dining out in this situation?”

“As we did not have any customers over the last few days, we had to throw away a large amount of food today. As a result, we suffered heavy losses,” he added.

The shop owners of Dhaka’s kitchen markets are also suffering due to a lack of customers and shortage of supplies.

Md Sobhan Mia, a businessman of Dhaka’s Krishi Market, said, “Very few trucks could pass through Dhaka-Aricha highway for the last three days. Supplies of vegetables and spices could not be replenished. If situation goes on like this, prices of essential food items and other commodities will increase again in the coming days. People will suffer a lot.”

“Why didn’t they agree with the legitimate demands of the students? It could have ended all the problems easily. We don’t know how they will solve it now,” he added.

## ‘Why did they kill my son?’

### Mother mourns death of Palli Bidyut employee from pellet wounds in Rampura

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a blank look, Hasi Akhter was sitting on the floor at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) emergency morgue yesterday.

She was mourning the loss of her only son. Tears have dried on her face from the relentless crying.

Rakib, 23, was killed during a clash between protesters and police yesterday.

Rakib was hit by shotgun pellets at Rampura in the morning. He was taken to DMCH immediately, where the doctors declared him dead around noon.

“How will I survive? He was the only earning member of our family. Rakib was not involved in politics. He was not even a student. Why did they kill him?” Hasi kept asking over and over.

She told The Daily Star that Rakib had been working at the Palli Bidyut office for the last seven years on a day-to-day basis. He became a permanent employee just seven months earlier.

In his wake, Rakib has left behind a widow. The two had gotten married just three years back.

Now, Rakib’s mother, two sisters and wife have no one to provide for them.

## Our daughters still await his return

### Says wife of killed journo Hassan Mehedi

DIPAN NANDY



Even two days ago, Farzana Poppy had been living a life full of love and happiness with her husband and two daughters.

But everything changed on Thursday. Her husband, journalist Hassan Mehedi, was killed on duty during a clash in the capital’s Jatrabari.

With Mehedi’s death, everything just shattered for Farzana and her little girls within a moment. Their two daughters – three-year-old Nisha and six-month-old Meher – aren’t even old enough to understand the gravity of the situation.

“It’s been only five years since we got married, going against our families. We were dreaming of a beautiful life surrounding our two girls; we were all so happy. But now everything is gone...,” said Farzana with a broken voice, as she was waiting in front of the DMCH morgue yesterday, alongside her elder daughter Nisha, to take the body home.

“Nisha is still waiting for her father to return from work and play with her, as he used to do every night,” said Farzana, a homemaker.

Meanwhile, Nisha was roaming around her mother and was constantly asking about her father’s whereabouts.

“I have left my younger daughter at home, she must be really hungry by now,” said Farzana, adding, “We will take Mehedi’s body to his village home in Patuakhali’s Baulal.”

“Now I have no idea how I’ll run the family,” said Farzana.

Before working as a staff reporter at online news portal Dhaka Times, Mehedi worked at Kaler Kantha and Dainik Bangladesh Alo, she said.

Emam Hossain Emon, staff reporter of Dainik Bangladesh Alo who was present during the incident, said Mehedi was shot with shotgun pellets by an Armed Police Carrier (APC) near the ramp of Mayor Hanif Flyover while he was taking video footage.

Mehedi was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.



Farzana Poppy breaks down in tears as her relatives try to console her. Her husband, journalist Hassan Mehedi, was killed on duty during a clash in the capital’s Jatrabari on Thursday. The photo was taken near the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue yesterday when she was waiting to take the body home.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN