

Nine hour curfew break from 8:00am in Dhaka, 3 other dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided that the ongoing nationwide curfew will continue until further notice.

Curfew will be imposed in Dhaka, Narsingdi, Narayanganj and Gazipur today and tomorrow with a nine-hour pause from 8:00am.

The decision on the curfew in other districts will be taken by the deputy commissioners concerned.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said this after a one-hour meeting with the law enforcement agencies at his residence in the capital yesterday.

He said they will make a decision tomorrow about continuing the curfew on Sunday.

The minister said their drives against those involved in vandalism, setting fire to state properties, and killing police personnel and the PS of former Gazipur city mayor Jahangir Alam will continue.



Fishermen loading their deep-sea trawlers with slush ice as they prepare to venture out to the sea after the 65-day fishing ban ended early Wednesday. The photo was taken in the port city's Fisheries Ghat yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

TK 187CR EMBEZZLEMENT CASE Sonali Life Insurance's ex-chairman, family sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against eight people, including the former chairman of Sonali Life Insurance Mostafa Golam Quddus, six of his family members, and one relative, over the embezzlement of Tk 187 crore.

Apart from Quddus, his wife Fazlutun Nesa, two daughters Fauzia Kamrun Tania and Tasnia Kamrun Anika, son Mostafa Quamrus Sobhan, Sobhan's wife Safia Sobhan Chowdhury, and relative Noor-e-Halfa, all of whom were former members in the board of directors have been named as defendants in the case.

The other accused is Tania's husband Mir Rashed Bin Aman, former chief financial officer and chief executive officer of the company.

The case was filed under the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004, ACC Public Relations Officer Aktarul Islam told The Daily Star.

Raqibul Hayat, an assistant director at ACC, filed the case, he said.

According to the case statement, the accused illegally withdrew Tk 187 crore from Sonali Life Insurance using forged documents.

Later, the money was transferred to different companies and bank accounts owned by them.

The case was filed against them for committing crimes punishable under sections 409, 420, 467, 468, 471, and 109 of the Penal Code and section 4 (2) and (3) of the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012.

Russian drones attack Ukraine port for a second night

AFP, Kyiv

Russian drones attacked the southern Ukrainian port city of Izmail for a second straight night damaging infrastructure, Kyiv said yesterday, claiming several Russian attack drones entered Romanian airspace.

Moscow has repeatedly targeted ports in the southern Odesa region since it exited an accord last year brokered by the United Nations and Turkey allowing Ukraine to export grain via the Black Sea.

Local authorities in Izmail said "port infrastructure facilities were damaged" and two civilians were wounded.

The Ukrainian air force said Russia had launched 38 Iranian-designed attack drones and that air defence systems had downed 25.

"Another three Shaheds were lost after crossing the state border with Romania," it said.

The governor of the Odesa region, which borders EU and NATO member Romania, said the attack had damaged an administrative building.

Three people were wounded in a Russian attack one day earlier on Izmail, local authorities had said.

Romania conducted searches for "possible objects fallen" on its territory for a second day yesterday, the country's defence ministry said.

19-yr-old crippled as cop shoots him point-blank

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Eyewitnesses, including Raju Hossain, the storeowner, and others present corroborated Akash's version, confirming his occupation as a dedicated worker, not associated with any protests or unlawful activities.

But the police refused to accept these assurances and all of a sudden one of them just shot Akash in the left knee causing him to crumple to the floor. Profusely bleeding and in excruciating pain, Akash was rushed by his family from one hospital to the other, in a desperate attempt to save his leg.

According to Akash's father Dulal Miah, one private hospital agreed to take him in and took Tk 2 lakh to treat him, promising to save his leg. "But they couldn't and ultimately, Aksah was sent to NITOR [Pangu hospital] and the leg had to be amputated," he said.

Akash was all set to go to Saudi Arabia for work hoping to end his family's financial woes. A single gunshot ended that dream for good.

"Now, all financial resources intended for his future abroad are being drained because of the medical expenses for his treatment," says Akash's father.

The family has already spent Tk 3 lakh on medical bills, including Tk 35 thousand for blood transfusions, depleting their savings. The future looks bleak and uncertain for them.

Akash, lying helplessly in the hospital bed could not reconcile with the fact that he had become disabled for life. "What will I do now?" he asks, "Should I beg in the streets?"

He may even have to forgo his meagre salary of Tk 7,500 from the store as he struggles with the devastating physical and emotional toll of his ordeal.

As Akash's family seeks justice and financial aid for an artificial leg, the incident has ignited widespread condemnation in his community.

Trauma, pain etched on their faces

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When he regained consciousness, he found himself in the hospital bed.

"How will I walk again?" he said before bursting into tears.

He had another surgery yesterday afternoon.

At Nitor, Rifat and Imran are among eight people who lost their limbs after being shot during the recent violence. Of them, six lost their legs while two lost arms.

According to the hospital authorities, 238 patients with gunshot wounds, sustained between July 18 and July 22, had treatment at the hospital. Some of them have been discharged.

Doctors there feared they may not be able to save the limbs of a number of patients under treatment.

Md Mamun, a trucker from Bhairab in Kishoreganj, was lying in a bed of

Casualty Ward-1 on Wednesday.

The 30-year-old was brutally hacked when he was heading to Bhairab from Dhaka on July 19 afternoon.

"I was caught in the middle of a clash. There was gunfire all around me. As I got down from the truck for safety, some people got hold of me and attacked me with knives.

I don't know them," he told this correspondent on Wednesday.

He had seven stitches on his left hand. However, his right hand bore several marks of stabs that became infected.

"The doctors told me there is no other option but to amputate my right hand. How will I drive without my right hand?" Mamun said.

Doctors yesterday had to amputate his right hand, his family members told this paper.

During a visit to the hospital on Wednesday, this correspondent found 34 patients with gunshot wounds still under treatment at Casualty Ward-2.

Seven of them were shot in their arms and 26 in their legs.

The air was heavy with the cries of patients and their relatives. Some were looking for certain types of blood.

Many of them said they were running out of money since they had spent a lot to travel to Dhaka and had been to multiple hospitals before getting to Nitor.

Kazi Shamim Uzzaman, director of Nitor, said all the patients admitted there underwent surgeries and some had multiple surgeries.

"Even after surgeries, some of them still have bullets in their bodies," the

director said.

The country witnessed unprecedented violence centring the quota reform demonstration. The non-violent movement turned violent after Chhatra League men attacked agitating students at Dhaka University and some other universities on July 15.

The violence escalated further in the following days after several students were killed in clashes. The government eventually imposed a nationwide curfew and deployed the armed forces.

According to the count of The Daily Star, since July 16, at least 156 people, including three police personnel, were killed. Several thousand were wounded in clashes between agitators and law enforcers, who were aided allegedly by ruling party activists.

The death toll may rise as The Daily Star could not reach many hospitals in Dhaka and elsewhere where many critically injured were taken for treatment. Also, many friends and families reportedly took the bodies of their loved-ones from the scenes and this newspaper could not contact them. The Daily Star's count of the death toll is based solely on hospital and police sources.

Andaleeve, David Hasanat arrested

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David, who is accused of financing the perpetrators, was also placed on a five day remand by the court.

On Wednesday and yesterday, 1,367 were arrested in the country including 829 people in the capital; 254 of them were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka in 72 cases.

According to data, 3,417 were arrested previously.

At least 302 people were arrested on Wednesday and Thursday in 18 districts in 164 cases in which 2,148 named and 73,520 unnamed people were accused.

Besides, Rab arrested 228 across the country including 55 in Dhaka on the same charges, Rab said.

DB Inspector Abu Sayeed Miah, who is investigating the case filed over arson attack on Setu Bhaban, wrote in the remand application that

Andaleeve expressed solidarity with the students who protested for quota reform and he was involved in arson at Setu Bhaban.

David played an active role in financing the students' movement, added the officer.

Andaleeve told the court he was innocent while David's lawyer said his client was abroad from July 13 to July 23, but didn't show any document in support of the alibi.

Upon hearing both sides, the magistrate turned down the defence pleas and placed them on remand.

Yesterday, another Dhaka court placed seven BNP leaders, including Saiful Alam Nirob, on a five-day remand in the same case.

On July 18, nearly 250 300 unidentified people stormed the Setu Bhaban, vandalised many vehicles, motorbikes, and ransacked different sheds and rooms. They later set those

on fire.

At a press briefing, DMP Additional Commissioner (DB) Harun-or-Rashid said an arrested Juba Dal leader of Gaibandha Nure Alam Siddique Piton received a message from "high-ups" in London that if they can kill a Chhatra League member, the killer would receive Tk 5,000 and to kill a policeman, he would receive Tk 10,000.

Harun claimed that Piton engaged his brother-in-law Abdul Aziz to make this plan successful. In this regard, the BNP-Jamaat-Shibir men carried out vandalism and arson in Uttara and Abdullahpur areas, the DMP DB chief claimed.

Another DMP official, wishing anonymity, said police are identifying those involved in the violence and sabotage by analysing intelligence information and CCTV footage.

Social media off-limits indefinitely

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will take the risk [of opening the social media platforms?]"

The government will write to the platforms seeking explanation for their non-compliance with orders.

"Access to the platforms will be reopened if they promise to comply," Palak added.

Palak though continues to use Facebook prolifically.

He was one of the first persons to take to Facebook after the government resumed broadband service on Tuesday in selected areas.

Since then, he has given dozens of posts on his verified Facebook page.

Palak could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, internet speed improved yesterday as the BTRC instructed the IIG operators to open the majority of cache servers that host Google content, such as YouTube videos and Google search results.

Besides, users will not experience free flow internet as traffic is going

through deep packet inspection (DPI) through the Department of Telecommunications equipment placed previously in the IIG's system, according to people informed with the proceedings.

The DPI works like a security guard checking the contents passing through a checkpoint.

While the government and the BTRC maintained that the internet shutdown occurred due to an attack on the data centres in the capital's Mohakhali, people with knowledge of the matter said the outage was ordered by the government.

The Daily Star has visited the data centres in question and found no sign of damage to the building that housed them.

Officials of the data centres also confirmed that there was no fire in the building. However, the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) opposite the building was torched and that fire partially damaged some

overheard cables connected to the data centres.

On July 17, Palak ordered the shutdown of mobile internet "in light of the current unrest in the country and to stop the spread of fake news on social media".

The next day, the DDM building was torched.

Around 8:00pm, officials of the Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh said the fire might have cut 30-40 percent of the bandwidth supply, leaving some users disconnected and many with slow internet.

An hour later, the entire Bangladesh was without internet.

The government reopened broadband internet in selected areas on July 23 and restored connections on a trial basis nationwide the next day.

However, mobile internet, used by around 14 crore subscribers, continues to be offline.

Play your part to bring the culprits

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She said the infrastructures that provided services, comfort, and convenience to the people have been destroyed.

The premier said the government had to overcome so many obstacles to construct the metro rail and the job was completed ahead of schedule.

The metrorail eased the suffering of the people who earlier had to spend hours in traffic jams, she said, adding that the metro rail and its services are of international standard.

"But what a grave scene of destruction I have seen here! It is unbelievable that people of this country can do this."

Hasina accused the BNP-Jamaat of taking the advantage of the students' quota reform protests to unleash destruction.

She said she has done everything over the last 15 years for the welfare and happiness of the people.

"Who are the beneficiaries of the development? It is the mass people of the country. Why is there so much anger about the metro rail? That is my question."

The premier said the government made highest efforts to convince

the quota reform protesters that the matter was in court and the government was doing its best to get a result that would not disappoint them.

"But they did not agree to have patience till the delivery of the verdict by the apex court. They are pressing their demands still now. At first it was one-point demand but now it is eight-point demand."

Hasina said a situation was created to give the BNP-Jamaat the opportunity to carry out the mayhem.

"Who are the worst sufferers? I don't know how long it would take to restore the metro rail stations."

The PM inspected different parts of the station.

Senior officials of the Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) briefed Hasina about the destruction and the plan to reopen the Mirpur-10 and Kazipara stations.

Some unidentified people went on a rampage at the two metro stations on July 18 during demonstrations by students demanding reform of the quota system in government jobs.

Metro rail services were suspended that day.

End crackdown

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— and many are missing following protests by students and youth movements against government policies, the statement says.

The rights chief also urged the authorities to provide a guarantee that there would be no reprisals against those involved in the protests.

He emphasised longer-term, comprehensive security sector reform to prevent future abuses and safeguard the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.

He called on the government to restore full internet access to allow all people, including journalists and media outlets, to communicate freely and in line with international law.

He hoped the Supreme Court's decision on Sunday, which allowed 7 percent of quota in government jobs, would help to open a space for confidence-building, leading to meaningful and inclusive dialogues to address underlying issues and grievances.

He appealed to all political actors to avoid any statements or actions that could constitute incitement to violence or lead to a further crackdown on dissent.

Meanwhile, Deprose Muchena, a senior director at Amnesty International, yesterday urged the Bangladesh government to "lift shoot-on-sight orders, fully restore internet access across the country and end the use of army and paramilitary forces in the policing of protests".

The rights group released the second part of its evidence analysis series on Bangladesh's quota-reform protest yesterday.

The authorities must also guarantee that shoot-on-sight orders and internet shutdowns will not be used in the future to suppress protests, Muchena said.

He said these repressive measures are a deliberate attempt to crush both these protests and any future dissent.

Amnesty citing media reports said there have been at least 2,500 arrests, nearly 200 deaths and several thousand injuries since the protests turned deadly on July 16.

At least 61,000 people have been charged over the recent violence, said the rights group.

In its evidence analysis, Amnesty said Bangladesh authorities cracked down on protesters, deployed armed forces, declared a curfew and issued a shoot-on-sight order during a six-day communication curb period starting