



Multinationals' profits decline for lower sales

B1



Taskin on red-ball track, Shakib available

P11



Ukraine downs 89 Russian drones

P7



New Khulna jail: construction works drag on for 12 years

P5

Police block 'March for Justice'

Use teargas, stun grenades, charge batons; at least 100 hurt; 83 held

STAR REPORT

The law enforcers yesterday foiled the quota protesters' March for Justice by using teargas and stun grenades and charging batons in different districts.

At least 100 people were injured and 83 detained during the protests.

Teachers, parents, and people from various walks of life joined the programme called by the Students against Discrimination in protest of the killings and arrests of students and people, filing of cases, and abductions.

In Barishal, at least 11 people, including five journalists, were injured when police hit them with batons.

The injured journalists, The Daily Star photographer Titu Das, Jugantar photographer Shamim Ahmed, Jamuna TV videographer Hridoy Chandra Shil, NTV videographer Gobinda Saha, and barta24.net reporter Tuhin, took primary treatment at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Witnesses said some students were marching on SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



A female student, who said she was just 17, being carried away in a prison van after police obstructed the 'March for Justice' near the BMA Bhaban in Khulna city yesterday. Right top, Nusrat Noor, a law student of Stamford University being dragged away by cops while Nusrat Noor, a student of the same university, refuses to let him be taken away during the protests near the High Court. Right bottom, students from different universities gathered near the HC gate. PHOTOS: HABIBUR RAHMAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN



ABU SAYED MURDER CASE 16-yr-old in Rangpur jail for 12 days

Father says he was shot in his leg

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A 16-year-old is in Rangpur jail for 12 days after his arrest in the case filed over Abu Sayed's killing.

Begum Rokeya University student Sayed was shot and killed during the quota reform protest near his university on July 16.

Video footage shows police shooting Sayed, who posed no threat to the law enforcers. He died soon afterwards.

But contradicting what is clear as daylight, the First Information Report filed by police says Sayed was not a victim of police firing. "The protesters fired weapons and threw chunks of bricks from different directions, and at one stage, a student [Sayed] was seen falling to the ground," read the FIR.

"Police have shown my son Mahim arrested in the Abu Sayed murder case," said Md Shahjalal, who owns a photo studio in Rangpur city.

Alfi Shahrir Mahim, a first-year HSC student of Rangpur Police Lines School and College, is 16 years and 10 months old, said his father, citing his birth certificate.

Public Prosecutor Rafiq Hasnain at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Rangpur said Mahim was not a named accused in the Abu Sayed murder case, SEE PAGE 7 COL 5



Mahim

Process underway to ban Jamaat and Shibir

Home boss says it may happen any time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The banning of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student front Chhatra Shibir is under process, said the home minister, despite expectation that it was going to happen yesterday.

Yesterday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan mentioned no date for issuing a notification in this regard but said it could be issued any time.

"I have not received the file yet. We are waiting. We had meetings in the morning and in the afternoon ... A few issues were discussed with the prime minister, including the ban on Jamaat," he said. "We will announce whenever the decision comes."

Asaduzzaman said Jamaat was going to be banned as per Section 18 of the Anti-Terrorism Act.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT EU postpones negotiations with Dhaka

Cites 'prevailing situation' as reason

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The European Union has postponed its first round of negotiation with Bangladesh on a new agreement meant to elevate its partnership with the South Asian country.

"In light of the prevailing situation, the first round of negotiations on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement envisaged for September has been postponed with no later date fixed as yet," Nabila Massrari, EU spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, told The Daily Star in a message yesterday.

The decision comes a day after EU High Representative and Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell on Tuesday issued a statement condemning the "shoot-on-sight policy" announced by the authorities in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Harun transferred from DB 5 other top DMP officials also transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Additional Deputy Commissioner Harun or Rashid has been removed from the Detective Branch.

In a major reshuffle, six top officials of DMP including Harun were transferred yesterday.

Harun has been transferred to the crime and operations division of DMP, said a notification signed by DMP Commissioner Habibur Rahman. He will be replaced by DMP Additional Commissioner Ashrafuzzaman, it added.

Harun's transfer came two days after a meeting of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, where some alliance leaders expressed their discontent about Harun.

On Monday, the High Court also expressed its displeasure over a photo of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

'Structures can be rebuilt, lives lost will never return'

PM says about violence centring quota protests

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the destroyed structures can be rebuilt but the lives lost during the recent violence in the country can never be returned.

She was speaking at a programme marking the inauguration of the National Fisheries Week 2024 at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

Hasina said there was no issue for waging a movement as she fulfilled all the demands of the students and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court ordered status quo on the High Court judgment, restoring the effectiveness of the government's 2018 notification that abolished the quota system in government jobs.

Despite that, such incidents happened and destructive activities were carried out, leading to loss of so many lives, she said.

"I never thought such a situation would arise and so many lives would be lost."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Quader booted off a meeting with ex-BCL leaders



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader faced the wrath of former Chhatra League leaders yesterday as he began speaking to the media instead of having discussions with them at a views-exchange meeting.

The AL organised the meeting at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue head office at 11:00am and according to the invitation letter, Quader was supposed to exchange views with the former Chhatra League leaders.

However, Quader reached the venue around 11:20am and immediately started talking to the media without having any SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Palestinians attend a protest in Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday, after the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Iran.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Hamas leader killed in Iran by Israeli air strike

Says the Palestinian group, warns assassination takes war to 'new levels'

AGENCIES

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in Iran yesterday morning, the Palestinian group and Tehran said, drawing threats of revenge on Israel in a region already shaken by the offensive in Gaza and a deepening conflict in Lebanon.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards confirmed the death of Haniyeh, hours after he attended a swearing in ceremony for the country's new president, and said it was investigating. Haniyeh has been killed in an Israeli air strike in the Iranian capital, Hamas said.

Haniyeh, normally based in Qatar, has been the face of Hamas's international diplomacy as the Israel's offensive in Gaza began on October 7. The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 39,445 people have been killed in the offensive. The toll includes 45 deaths in 24 hours, according to the ministry figures.

Hamas' armed wing said in a statement Haniyeh's killing would "take the battle to new levels and have major repercussions", while Iran also vowed to retaliate.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Ismail Haniyeh



Students stage a demonstration at Doyel Chattar near the Chattogram court as part of their "March for Justice" programme yesterday. Top right, police take away protesters after detaining them near the entrance to the Barishal District and Sessions Judge's Court on Fazlul Haque Avenue in Barishal city. Bottom right, students clash with police and BGB personnel after law enforcers broke up a protest at Khulna city's Satrasta intersection.



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN, TITU DAS, HABIBUR RAHMAN

POST-COUP MYANMAR Junta extends emergency rule amid conflict

REUTERS

Myanmar's embattled military government extended a state of emergency yesterday for another six months, state media said, as the junta struggles to maintain its grip on power with fighting flaring on multiple fronts and the economy in crisis.

Army-run Myawaddy media said the military-controlled National Defence and Security Council extended emergency rule to give the junta more time to put together population data for voter lists. The junta has said it will hold an election next year.

The military put the country under emergency rule for a year when it took power in a February 2021 coup, deposing the elected civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi and triggering nationwide street protests that it violently crushed.

Harun transferred Police block 'March for Justice'

FROM PAGE 1
six detained quota protest organisers eating at the DB office with Harun.

"Why did they do that? Whoever is taken there [DB office] is made to sit at the dining table. Don't mock the nation," said the HC.

Meanwhile, DMP Additional Commissioner Kh Mahid Uddin has been transferred to the logistics, finance, and procurement division from the crime division.

DMP Joint Commissioner (operations) Biplob Kumar Sarker was transferred to DB (South).

Besides, joint commissioners Sanjit Kumar Roy was transferred to the DB (North) and Khondaker Nurrunabi (DB-North) was transferred to DMP's operations division.

At the Monday's meeting, 14 party alliance leaders Rashed Khan Menon and Hasanul Haque Inu urged caution from ruling party members and the government officials while making public statements, according to meeting sources.

Referring to the photo of quota protesters at DB office and the statement allegedly made by them afterwards announcing the end of protests, Menon said such activities by a government official carries a wrong message.

He also said a political crisis should be dealt with by politicians.

People do not trust political solutions given by bureaucrats, and the statement made by the protesters from the DB office is nothing but a mockery, meeting sources quoted him as saying.

In reply, the prime minister, who chaired the meeting, said she will "take care" of Harun.

Quader

FROM PAGE 1
discussion with the invitees.

There were nearly 100 former Chhatra League leaders, including some ex-presidents and general secretaries of the pro-AL student body, present at the meeting.

At one stage, some ex-Chhatra League leaders started yelling and expressing their displeasure.

"Why are you [Quader] talking to the media without having any conversation with us? If you want to talk to the media, why did you invite us?" yelled some of them at Quader.

Quader then asked them to stop, but they paid no heed. Eventually, Quader left without finishing his speech to the media.

As he was heading towards his office on the sixth floor, the ex-Chhatra League leaders chanted "bhua, bhua [fake, fake]".

They chanted "bhua, bhua" again when Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, was leaving the office.

The former Chhatra League leaders also criticised AL presidium member Abdur Razzaque, who was beside Quader. They claimed that Razzaque's son supported the quota reform protest. They also questioned as to why Razzaque was invited.

Earlier, Quader held several views-exchange meetings and joint meetings with party units of Dhaka city after the quota reform protest became violent.

But on most occasions, Quader was the lone speaker at the meetings.

In his address to the media yesterday, Quader called upon all to forget their differences and fight terrorism.

"We don't need leaders and activists who will not do any work, just come to the office and give protocols. No protocol is required. Our protocol is our standard. Our protocol is the model of our politics," he said.

FROM PAGE 1
Kathpatti Road in the city around 11:00am when police dispersed them, charging batons.

The students later entered the Barishal City Corporation building, where a scuffle occurred between them and City Panel Mayor-2 Enamul Haque Bahar. At least 13 protesters were detained.

Arichul Haque, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said most of the detainees had been released.

Deputy Commissioner Tanvir Arafat of Barishal Metropolitan Police apologised to journalists.

Meanwhile, the quota reform protesters last night announced that they would remember their fallen comrades today through programmes called Remembering the Heroes.

In a press release, Rifat Rashed, assistant coordinator of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, said the victims will be remembered by their families and classmates.

Painting, graffiti, wall writing, festoons, and photos of the incidents will be displayed at the programmes. Silent processions, street theatre, and protest songs will be organised on campuses.

They urged social media users to make

posts with the hashtags #JulyMassacre, #RememberingOurHeroes.

They also demanded a thorough investigation into the killings during the violence.

Their nine-point demand include an apology from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and the resignations of Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, Law Minister Anisul Huq, State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mohammad Ali Arafat, and State Minister for Post, Telecommunications, and Information Technology Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

In Sylhet, around 100 students demonstrated in front of the gate of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) in the morning.

Police used teargas and stun grenades as the protesters, marching towards the court premises, reached Subid Bazar around 1:00pm and removed barriers placed by police.

Locals said around 50 people were injured.

Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (north) at Sylhet Metropolitan Police, later told reporters that hundreds of Jamaat Shibir men

were in the procession. When the protesters threw bricks, the police used tear gas to disperse them.

He added that no one was injured or detained.

In a separate incident, around 100 cultural, social, and political activists marched through the city demanding justice for the victims.

In Khulna, police detained at least 19 people, students said.

Hundreds of students marched from the city's Nirala Mor to Royal Mor around 1:40pm. They removed barriers at Moyla Pota intersection and demonstrated at Satrasta intersection.

Police and demonstrators chased each other around 2:15pm.

In Dinajpur, police detained 10 people, including five female students. As students gathered at Dinajpur Gore Shaheed Boromath around 11:30am, police chased them away.

The students then gathered in front of Dinajpur Shaheed Minar and started chanting slogans. Police detained 10 of them, said Farid Hossain, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station in Dinajpur.

In the capital, law enforcers intercepted several hundred students, mostly from private universities, near the High Court.

At least five students were allegedly picked up from the area when students, accompanied by some teachers and lawyers, attempted to enter the HC premises. One of the detainees was released later.

Meanwhile, two Dhaka University teachers — Prof Nusrat Jahan Chowdhury and Shehreen Amin Monami — were also allegedly shoved by police when they along with three students tried to stop policemen from detaining a college student.

"I did not expect this behaviour. I came here to stand with the students. Don't we have the right to be here?" asked Prof Nusrat.

The University Teachers' Network later condemned the "misbehaviour" of police and demanded the authorities investigate the incident.

Around 1:00pm when police attempted to take a few more students in a pickup. Nusrat Noor, a private university student, stood in front of the vehicle and some other people joined her.

"My fellow university student has been detained by the police. We came for a peaceful protest for justice, but the police obstructed our programme," Nusrat told The Daily Star.

Around 1:15pm, a group of mostly

pro-BNP DU teachers marching from the campus to the High Court was stopped by law enforcers in front of Shishu Academy.

They sat on the road where around 200 students from BUET, DU, and several private universities joined them. They went back to the Doyel Chattar area, after police released two detained students.

Around the same time, over 50 lawyers stood inside the closed Mazar Gate of the HC and chanted slogans.

In Chattogram, around 500 students demonstrated on Chattogram Court premises.

Nearly 30 pro-BNP lawyers demonstrated at the main entrance of the court building. A confrontation then occurred between them and Pro-AL lawyers.

In Jashore, students gathered in the town in the morning and as they walked towards the police superintendent's office, police hit them with batons, injuring at least six. Six students were detained there.

In Kustia, at least 15 people were detained when they tried to demonstrate in the DC Court area.

Jahangirnagar University students and teachers marched and collected signatures demanding the release of arrested students around 1:00pm.

Process underway

FROM PAGE 1
He said this while briefing reporters at his office after a meeting with the members of law enforcement agencies.

Early today, home ministry officials said the home ministry sent the law-ministry vetted ban proposal back to the law ministry asking it to issue a notification.

Jahangir Alam, secretary to the Public Security Division at the home ministry, told The Daily Star around 12:30am today that the issuance of the circular was pending with the law ministry.

"They will put the SRO [Statutory Regulatory Order] number and after that it will be issued," he added.

The issue of the ban came to the fore after the Awami League-led 14-party alliance unanimously recommended banning the two organisations during a meeting at the Gono Bhaban with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday.

It became the talk of the town yesterday as Law Minister Anisul Huq on Tuesday said a government notification in this regard may be issued yesterday.

He said the proposal to ban Jamaat and Shibir would be sent to the law ministry from the home ministry as per rules and that the ban would be enforced though an executive order.

Hamas leader killed in Iran

FROM PAGE 1
Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said Israel had provided the grounds for "harsh punishment for itself" and it was Tehran's duty to avenge the Hamas leader's death as it had occurred in the Iranian capital. Iranian forces had already made strikes directly on Israel earlier in the Gaza offensive.

There was no comment nor claim of responsibility from Israel. The Israeli military said it was assessing the situation but had not issued any new security guidelines for civilians.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was expected to meet for consultations with security officials later yesterday.

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said Washington would work to try to ease tensions but said the United States would help defend Israel if it were attacked, reports Reuters.

"I don't think war is inevitable. I maintain that. I think there's always room and opportunities for diplomacy," he told reporters during a visit to the Philippines. "We're going to work hard to make sure that we're doing things to help take the temperature down and address issues through diplomatic gatherings."

The government has been accusing Jamaat and Shibir of resorting to violence centring the quota reform protest.

Asaduzzaman yesterday said the Jamaat-Shibir created the ongoing situation. The Jamaat, Shibir, BNP clique resorted to destructive activities from behind by keeping the students at the forefront, he said, alleging that militant organisations were also involved.

"Students would not have resorted to destructive activities if the advisers did not advise them. So many people have been injured. Have all been shot by the police? We will also reveal how many people were killed and injured in whose firing," the home minister said.

He said Jamaat Shibir was banned before. Late president Ziaur Rahman gave them the right to form a party.

The people in favour of the Liberation War and the civil society members are now talking about banning Jamaat. It is the demand of the people, he said.

The Election Commission on October 29, 2018, scrapped the registration of Jamaat, a long-time ally of the BNP, following a High Court verdict that declared Jamaat's registration illegal.

Structures can be rebuilt

FROM PAGE 1
Hasina said the government formed a judicial inquiry commission, led by an HC judge, to investigate the incidents even before anyone asked for it.

She said she sought cooperation from the United Nations and other international organisations to help the government conduct a proper investigation into the violence centring the quota reform protest so that the real culprits could be punished.

The PM said she has already directed the authorities to increase the manpower of the probe committee by including two more members and expand the scope of the investigation.

Hasina said she has been living with the pain of losing her dear ones. She prayed for the salvation of the departed souls and conveyed her profound sympathy to the bereaved families.

She questioned why blood was shed and such an abnormal situation was created in Bangladesh at a time when the world treats Bangladesh with respect.

Referring to her visits to different hospitals to see the injured, Hasina said she witnessed the sufferings of many people, including a small child, and it was very painful.

EU postpones negotiations with Dhaka

FROM PAGE 1
The government put the death toll at 150 in violence centring the quota reform protest.

But according to The Daily Star's count, at least 163 people were killed.

The death toll from the violence could be much higher as this newspaper could not reach many hospitals, where dozens of critically injured patients were taken.

Also, many families reportedly collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene, and this newspaper could not contact those families.

The Daily Star's count of the victims is based solely on hospital and police sources.

In the statement, Borrell also expressed grave concern over unlawful killings perpetrated in recent days by the authorities in Bangladesh. He called for thoroughly investigating the killings and bringing those responsible to justice.

"We will follow closely the actions of the authorities in the context of this crisis and... expect all human rights to

be fully respected," Borrell said.

Bangladesh exported products to the EU market worth \$24 billion in 2023. This is 58 percent of Bangladesh's total export, according to the Export Promotion Bureau.

Bangladesh enjoys duty-free access to the EU market because of its LDC status.

The country can enjoy similar privileges after 2026 under another scheme called GSP Plus, which will, however, require conditions on human rights, labour rights, democracy, and environment.

Once the country is graduated, it will face 12.5 percent duty on export of goods to the EU if Bangladesh cannot obtain the GSP Plus fulfilling EU's conditions of 32 international conventions, including four core conventions on labour, human rights, good governance, and environmental protection.

Experts said any kind of bad relationship with the EU may have a negative impact on trade.

The EU and Bangladesh agreed in

principle in 2022 to sign the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA).

The first round of negotiation was scheduled in Dhaka in September.

A diplomatic source said Bangladesh is willing to hold the first round of negotiation of PCA in November, considering the 79th session of the UN General Assembly opens on September 10, 2024.

In view of the increasing importance of EU-Bangladesh relations, including in the international domain, the EU had proposed to initiate discussions for signing the PCA, which is aimed at enhancing dialogue between both sides on issues of global concern and give more scope for mutually beneficial cooperation in a wide range of policy and strategic areas, said the European Commission.

"The PCA will give Bangladesh-EU relations a new legal foundation, which is 'more comprehensive and up-to-date', and will respond better to current and evolving challenges," according to the European Commission.

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'Almost a terrorist attack' to topple govt

PM tells Indian envoy

UNB, Dhaka

Terming the recent violence in the country "almost a terrorist attack", Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the attacks were aimed at creating a situation like Sri Lanka to oust her government.

"It was not a movement at all, and at one stage it almost turned into a terrorist attack," she said while Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma called on her at her official residence Gono Bhavan.

PM's Press Secretary
SEE PAGE 4 COL 7



Demanding justice for the killings and torture of students and innocent bystanders, teachers of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology bring out a procession on the campus yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

'Killings during quota protests state-sponsored'

Says Prof Salimullah Khan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All the killings that took place during the quota reform protests were state sponsored and carried out by the forces of the state and its associates, said Prof Salimullah Khan of University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh yesterday.

Salimullah, while talking at a programme in front of the university, also said considering the current situation, an international probe is certainly necessary for a "credible investigation into the killings". He also expressed skepticism whether people will get justice over the killings.

Wearing red clothes, teachers of ULAB held a sit-in in front of the university entrance in the morning, demanding the release of students who were arrested during the protests, the withdrawal of cases filed against them, an end to oppression, and a peaceful environment for education.

Salimullah said they are extending their support to the killed, injured, disappeared, and persecuted people.

He said the question of whether all will have the right to

The government, without going to the problem's root, is now saying they will slap a ban on this party or that party. This will not even scratch the surface of the main problem. Rather, this will make it more complex.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

More than just NUMBERS

A 20-year-old young mother shot dead in Narayanganj. A 26-year-old nightguard dies from bullet wounds at a Dhaka hospital. A 25-year-old student fatally shot in Dhaka. At least 163 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are sons, husbands, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.



A family left to navigate pain and loss

Nightguard Imran, 26, dies of bullet wounds in Dhaka

SHUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Fifteen-month-old Yaj Khalifa clung to his mother, Shanta Akhtar, his tiny face a mixture of confusion and fear as he gazed at the unfamiliar faces in their home.

The air in their Barishal residence was thick with grief as Shanta's sob fill the room. "How am I going to survive now? I have lost everything."

Her husband, Imran Khalifa, 26, died after a bullet hit him near Shahjadpur Market in Dhaka around 6:00pm on July 19 amid the clashes centring the quota reform protests.

Imran worked as a nightguard in Gulshan.

He moved to Dhaka from Kalna in Barishal with his family last year in search of better opportunities.

Initially, Imran tried his hand at selling shoes on the footpath, but it failed. He then worked as a labourer, struggling to make ends meet. Finally, on July 3, he secured a job as a nightguard at an apartment building.

Life slowly started to fall into places for the three. They rented a small room in Shahjadpur Khilbaritek area. It wasn't much but it was home.

But everything changed on July 19.

With teary eyes, Shanta recalled the events.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Bullet leaves newborn without a mother

20-year-old Sumaiya dies after being shot; family believes it came from a helicopter

SAURAV HOSSAIN SIAM, Narayanganj

There were loud noises everywhere.

Helicopters were flying over the Siddhirganj area of Narayanganj since the afternoon.

It was July 20 and clashes were ongoing between protesters and law enforcers.

Once her two-month-old daughter fell asleep, Sumaiya Akter, 20, put her down on the bed and went to the balcony of their apartment on the sixth floor, to see what was happening outside.

Suddenly, a bullet hit her and she fell on the floor.

Her mother, Asma Begum, was already in the balcony at the time. She did not immediately realise what happened. She saw her daughter lying in a pool of blood.

"I kept calling her name, but got no



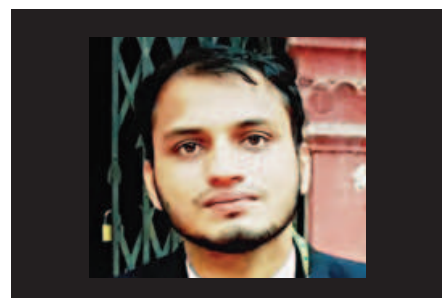
response. It took me a while to realise that she was no more. She was shot in the head. The bullet pierced through the iron grille before hitting her," Asma said while pointing to the hole in the rod of the balcony grille.

Sumaiya's younger brother, Md Sojol,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Jihad wanted to be a cricketer

Death of 25-year-old leaves family distraught



SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

In the small, close-knit community of Nalkhola Bazar in Patuakhali's Dasmina upazila, the grief was palpable.

The Hossain family was mourning an irreplaceable loss - their son, Jihad Hossain, a 25-year-old postgraduate student at Dhaka's Kabi Nazrul Government College,

whose life was tragically cut short during the anti-quota protests in Dhaka on July 19.

Jihad was the youngest of Nurul Amin Molla and Shahanur Begum's four children. He was a beacon of hope for his family, known for his affable nature and academic diligence. Jihad's elder siblings, Jannatul Ferdous and Zainab Akhter Neela, are married, while his elder brother Jinnat Hossain is a government primary school teacher.

Their father, Nurul Amin, is a farmer.

After graduating from Dasmina Model Government Secondary School in 2016, Jihad pursued higher education in history at Kabi Nazrul Government College, residing with his cousin Kulsom in Dhaka's Sadarghat area.

He loved to play cricket and aspired to play for the country someday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

'Such killings during protests unacceptable and barbaric'

Says MJF, calls on govt to probe all incidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has expressed grave concern over the widespread violence and casualties centring the ongoing anti-discrimination student protests in the country.

Referring to a media report published on July 29, MJF, in a statement, mentioned that 210 deaths have been reported so far in the protests, with detailed information available for 150 of the deceased. Among them, 113 were children, adolescents, and young adults, including 19 individuals aged between four and 17 years.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'Count all the bodies, stop arrests, torture'

Demand speakers at press conference by Outraged Women Community

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent women of the country yesterday said that the government is failing to realise that the anti-discrimination student protest has the support of millions of people across the country. Because of this failure, they are constantly taking more anti people steps and only speaking the language of bullets.

They said the people of Bangladesh sacrificed their lives for independence, but people are not safe in this independent country, they have to sacrifice their lives fighting for their rights. All bodies will be counted, mass arrests and torture must be stopped.

The remarks were made at a press conference organised by the Outraged Women Community at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

Women's leader Farida Akhtar said, "As long as such autocratic incidents continue in this country, we will stay on the streets until the demands of the students are met."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Rights violations soar amid protests

Says MSF report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A recent media monitoring report revealed that the ongoing anti-discrimination student protests in Bangladesh have resulted in at least 211 deaths and nearly 7,730 injuries.

The report also revealed that there have been 798 incidents of violence and sabotage nationwide, resulting in 10,372 arrests.

Prepared by the Manabdhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF) and verified by local rights defenders, the report analysed data from major print and online dailies based in Bangladesh.

As per the report, in Dhaka division alone, 270 cases have led to 2,891 arrests. Notably, over 2,13,000 individuals, many of whom are unidentified, have been accused in 200 cases.

Additionally, 259 students have been arrested across Dhaka and 18 other districts for their alleged involvement in sabotage during the unrest.

The report also detailed political violence over the past two months, with at least eight people killed and 214 injured in 30 incidents in June and July. Post-election violence has claimed another eight lives and injured 490 people in 50 separate incidents.

Between June and July, there were 559

reported incidents of violence against women and girls - including 82 cases of rape, 24 cases of gang rape, four murders following rape, 42 cases of attempted rape, 143 murders, and 63 cases of physical abuse.

The MSF report further revealed that, in June and July, 44 journalists faced torture, attacks, injuries, lawsuits, and harassment.

Additionally, since mid-July, the recent unrest has led to four journalist being killed, 35 injuries from shotgun pellets, and 224 other injuries from gunfire or attacks.

The report also documented that six people were killed extrajudicially, two died in custody, two were killed while fleeing law enforcement, and nine died in jail.

The report again indicated that nine people were killed and nine others injured in border incidents, with two also being tortured. Additionally, mob violence also claimed seven lives and left nine injured.

The monitoring report, signed by MSF Founding President Sultana Kamal, mentioned that the organisation condemns the rising rights violations and urges authorities to ensure political engagement, peaceful elections, voting rights, freedom of assembly, expression, and civic security.



David Hasanat granted bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to garment exporter KM Rezaul Hasanat David, chairman and CEO of Viyellatex Group, in a case filed over vandalising and setting Setu Bhaban on fire on July 18.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Jashim passed the order considering his health condition after his lawyer Sheikh Baharul Islam moved a petition on grounds that David was abroad during the time of occurrence.

During the hearing, the lawyer told the court that his client is a renowned businessman and was implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass him. The accused was abroad from July 13 to July 23.

Moreover, the accused has been suffering from different ailments. So, his client should be granted bail considering the depth of offences, said the lawyer.

While Sub-inspector Shah Alom opposed the bail petition saying that David was accused of financing the perpetrators.

Upon hearing both the sides, the magistrate granted David bail. The bail order will be valid until the submission of the probe report, said the magistrate.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 1

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:20	12:45	5:00	6:47	8:15
JAMAA 4:55	1:15	5:15	6:50	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



KURIGRAM, LALMONIRHAT Floodwater sweeps away fish worth Tk 6cr

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Recent floods have wreaked havoc on fish farms across Kurigram and Lalmonirhat, with floodwaters sweeping away fish and fish fries worth Tk 6 crore from 3,550 ponds and enclosures.

Approximately 2,000 individuals engaged in pisciculture have been severely affected, said officials.

According to the fisheries department in Kurigram, 210 tonnes of fish and fish fries from 3,100 ponds on 450 hectares of land along the banks of the Brahmaputra, Dudhkumar, and Dharla rivers were washed away, leaving 1,600 fish farmers in dire straits with a total loss of Tk 5 crore.

In Lalmonirhat, the floodwaters washed away 50 tonnes of fish and fish fries from 450 ponds on 90 hectares of land in the Dharla and Teesta rivers'

shoal areas, causing a total loss of Tk 1 crore to 400 fish farmers.

"I had taken a Tk two lakh loan to rear fish in two leased ponds on four acres of land. All the fish were washed away by the floodwaters from the Brahmaputra. I don't know how I will repay the loan and raise capital to resume my venture," said Sudan Chandra Das, a fish farmer from Patrakhata village under Kurigram's Chilmari upazila.

Fish farmers Noor Islam from the Sardob area under Kurigram Sadar upazila and Dhiren Chandra Das of Kulaghat village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila shared similar plights.

Moktadir Khan, district fisheries officer in Kurigram, said a list of flood-affected fish farmers has been prepared and sent to higher authorities, requesting government assistance for them.

'No shots were fired from Rab helicopters'

Says Rab HQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion Headquarters yesterday in a statement once again said only teargas canisters and sound grenades were fired from their helicopters during the recent protests.

"No shots were fired from our helicopters. But a quarter is deliberately trying to make the use of helicopters controversial..." it said.

While explaining the death of 11-year-old Shafkat Samir during the ongoing violence on July 19, the Rab Headquarters said Samir was shot dead while closing the window of his house on the second floor of a four-storey building in Kafur.

"Propaganda is being spread that Samir was shot from the helicopter of Rab forces. However, the helicopter travels in an uninterrupted pace, and the bullets move in a straight line..." it said.

"Considering the overall situation... the speed of the bullet that hit his eye does not match in any way," the statement read.

Curfew to be lifted soon

Home minister tells UN resident coordinator

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan yesterday said the country's situation is gradually becoming normal and the curfew would be lifted soon.

He said this in response to a query of Gwyn Lewis, UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh.

"We will be able to withdraw the curfew soon. The army will also go back to barracks," said the minister.

After a meeting with Lewis at the secretariat, the minister spoke to the media. He said the UN wanted to know about the detention of a teenager.

Asaduzzaman said the age of the said teen is yet to be known. They came to know from his school records that he was seventeen and a half years old. "He was involved in the crime of killing a cop in Jatrabari."

They have identified him through video evidence, said the minister. He said the boy is now in a correction centre as per the existing law.

Regarding the loss of lives, he said, "Our police and security forces were forced to fire to protect lives and property. The miscreants put forth children and stayed behind during the violence. As they [miscreants] started throwing bricks and blasting crude bombs, police were forced to use tear gas. When the violence escalated, police had to take other steps that left a number of people killed."

He said the UN resident coordinator also asked him about the use of armored personnel carriers (APC) with the UN insignia.

"I informed her that the army might have used the APCs with UN logo unintentionally, but when it came to light, those vehicles were not used anymore. No operational activities were conducted by those vehicles."

Govt takes measure to form public opinion against violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has directed all deputy commissioners and UNOs to create public opinion against terrorism and violence in their areas by forming a "Terrorism and Sabotage Prevention Committee" amid the ongoing situation.

The committee, comprising representatives of local dignitaries and social, cultural, religious, professional, and business organisations, will work to form public opinion through mass contact.

In a letter yesterday, the cabinet division instructed calling a meeting for each of such committees across all metropolitan, districts, upazilas, municipalities, wards, and unions.

In this regard, the cabinet division has directed the secretary of LGD, all divisional and deputy commissioners to take the necessary measures and to report to the division, said the letter.

A family left to navigate

FROM PAGE 3

Around 5:30pm, Imran had asked Shanta to prepare dinner for his night shift. He said he would step out briefly to see what was going on outside. Tragedy struck as he walked towards the market. A sudden bullet ended his life. "My husband was not involved in politics. All he cared about was taking care of his family," Shanta wept.

While talking to Shanta, this correspondent saw Imran's parents, Nazrul

Islam, 68, and Selina Akhtar, 50, sitting in silence.

Nazrul recounted the moment he received a call from Imran's phone on Friday night. "It was not him speaking. Someone said he was at a hospital."

Shanta said she rushed to the hospital, only to find Imran's lifeless body among many others. "The doctor said a bullet had pierced through his body."

Imran was buried near his village home on July 21.

Count all the bodies

FROM PAGE 3

"Almost every day, we see the prime minister visiting the injured in clashes in different hospitals. It's nothing but a farce," she said.

Rahnuma Ahmed, a writer and researcher, said the government, with its forces, not only killed the youth, but also killed the dreams and future of the country.

"Eliminating quota discrimination has now become a symbol. Young people are furious. They don't want to see such a country again. They want to rebuild the country, they want to dream anew. They want to live freely and with dignity. In doing so, they had to give their lives. What could be more shameful?"

Shireen Haque, a women's rights activist, said, "The courage of today's youth has overwhelmed us. Even after being attacked, they have developed resistance. However, from the events that have happened, it is easy to guess that our country will not go back to the previous place. But we all have to remember the fundamental rights of the constitution. Accordingly, the country should be run."

Writer and researcher Maha Mirza said, "What has happened in the last few days is genocide. What

is being done to cover it up is unimaginable. Students are being picked up from their homes, it is not possible to know where they are being taken. This is a clear violation of human rights. There has never been so many human rights violations in Bangladesh."

Environment Activist Sharmeen Morshed said, "What have we gone through in the last few days? The electricity was turned off, the internet was turned off and students were picked up from their homes. In 1971, Pakistan forces attacked the youth, today our own forces attacked them. But the young people did not lose courage. The new Liberation War of the youth has begun. We are with them in this fight."

Labour leader Taslima Akhter said that the quota reform protest has now brought the issue of protecting democracy and freedom of speech to the forefront. There is no scope to divide it with the spirit of the Liberation War or Razakars. Because there have not been these many killings in this country in recent memory.

Filmmaker Reetu Sattar read out a written statement at the press conference.

The speakers also put

forth six demands -- the nine-point demand of the anti discrimination student movement must be accepted; all detained students must be released unconditionally; police killings must be investigated; curfew should be withdrawn, along with BGB and army; lives of ordinary people should be protected and general students should not be threatened through various agencies.

Such killings

FROM PAGE 3

MJF's Executive Director Shaheen Anam called for the protection of all individuals from violence, stating, "Such killings, especially of children, during protests are absolutely unacceptable and barbaric. We are extremely concerned about the high number of child fatalities. We want a safe environment for all children."

Shaheen Anam urged everyone to ensure that no child's safety is compromised and to keep children away from all political activities.

She strongly called on the government to conduct thorough and transparent investigations into each incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Bullet leaves newborn



A bullet pierced through this bar of the balcony grilles and struck Sumaiya.

PHOTO: STAR

FROM PAGE 3

said, "Since the morning of that day, helicopters were flying in the area."

Asma kept pointing to the bullet hole in the iron bar, saying, "This could not have happened unless the shot was fired from above. There were helicopters flying directly over our building. If the bullet had been fired from below, the hole wouldn't look like this. That's why we believe the shot came from a helicopter."

Mentionable, Rab in a press statement yesterday stated that no shots were fired from their helicopters.

Asma said they took

Sumaiya to a private hospital in the Signboard area, where doctors declared her dead. She was buried at a local graveyard.

Sumaiya was staying with her mother at Siddhirganj since May during her postpartum period. She was supposed to return to her in-law's house in Cumilla a week later.

Now, Asma is blaming herself for bringing her daughter to Narayanganj.

Asma said Sumaiya's father died during the pandemic. "She was my everything... now I lost her as well..."

Asma started crying. Her granddaughter, who was in her lap, began crying too.

Almost a terrorist

FROM PAGE 3

M Nayeemul Islam Khan briefed reporters after the meeting.

Hasina expressed sorrow for the loss of lives and destruction of properties in the carnage centring the students' protests.

Verma expressed condolence for the loss of lives during the recent violence. He welcomed the normalcy that is being restored steadily, and the gradual resumption of economic activities in Bangladesh.

Consultancy Opportunities

International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites applications from interested consultant to Support the private sector stream of work in the LAWC cluster by establishing connectivity with key stakeholders such as international buyers' organizations, global business associations, chambers, investors, multinational corporations (MNCs), and employers; and develop a comprehensive knowledge base and material on the private sector in Bangladesh. The Terms of Reference (ToR) can be downloaded from the United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM) at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/241879>

The deadline for submission of proposal is Sunday, August 25, 2024, by 04:30 PM (BST time).

National Housing Finance PLC
Registered Office: National Plaza (7th & 8th Floor)
109, Bir Uttam C.R. Datta Road, Dhaka-1205

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of National Housing Finance PLC at its 257th Meeting held on 31 July 2024 at 4:00pm has approved the unaudited Financial Statements as at and for the 2nd Quarter ended June 30, 2024.

The performance highlights for the Half-Year ended June 30, 2024:

Particulars	January 01, to June 30, 2024	January 01, to June 30, 2023	April, 01 to June 30, 2024	April, 01 to June 30, 2023
Net profit After Tax (Million in Taka)	69.66	122.31	34.37	61.70
Earnings Per Share	0.60	1.05	0.29	0.53

Other performance highlights for the Half-Year ended June 30, 2024:

Particulars	January 01, to June 30, 2024	January 01, to June 30, 2023	As on December 31, 2023
Net Asset Value per share (NAV)	19.52	18.94	18.93
Net operating cash flow per share (NOCFPS)	(3.64)	20.13	25.20

By order of the Board
Sd/-
Md. Sarwar Kamal, FCS
Company Secretary

Dated: 31 July 2024

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Department of Public Health Engineering, Feni.
ee.feni@dphe.gov.bd, dphe.feni@gmail.com

Memo No. 46.203.3000.061.014.0014.24.100 Date:- 31/07/2024

Invitation for e-Tender notice-(2024/2025)

1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division
2	Implementing Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering
3	Project/Program Name	Project for Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country
4	e-Tender ID	1003959, 1003960 & 1003961
5	Description of works:	Installation of Deep Tube well (100x38) mm with Submersible Pump at different Upzila of Feni District under Project for Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country (PSWSC) of Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE).
6	Name, Designation & Address of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Shafiqul Haque, Executive Engineer DPHE, Feni District, Feni. Tel. No. 0331-74034
7	This is online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested persons/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd .	

(Md. Shafiqul Haque)
Executive Engineer, DPHE
Feni District, Feni

Jihad wanted

FROM PAGE 3

On July 19, while heading to a roadside hotel for lunch, Jihad was struck by a bullet that pierced his right thigh. He was declared dead at DMCH.

The news shattered his family. Jinnat Hossain, Jihad's elder brother, recounted the harrowing experience of receiving the devastating news and bringing his brother's body home. "He was not involved in any politics. His death is an irreparable loss to our family. We want justice for this murder," Jinnat said.

Nurul Amin and Shahanur Begum, Jihad's parents, are inconsolable. Shahanur clutches her son's photo, her tears unceasing, questioning the senseless violence that took her son away. "What was my son's offence? I want justice for my son's murder," she lamented.

Nurul Amin recounted their last phone conversation at 3:00pm on the day of the incident. Jihad had mentioned the tense situation in Dhaka, and Nurul had advised him to stay indoors.

But fate had other plans, and by 5:00pm, the devastating news of Jihad's death had reached him. The sorrow and disbelief are etched deeply in his heart.

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

This is for information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of Bank Asia PLC. in its 532nd meeting held at 2:35 p.m. on Wednesday, 31 July 2024, in the Bank's Board Room at Bank Asia Tower (Level-10), 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215, has approved the unaudited financial statements of the Bank for the second quarter ended on 30 June 2024 and disclosed the following financial indicators of the Bank:

Particulars	January to June 30, 2024		January to June 30, 2023	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Net Asset Value (NAV) (Crore)	3,095.52	3,090.55	3,025.02	3,008.26
Net Asset Value (NAV) per Share	26.55	26.51	25.95	25.80
Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS) *	28.87	28.95	14.29	14.43

Particulars	January to June 30, 2024		January to June 30, 2023		April to June 30, 2024		April to June 30, 2023	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Earnings per Share (EPS)**	2.43	2.65	2.86	2.88	1.82	1.98	1.79	1.81

*Net Operating Cash Flow per Share (NOCFPS) increased mainly due to cash inflow by way of increase in Deposit.

**Earnings per Share (EPS) decreased mainly due to maintaining higher provision compared to same quarter of last year.

The details of unaudited financial statements of the Bank for the second quarter ended on 30 June 2024 will also be available on the website of the Bank at www.bankasia-bd.com.

Dated: Dhaka
31 July 2024

Bank Asia

Corporate Office
Bank Asia Tower, 32 & 34 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Construction work of a new prison goes on in Khulna city. While the cost of the project increased several times to eventually stand at Tk 288 crore, the work still could not be completed even after 12 years.

Govt now a 'public enemy'

Says Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

B N P Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the existential crisis of the government is gradually deepening as it has now become a "public enemy" by carrying out "genocide" to suppress student protests.

In a statement, he called upon all to take part in the ongoing student-led protests to end injustices by removing the "fascist" Awami League government.

"The government, now isolated from people, has become a public enemy by committing ruthless and barbaric attacks and genocide," he said.

Fakhrul said the indiscriminate killings to subdue the movement are a crime against humanity and punishable by International Criminal Court.

He also called for the immediate and unconditional release of those arrested, withdrawal of the curfew, return of the army to their barracks, lifting of restrictions on gatherings, and reopening of educational institutions.

He said the government is doing whatever it wants to protect itself from public wrath by disregarding the law, constitution, democratic principles, and humanitarian values.

NEW KHULNA DISTRICT JAIL

Construction works drag on for 12 years

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

The construction of a modern prison of the Khulna District Jail has remained incomplete for 12 years.

The old prison of Khulna District Jail, located in the city's Jaikhana Ghat along the bank of Bhairab River, was built in 1906. It has some 1,600-2,000 prisoners at present against a capacity to keep 608 inmates.

The Directorate of Prisons in 2008 took the initiative to build the new jail to provide modern facilities to inmates.

Approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Necoc) in 2011, the Tk 144 crore project to construct the prison started in 2012 on around 30 acres of land in Chowk Mathurabad under Dumuria upazila, near Joy Bangla Intersection on Khulna City Bypass Road, slated to be completed by 2016.

However, while the cost of the project increased several times to eventually stand at Tk 288 crore, the work still could not be completed even after 12 years.

According to sources, the project got delayed due to different reasons including change of location, and complications regarding land acquisition.

Since June 6, 2017, the project has been revised and extended a total of six times, with June 30, 2024 set as the new deadline, which has also been crossed.

As per the project's masterplan, the new jail was designed to accommodate 4,000 prisoners. However, the infrastructures under the project were later revised to keep 2,000 inmates.

So far, a total of 52 concrete structures including 47 buildings with one floor to six floors have been constructed inside the project area.

The structures include barracks for different categories of prisoners, prison guards' quarters, and observation

towers. Each prisoners' barrack has a wall around it.

Visiting the project site recently, this correspondent saw that although the infrastructures have been constructed, other works including pavement and walkways, internal and connecting roads, fitting grilles, fences, and drains are still incomplete.

However, the Public Works Department sources said the work is almost complete and it will be handed over to the authorities soon.

According to the project office, the new prison is being built as a correctional facility. Here under trial and sentenced prisoners will be kept separately. There are also separate barracks for juvenile and female prisoners. There will be separate hospitals, motivation centres, work-sheds and day-care centres for female inmates.

There will also be a 50-bed hospital for male prisoners, as well as a school for the children of prison guards, a library, a dining room, a modern salon, a laundry, recreation centre, and separate prayer rooms for male and female inmates.

Kudrat-e-Khuda, president of Shushashaner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) in Khulna, said, "Even after 12 years, the construction of the new jail is not completed yet. This is unthinkable in a fair state. Corruption is associated with project delays. Prolonged projects only pave way for more corruption."

"Hopefully the project will be completed soon. The new prison will enhance the district jail's capacity to keep more inmates," said Mohammad Rafiqul Kader, jail superintendent of Khulna District Jail.

Contacted, Md Asaduzzaman, executive engineer of PWD Division-2, Khulna, said, "The project is almost 99 percent completed and will be handed over to the authorities concerned soon."

176 more hospitalised with dengue

BSS, Dhaka

A total of 176 people were hospitalised with dengue in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Of them, 73 patients were hospitalised in Dhaka.

This year, the total number of cases rose to 6,320, while 56 deaths were reported during the period.

In the past 24 hours, 144 dengue patients were discharged from hospitals.

Last year, the country recorded 1,705 dengue-related deaths and a total of 3,21,179 cases.

DEATHS OF 4 CHILDREN Petition seeks HC order for judicial commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a petition with the High Court seeking its order on the government to form a judicial commission to probe four children's deaths in the recent violence.

Advocate Taimur Alam Khondaker also prayed to the court to direct the government to give Tk 1 crore each to the families of the deceased.

The four children are four-year-old Abdul Ahad of Rajarbag in Jatrabari; 15-year-old Nayima Sultana of Utara; 11-year-old Safayat Shamir of Mirpur and 6-year-old Ria Gope of Narayanganj.

He said the minors were killed in gunshots although they did not participate in the protests. He said the HC may hold hearing of the petition today.



Month of mourning begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The month of mourning begins today commemorating the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members on August 15, 1975.

To mark the month, Awami League will bring out a mourning procession in Dhaka at 3:00pm on Friday.

It will start from Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh adjacent to Suhrawardy Udyan and end on the Bangabandhu Bhaban premises at Dhanmondi 32 after parading through Shabbagh, Elephant Road and Mirpur Road, said a press release.

Various political and socio-cultural organisations also chalked out month-long events.

Killings during quota protests

FROM PAGE 3

compete for government jobs is not nonpolitical; rather, it is a political one.

"But instead of going towards a political solution to this question, the government first wanted to ignore it. It later resorted to repression," he said.

"The government, without going to the problem's root, is now

and resign. Without this step, we cannot take any step towards a new system," he observed.

"A safe learning environment must be restored in the universities. If our students can't come, whom will we teach, what will we teach?" Salimullah asked, demanding the release of all arrested students.

and resign. Without this step, we cannot take any step towards a new system," he observed.

"A safe learning environment must be restored in the universities. If our students can't come, whom will we teach, what will we teach?" Salimullah asked, demanding the release of all arrested students.

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সরকারী মালিকানাধীন ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, গোপালগঞ্জ কারখানায় উৎপাদন বিভাগের (Contraceptive Unit) নিম্নলিখিত পদে জরুরী ভিত্তিতে লোক নিয়োগ করা হবে:

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স সীমা
০১।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০২।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing)	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product Manufacturing-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৩।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Vial Washing and Depyrogeneration tunnel)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Washing and Depyrogeneration tunnel-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৪।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Vial Washing and Depyrogeneration tunnel)	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Washing and Depyrogeneration tunnel-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৫।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Vial Filling-Sealing Machine)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Filling-Sealing Machine-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৬।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০২ (Vial Filling-Sealing Machine)	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Vial Filling-Sealing Machine-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৭।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Autoclave Machine (Vial))	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Autoclave Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৮।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Autoclave Machine (Vial))	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Autoclave Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০৯।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Auto-Labeling Machine Vial)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Auto-Labeling Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১০।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Auto-Labeling Machine Vial)	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Auto-Labeling Machine (Vial)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১১।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Blister Machine (Combo Pack))	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Blister Machine (Combo Pack)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
১২।	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-০১ (Blister Machine (Combo Pack))	এসএসসি/এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	জুনিয়র মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন সুনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে Sterile Contraceptive Product-এর Blister Machine (Combo Pack)-এ মেশিনের অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৩ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)

অগ্রাধী প্রার্থীদেরকে ০৩ (তিন) রকম সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙীন ছবি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, জীবন-বৃত্তান্ত, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র সমূহের সত্যায়িত কপি সহ আগামী ২০ আগস্ট, ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর বরাবরে আবেদন করার জন্য বলা হচ্ছে। উল্লিখিত কাগজপত্রসমূহ সঠিকভাবে জমা দিতে হবে অন্যথা আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

কণ্ডুমা শর্ট লিটেড প্রার্থীদেরকে সাক্ষাতকারের জন্য ডাকা হবে।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, এডভাইজার এন্ড এইচআরএম (চলতি দায়িত্ব)
এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

RECENT VIOLENCE SCBA president demands UN probe, secretary blames it on BNP-Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers, led by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, and Awami League backed lawyers, led by SCBA Secretary Shah Monjurul Hoque, yesterday held two separate press conferences, regarding the current state of the country.

Khokon demanded that the ongoing curfew be lifted, along with the withdrawal of armed forces and a stop to "government's control on media".

"The government has already filed cases against lakhs of people. Around 13,000 people have been wrongfully arrested and students are being arrested by house-to-house searches. Political activists are being arrested in order to give political colour to this movement. We support the mass inquiry commission formed under the leadership of Justice MA Matin and rights activist Sultana Kamal," he said.

"We are demanding an inquiry into every incident of killings and injuries under the supervision of the United Nations. We think that hundreds of people have been killed in a planned manner."

"We are strongly demanding an amendment to the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act and to arrange speedy trial of those accused for the crimes against humanity and human rights violations," he said.

SCBA Secretary Shah Monjurul Hoque, at their event, said, "During the quota reform protests, the BNP-Jamaat-Shibir, relying on ordinary students, wreaked havoc across the country and destroyed important state structures."

"The government sincerely stood by the families of the people injured and killed in this unexpected incident and accepted all the demands of the students."

He said the SCBA is pledge-bound to protect the country's independence, sovereignty, state resources, law and order and public life. Therefore, this association protests against the anti-national activities of the anti-independence circle.

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TENDER NOTICE

01. Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide vendors for Supply and Installation of Air Conditioner at Joranganj Branch, Dewanhat Branch and Bangshal Branch of BASIC Bank Limited.

02. The participating companies must have at least 5 years proven experience of successfully supplying, installing, testing and commissioning of Air Conditioners in any Scheduled Bank / Bangladesh Bank or must have previous record of successfully supplying, installing, testing and commissioning of Air Conditioners in BASIC Bank Limited. Copy of previous work order(s) must be supplied along with the tender as proof in this regard.

03. A pay order of Tk. 60,000/- (Sixty thousand Taka) has to be submitted with each tender in the name of BASIC Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka as earnest money. Earnest money can be forfeited for reasons mentioned in the tender schedule.

04. The tender document may be obtained from Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited between 10:00 A.M. and 05:00 P.M. of all working days at a cost of Tk. 1,000/- (Non-Refundable) only. No tender document will be sold after 05:00 P.M. of 18/08/2024.

05. Sealed tenders have to be dropped in the tender box kept at Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited within 19:00/2024 by 03:00 P.M., and the tenders will be opened at 03:30 P.M. on the same day in presence of bidders, if any.

06. Other terms and conditions can be found in the tender document.

Deputy General Manager
Common Services Division

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
তথ্য ও সম্প্রচার মন্ত্রণালয়
বাংলাদেশ ফিল্ম সেলস বোর্ড
তথ্য ভবন (লেভেল ১৩ ও ১৪), ১১২, সার্কিট হাউজ রোড
রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০

১৬ প্রাক, ১৪৩১ বর্ষাংশ।
তারিখ: ০১ জুলাই, ২০২৪ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩ এর জন্য আবেদন জমাদানের সময় বৃদ্ধি

জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩ এর জন্য আবেদন জমাদানের সময়সীমা ২০ আগস্ট ২০২৪ বিকাল ৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত বৃদ্ধি করা হলো। ২১ জুন ২০২৪ তারিখে বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, কালকোণা ও The Daily Star পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে বর্ণিত সকল শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

(মো. আবদুল জালিল)
হাইস চেয়ারম্যান
বাংলাদেশ ফিল্ম সেলস বোর্ড
সদস্য-সচিব, জুরি বোর্ড
জাতীয় চলচ্চিত্র পুরস্কার-২০২৩
ফোন: ৮৩০০৬২০

GD- 97

INTERNATIONAL

Haniyeh was seen as more moderate face of Hamas

REUTERS, Dubai

Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas leader who was killed in Iran, was the tough-talking face of the Palestinian group's international diplomacy as the offensive raged back in Gaza, where three of his sons were killed in an Israeli airstrike.

But despite the rhetoric, he was seen by many diplomats as a moderate compared to the more hardline members of the Iran-backed group inside Gaza.

Appointed to the Hamas top job in 2017, Haniyeh moved between Turkey and Qatar's capital Doha, escaping the travel curbs of the blockaded Gaza Strip and enabling him to act as a negotiator in ceasefire talks or to talk to Hamas' ally Iran.

"All the agreements of normalisation that you (Arab states) signed with (Israel) will not end this conflict," Haniyeh declared on Qatar-based Al Jazeera television shortly after Israel launched the offensive.

Israel's offensive killed more than 35,000 people inside Gaza so far,



according to health authorities in the territory.

Three of Haniyeh's sons - Hazem, Amir and Mohammad - were killed on April 10 when an Israeli air strike struck the car they were driving, Hamas said.

Haniyeh also lost four of his grandchildren, three girls and a boy, in the attack, Hamas said.

Haniyeh had denied Israeli assertions that his sons were fighters for the group, and said "the interests of the Palestinian people are placed ahead of everything" when asked if their killing would impact truce talks.

For all the tough language in public, Arab diplomats and officials had viewed him as relatively pragmatic compared with more hardline voices inside Gaza.

Israel regards the entire Hamas leadership as terrorists.



Smoke billows from burning tyres as Israeli soldiers deploy in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron yesterday, following a demonstration by Palestinians denouncing the killing of the leader of the Hamas group.

PHOTO: AFP

PALESTINIAN DETAINEES FROM GAZA

Israel used waterboarding to torture them: UN report

AGENCIES

Israel has detained thousands of Palestinians during the offensive in Gaza and stands accused of numerous cases of torture, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a new report.

The 23-page report, released yesterday, noted allegations of widespread abuse of prisoners being held incommunicado in arbitrary, prolonged detention. It was published during a tense standoff in Israel as far-right politicians and demonstrators opposed an investigation into alleged sexual abuse of detainees by soldiers.

Based primarily on interviews with released detainees and other victims from October 7 to June 30, the UN report found that since the offensive began, "thousands of Palestinians" including medical staff, have been "taken from Gaza to Israel, usually shackled and blindfolded".

As of the end of June, Israel's prison service held more than 9,400 "security detainees", the report said, adding that those detained have been "held in secret, without being given a reason for their detention" and without a lawyer.

"At least 53 Palestinian detainees" are known to have died in Israeli detention facilities: report

"At least 53 Palestinian detainees" are known to have died in Israeli detention facilities, it said. It also detailed "allegations of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, including sexual abuse of women and men".

The report was released during an investigation by the Israeli army, which is

questioning nine soldiers over allegations of "substantial abuse" of a Palestinian detainee at the Sde Teiman detention camp in the Negev desert in southern Israel, reports Al Jazeera online.

Last week, eight Palestinian prisoners who were released by the Israeli army said they experienced torture during their time in Ofer Prison in the occupied West Bank.

Former Palestinian detainees told the UN that they were held in "cage-like facilities, stripped naked for prolonged periods, wearing only diapers".

The documented abuse included food, sleep and water deprivation and being burned with cigarettes.

"Some detainees said dogs were released on them, and others said they were subjected to waterboarding, or that their hands were tied and they were suspended from the ceiling. Some women and men also spoke of sexual and gender-based violence," the report said.

Death toll in Kerala landslides rises to 167

REUTERS, Chooramala

Soldiers and rescuers worked through slush and rocks under steady rain, looking for survivors and searching for bodies in the hills of India's Kerala state yesterday, a day after more than 165 people were killed in monsoon landslides.

Nearly 1,000 people had been rescued from the hillside villages and tea and cardamom estates in Wayanad district and 225 were still missing, authorities said yesterday. They said at least 167 people died and 195 were injured, while the local Asianet news TV channel put the death toll at 179.

Heavy rain in Kerala, one of India's most attractive tourist destinations, led to the landslides early on Tuesday, sending torrents of mud, water and tumbling boulders downhill and burying or sweeping people away to their deaths as they slept.

It was the worst disaster in the state since deadly floods in 2018.

Experts said the area had been receiving heavy rain in the last two weeks which had softened the soil and that extremely heavy rainfall on Monday triggered the landslides.

16-yr-old in Rangpur jail

FROM PAGE 1

but he was shown arrested in that case.

Shahjalal filed a prayer seeking bail for Mahim, and the hearing will be on August 4, he said, adding that the matter has been transferred to the children's court.

Shahjalal told The Daily Star that Mahim on July 18 was hanging out with his friends at Parkermor near his home, which is also close to the Begum Rokeya University. He was in his college uniform.

When violence erupted around Parkermor, panicked Mahim ran towards the opposite direction to his home and suffered shotgun pellet injuries to his leg, said his father, quoting Mahim's friends.

Mahim's father Shahjalal said they looked for Mahim all day but at night he received a call from someone claiming to be a law enforcer. The person said Mahim was in their custody and that he would be released the next day, July 19.

Shahjalal called the person the next day but this time he said Mahim would not be released.

That afternoon, the father learnt that Mahim was sent to Rangpur jail after he was produced before a court.

In a Facebook post at 8:24pm yesterday, a sister of Mahim claimed that the commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police called the family to his office yesterday. He assured them that Mahim was in good health and urged the family to be at the court during proceedings today. He also told them that Mahim would be released after the court proceedings today.

The Daily Star could not reach any Rangpur police officials for comments last night.

Academic calendars in total disarray

FROM PAGE 12

pension scheme issue] is a question of our [university teachers'] dignity. We'll continue our movement until our demands are met."

Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said ensuring the safety of the students is the government's prime concern now.

"We're in close contact with the government authorities concerned and we'll take decisions in line with their recommendations regarding the reopening of schools and colleges," he told The Daily Star.

He said the situation in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Narsingdi and Gazipur differs from that of the rest of the country, and they will take it into consideration when making the decisions.

"However, we want to reopen schools and colleges as soon as possible."

About the teachers' protests, Mohibul said they were in talks with the teachers. "We'll request the teachers to reach a positive decision."

There are 1.98 crore students in primary level schools, 2.03 crore in secondary level and 44 lakh in all universities and affiliated colleges under public universities.

On July 1, the students took to the streets demanding reforms to the quota system in government jobs and had enforced strikes and boycott of classes and exams on all campuses

indefinitely since July 6.

Their peaceful protests, however, turned violent as Bangladesh Chhatra League men attacked them on the Dhaka University campus on July 15.

Unprecedented violence and police attacks since July 16 had left at least 163 people, including students, dead (the actual number could be much higher) and thousands injured.

That very night, the education ministry declared the closure of all secondary and higher secondary level educational institutions (schools, colleges, madrasas and technical institutions), as well as polytechnic institutes until further notice. Following that, the UGC declared the closure of all public and private universities along with their affiliated colleges. It also instructed them to vacate all dormitories.

On July 17, the primary and mass education ministry issued a press release announcing the closure of all government primary schools, Child Welfare Trust-run primary schools, and Bureau of Non-Formal Education learning centres in the city corporation areas of the eight divisional cities indefinitely.

LOSSES AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES Undergraduate admission seekers have been affected by the postponement of the admission processes and orientations at the Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology, Khulna University

of Engineering and Technology and Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology.

Admission tests for the cluster of nine agricultural universities for this academic year, scheduled to be held on July 20, were also postponed.

Besides, Rajshahi University authorities pushed back their undergraduate admission process on July 1 and deferred the start of the first year honours classes.

A student of Comilla University's English department, requesting anonymity, said no classes were held at the university since early May, following a conflict between teachers and the vice-chancellor over an untoward incident at the latter's office. "Then came the teachers' movement, which further hampered the educational environment on the campus.

"We understand that we're all fighting for our rights, but at the same time we need to continue our studies ... It's the government's responsibility to stabilise the situation for the students as well as for the teachers."

HSC EXAMINEES PERPLEXED Earlier, the government postponed the HSC and all equivalent exams, scheduled between July 18 and August 1, for eight days.

Professor Tapan Kumar Sarkar, chairman of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee and also of the Dhaka Education Board, said, "We'll hold the postponed exams

after August 11."

Meanwhile, teachers of secondary schools said the half-yearly exams, slated for July 15-24, were postponed due to the school closure and the next exams are scheduled for July 30 till August 3.

Classroom activities were disrupted during the first half of this year due to cold waves, the national election and then heat waves. So, more closures will cause more learning loss, teachers said.

Prarthona Sarker, a seventh-grader of Monipur High School and College in Mirpur, said, "It's difficult to study at home without classroom explanations. While self-study provides some understanding, it's not as effective."

Her mother, Labonno Sarker, expressed concerns about the overall situation. "School closures are harmful for the children. On the other hand, if they reopen, there's a fear of violence during the commute [to and from school], which is also a big concern."

The government was scheduled to complete the class XI admission process by July 25 and start classes on July 30.

However, the internet shutdown since the night of July 18 hindered the timely completion of admissions. The authorities concerned are now planning to start classes for newly enrolled class XI students on August 6.

Matiur goes on early retirement

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his son Mushfiqur Rahman Ifat posted on social media a photo of a sacrificial goat before Eid and wrote that the animal cost Tk 12 lakh.

The post went viral with many pointing out that Matiur, as a grade-1 NBR official, had a basic monthly salary of Tk 78,000.

The Anti-Corruption Commission launched an investigation into the sources of Matiur and his family members' wealth.

In early July, a Dhaka court ordered confiscation of all moveable and immovable properties owned by him and his family members on charges of corruption, involvement in insider trading, and making money through the purchase

of shares through private placement.

His involvement in the stock market raised questions since he was a tax collector.

An analysis of his and his family's shareholding in at least 15 publicly listed companies early last month showed that the top official and his family held 9.8 crore shares and the market value as of last month was Tk 174 crore.

On June 24, a Dhaka court issued a travel ban on Matiur and his family members.

Contacted yesterday, Matiur said he sought voluntary retirement because of the trial.

"I have never indulged in corruption in my workplace. Rather, I faced harassment and opposition from vested quarters when I tried to carry out automation of customs processes," he added.

Social media curbs lifted

FROM PAGE 12

To further his point, Palak said that pro-Palestine and anti-Israel posts are blocked by social media platforms.

From July 16 to 18, Facebook honoured only 13 percent of the government's requests to remove content on its platform, Palak said.

Social media platforms restrict posts related to the Awami League, Bangabandhu, liberation and Sheikh Hasina, he said.

He asked Meta if its community standards allow running a Facebook page in the name of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is currently incarcerated.

YouTube honoured 21 percent of

the government's request for taking down posts from July 17 to 26, while TikTok acted on 68 percent of the requests, Palak added.

Although all cache servers were opened from 2pm to allow all social media platforms, it would take another 24 to 48 hours for full-fledged service to resume, said Md Emdadul Hoque, president of Internet Service Providers Association of Bangladesh.

The mobile operators also received instructions to remove the restrictions on social media.

After the lifting of the restrictions on social media, users said the internet speed has improved but hasn't returned to previous levels.

Investigate allegations

FROM PAGE 12

The Daily Star's count of the victims is based solely on hospital and police sources.

Over the last several days, police arrested more than 10,000 people in connection with the violence.

"In recent weeks, thousands of students have taken to the streets in Bangladesh to protest a lack of economic opportunity and to end the government's inequitable quota system for public sector employment that reserves government jobs for relatives of veterans of Bangladesh's 1971 war of independence," the statement said.

Rather than engaging in the legitimate grievances of the protesters, the Bangladesh security forces, including the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), responded with brute force, killing hundreds of protesters, and arresting and injuring thousands more, it said.

The statement said the right to peacefully assemble and protest is one of the foundations of a democratic society.

"The United States stands with these courageous individuals who are advocating for their dignity and for a prosperous future, and we will continue to speak up for human rights in Bangladesh and seek to hold accountable those involved in such abuses."

Meanwhile, Catherine West, UK's parliamentary under-secretary of state at the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, said what has happened in the last couple of weeks in Bangladesh is not acceptable.

"And we have raised that on a number of occasions including the nature of judicial review which is being currently undertaken by the government of Bangladesh," she said in response to a query by Bangladesh-origin MP Rupa Huq in parliament on Tuesday.

She also said the UK and its international partners will continue to push for progress towards accountability and justice including through an independent, impartial and transparent investigation into alleged human rights violations in Bangladesh.

Olympic spirit

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the Tokyo Olympics because of the Covid pandemic.

"I congratulated them when they were introduced as Silver medalists," Lim told Korean media after the award ceremony.

When asked if they saw the South

Rupa made a reference to the Tiananmen Square and said the use of lethal force on student protesters in Bangladesh has rightly been condemned by their government.

She urged that the UK to put pressure on the Bangladeshi investigation, so that it has an international element, because "a country that can just turn off all communications with the outside world and controls all institutions right down to their stormtrooper-like police should not just be allowed to mark its own homework."

Another Bangladesh-origin UK MP Apsana Begum said following the high death tolls among the student protesters, international human rights bodies are reporting further crackdowns on dissent from mass arrests and enforced disappearances to torture and unlawful killings.

Expressing solidarity with Bangladeshi people facing repression, she said they must have their right to exercise their fundamental human rights, including the right to protest.

Meanwhile, Australian High Commissioner in Dhaka on Tuesday said they remain deeply concerned about the violence and reiterate Australia's support for universal human rights.

"It is critical perpetrators of alleged violations be held to account," it said in an X post, adding that they honour the memories of all those killed in recent violence in Bangladesh.

However, China said it is heartened as the situation in Bangladesh has come "under control and social order has resumed."

At a press briefing in Beijing yesterday, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian said China is heartened by this as Bangladesh's friend and close neighbour.

He said the two countries are comprehensive strategic cooperative partners and China stands ready to work with Bangladesh to deliver on the important common understandings reached by the leaders of the two countries during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to China.

Korean pair as their rivals, Kim and Ri both shook their heads.

South Korean broadcasters have repeatedly run videos of the selfie, with many commentators reflecting on the significance of a rare moment of unity.

"This is the true spirit of the Olympics," one commentator said.

Only fair justice can restore order

Govt must allow independent probe into deaths of protesters

Try as it may, the government can no longer circumvent critical questions about the role of security forces and ruling party cadres in the deaths of protesters. Five trends that have emerged from the law enforcement measures taken in response to the violent events of July 18-21 are blaming the violence squarely on BNP Jamaat (without evidence); mass arrests, often through block raids; gross violation of Supreme Court guidelines for arrests and remand; making destruction of public properties—rather than the deaths—a central focus of investigation; and suppression of student organisers and protesters through various tactics. All this has reaffirmed doubts about the government's sincerity to ensure justice for the horrific tragedy that befell our nation.

Against this backdrop, the prime minister's statement on Wednesday about seeking cooperation from the United Nations and other international organisations to conduct a "fair and proper investigation" into the nationwide violence offers a ray of hope. This comes after repeated calls for credible investigations into the deaths. Even the UN and the European Union also demanded a thorough and impartial probe. The PM, we may recall, earlier said the government would seek "foreign technical assistance" for the judicial inquiry committee. It has already indicated that the commission—initially tasked with investigating only the six deaths of July 16—can now probe all the killings that have since occurred.

Where does it all leave us? We have no details yet about the extent of any possible UN involvement in the process or how it will sit with the ongoing investigations by police. But we have to be reasonable about our expectations. With the entire law enforcement machine keyed to political manoeuvres, how much help the judicial commission or any team headed by the UN will have from relevant state departments in, say, collecting or verifying evidence remains to be seen.

As things stand, there is a huge gap between what's being said or sought publicly and what's being done on the ground. Leave aside the widespread panic caused by arresting nearly 11,000 individuals, including many students, over the last 13 days. Even while the PM made her UN probe call, there were reports from different parts of the country about security forces violently disrupting the protesters' "March for Justice" by charging batons and using other heavy-handed tactics. Many protesters were held, many injured. Clearly, protesters continue to be targeted as they were before. Now consider the fact that no legal steps have been taken against any member of the security forces involved in the killings. The disparity couldn't be more obvious, indicating that the government is still in denial, and without a complete turnaround in current practices, justice may continue to elude us.

To this day, the number of people who died varies widely—at least 163 as per this daily, 150 as per the government, 211 as per *Prothom Alo*, 266 as per the student platform. The actual number could be much higher. So many deaths cannot go unaddressed or unpunished. The government must realise that nothing short of a fair investigation into its own forces—who shot indiscriminately at the protesters, aided by party cadres—will restore public order or give credibility to its efforts. Any investigation also must delve into how the conflicts became so violent in the first place, and lead to accountability for those truly responsible. The government should also stop harassing the protesters and ordinary citizens immediately.

Stop the downward economic spiral

Fresh sovereign rating downgrade shows much remains to be done

S&P Global's downgrading of Bangladesh's long-term sovereign rating from BB- to B+ is but another indication that while the nation's focus has been trained on ensuring justice for the lives lost in recent violence, the economy continues to take a hit because of the government's failure to resolve this crisis. Following the unrest that resulted in the death of so many individuals, a five-day complete internet blackout, and subsequent curfew imposition, many economic sectors have struggled to bounce back even after the situation has become less tense. The lack of internet connectivity has particularly hurt IT and business-processing outsourcing firms and export-oriented industries. Even the S&P, alongside citing persistent pressure on Bangladesh's external metrics, particularly the decline in foreign exchange reserves, also mentioned in its report how the government is grappling with widespread protests, and that the "highly concentrated political environment" may undermine the predictability of future policy responses.

The S&P downgrade is significant as it may erode confidence in our economy among investors and businesses, and could directly affect Bangladesh's foreign direct investment (FDI) prospects. It may also result in interest rates for foreign loans rising. This means that the economy faces a double whammy as it tries to stay on the path to recovery from a 9.7 percent inflation and a 35 percent reduction of foreign exchange reserves over two years. This path has been beset by problems predating the recent unrest.

For example, on the back of a statistical mismatch of export data between two major sources, Bangladesh Bank published revised figures in early July, and the S&P report mentioned that exports have declined 5.9 percent in FY24. While remittance inflow grew by 10.7 percent in the same period, the most recent data from the central bank shows that remittance inflow in the first 28 days of July was 16 percent lower compared to the full month of July a year ago, and 35 percent lower compared to June this year. Recent events have but exacerbated all these longstanding issues, highlighting once again that the economy is structurally unprepared for instability.

One may recall that Moody's previously downgraded Bangladesh's sovereign credit rating in May 2023, citing heightened external vulnerability and persistent liquidity risks, as well as institutional weaknesses. Another global credit rating agency has now downgraded Bangladesh a year on, which indicates that the authorities have failed to take lessons from the previous setback. As things stand, any economic recovery cannot be even started without first resolving the ongoing crisis through ensuring justice for those killed in the protests. So the authorities must take the latest rating downgrade with the seriousness that it deserves.

What does our labour market look like for educated youth?



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SAYEMA HAQUE BIDISHA

The student movement for the reformation of the quota system in government jobs highlights the importance and urgency of re-evaluating the current labour market scenario in Bangladesh. The reason behind the educated youth's overwhelming preference for public sector jobs, particularly those in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS), must be understood in a greater detail and also through a critical lens of youth unemployment.

In this context, we should also keep in mind that Bangladesh is going through a demographic transition with the youth (15-29 years old) constituting 36.7 percent of the total labour force (LFS 2022). However, according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2022 data, the rate of unemployment among the youth (eight percent) is much higher than the national average (3.53 percent). Among the unemployed (reported to be unemployed for more than two years), as many as 14.7 percent are also found to have received tertiary

Our educational institutions, starting from the primary level, do not offer such skills with due importance and, as a result, a large mass of the youth population, especially those from the rural areas and underprivileged backgrounds, seriously lack such skills in most of the cases. In addition, skill mismatch due to poor academia-industry linkage is also partly responsible for shrinking the domain of private sector employment for graduates.

education. This poll of educated unemployed is certainly a serious concern for the country's labour market. Besides, as many as 22 percent of the youth are found to be NEET (not in employment, education and training), with the male NEET



FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BCS aspirants queue up in front of the central library of Dhaka University, waiting to get in to study for the exam.

being 16.2 percent and the female NEET being as high as 27.1 percent. With such a large proportion of our youth not being in the mainstream labour market activities and another significant proportion being unemployed, one of the most crucial challenges of Bangladesh's labour market is to effectively utilise our favourable demographic profile.

However, from the demand-side point of view, if we explore the employment opportunities for the educated youth in particular (those with tertiary level of education), there are basically two broad streams: public sector jobs and private sector employment. In addition, there is a separate stream comprising different self-employment activities, including entrepreneurial activities, freelance work, and digital platform economy-based jobs. Although all such jobs require a common set of eligibility in terms of education and skills, it is obvious that each of these categories requires different skill sets of its own. In this context, high skilled private sector employment in most cases requires strong interpersonal communication skills both in the native language as well as in English, along with computing and data management skills and teamwork in many cases.

linkage is also partly responsible for shrinking the domain of private sector employment for graduates. Therefore, it can be argued that a "push factor" is working for a significant mass of educated youth searching for high-skilled jobs with decent salary and benefit structure. In addition, there are also complaints and accusations of nepotism and favouritism, which discourage the young people coming from underprivileged backgrounds to compete for them.

On the other hand, we can say that there is a "pull factor" for public sector jobs and it is not only due to the reasonably decent salary and benefits, but also for the stability and job security associated with employment in the public sector. In addition, public sector employment is traditionally considered prestigious, with high possibilities for climbing up the occupational ladder, and is also seen as a source of power and social status. It is therefore not surprising that a young graduate will consider public sector jobs, especially the BCS cadre ones, as the most desirable.

It is not only in the context of salary-based employment but also for different self-employment ventures that there exist several challenges, all of which again "pushes away" the potential young graduates from such ventures. On the one hand,

we should put greater emphasis on specialised short courses, diplomas and technical and vocational education and training (TVET)-based employment instead. However, to attract more young people to TVET-based education and employment, we need to deal with the social stigma attached to it, and at the same time we must work on modernising the training programmes.

The government also needs to re-evaluate the overall labour market scenario for the youth and take necessary steps to broaden the horizon of their employability. In this regard, greater collaborative efforts of industry and academia are required to deal with the issue of skill mismatch and due emphasis should be given to develop soft skills of students through a wide range of initiatives. In this connection, the importance of quality education focusing on basic language, analytical and computing skills, especially at the primary level, cannot be overemphasised.

Finally, with a view to facilitate the entrepreneurial activities of the young graduates, availability of cheaper sources of credit, market linkages, suitable digital infrastructure, budgetary incentives, etc must be ensured, and a favourable ecosystem for the graduates seeking self-employment activities must be built.

In the aftermath of violence



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MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

"Are you okay?" Friends, family and relatives from abroad all share the same concern. They keep asking while I keep reassuring them that I am okay, at least physically. That was more than enough to be grateful about, I explain. These days, they ask more questions, difficult ones, and one of these questions keeps ringing in my head.

One of my school friends from Delhi asked how I felt and I had no answer to that.

In my mind, I kept rewinding time to figure out when was the last time I really felt something. I tried very hard to remember the last thing I felt. Was it the annoyance of traffic jams caused by the quota protests? Or the deep-seated shame of being unable to empathise with the plight of my peers? Perhaps it was the shock of witnessing violence unfold on my own campus, or the momentary relief of our halls being freed from student politics. Maybe it was the anger at a system that demanded martyrdom before acknowledging legitimate grievances, or the frustration of being unable to stand in solidarity with the protesters, and the sorrow of

being feeling so much and so little at the same time. There are things I feel a little more these days, like helplessness and vulnerability. And then there are things I no longer feel, like sleep and hunger. I spend hours on social media seeking updates and then regret being so adamant. The desire to stay informed is matched by an equal desire to escape the relentless barrage

every day and how I can no longer keep up with remembering their names. I realise that the victims have formed a closer circle around me, from strangers to people I know. How do I label this feeling that seems to be strangling me every day, embracing me in a cloud of remorse and contempt?

So, as I refresh my news feed for the hundredth time, I realise another day has passed and I still do not have the answer to their question. There is nothing much I do these days, except for sharing these stories and saying a silent prayer. The weight of grief is suffocating, and I cannot imagine how long I can endure it. I carry the burden of shared loss because this is where I belong. I do not remember the last time I felt like this, all of it seems very new. It started with an excruciating pain which has now given way to numbness. My tears have dried up and are replaced by a sense of emptiness. I feel hollow if that is something you could feel, and I know that it is here to stay for a while.

All this while I realised that we are capable of feeling way more than our hearts can contain. Yet, amidst the despair, a flicker of hope remains. This makes me feel strong and alive when everything else is falling apart. It is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit, a force that united thousands of us in the face of adversity. This hope, fragile though it may be, is the only anchor in the storm. No matter what lies ahead, I want this hope to persist. It is probably the only feeling that makes sense right now.



A parent holding a placard that reads, 'Why would my children get killed for asking for their rights?' in front Dhaka Medical College Hospital entrance on July 30, 2024.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

scrolling through countless obituaries on social media? Was it the fear of becoming another victim, or the pride of belonging to a generation that had etched its name in history?

I do not know. The truth is I have

of distressing news. I cannot sleep in the comfort of my own home knowing what my peers are going through. Their dialogues haunt me as nightmares, pulling me out of a slumber of despair. I keep thinking how the list gets longer

Enough!



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MOHAMMAD SHAMSUZZAMAN

Police patrol. Paramilitary fly and fire. Army amble amid curfew. Smokes lick the sky. Shrieks and screams can be heard from many places. A slow-motion mayhem is all set. The horror unleashes. They cry. They sigh. They die. Clashes and confrontations renew. Bullets still pierce. Blood still drips. Bodies still drop. The atmosphere is spooky.

This is not a scene from a horror movie. This is what unfurled in Bangladesh during the third week of July. We are jinxed since. A part of the whole state apparatus appears to be up against its student populations. They are brutally killed and fatally wounded. No one knows exactly how many students have already perished. Victims, including civilians, are legion. As of July 30, *The Daily Star* confirmed 163 deaths. No student movement has been attempted to be quelled by any government since our independence in 1971 that costs so many lives. This is perplexing, paralysing!

Shockingly, a disconnected voice reminds us that the government has deployed only five percent of its power to deal with the defectors, who are the agents of anarchy. They (read: the government) don't own up to the terrible mess that the country is now. They look for scapegoats. They swagger around like saints and angels, whose failure is someone else's fault. Whatever they did, and do, bolsters democracy and fosters development. Rigged elections don't bother them. A muzzled press doesn't embarrass them. Epic corruption charges against government officials seem to them infractions of a slapstick proportion. They ignore. Consequently,



When Bangladesh bleeds, no one scores any political point, however lofty their political ideologies are. The photo was taken in Dhaka on July 19, 2024. FILE PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

the potential for crime, corruption, and discrimination metastasises. People feel divided and vulnerable. They yet stand no criticism. When they encounter a conflict with their beliefs, values, and vision, they become confrontational and condescending. They trot out labels for othering. One of the common labels they almost religiously drizzle is *Razakar*—the traitor. This time around,

the label fell on the wrong ears, and exploded agitations nationwide.

And that's how we've reached where we stand now. Students from universities across the country were protesting against the quota system in civil service. On July 21, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court ordered that 93 percent of jobs in civil service will be merit-based. Case closed!

If it were! The country simmers in anger

appeared exhausted. Paramilitary chipped in. The chaos confounded. The army took over the streets. Curfew continues. Helicopters whir. Guns roar. Sound grenades blast. Whoever lives here, as it seems, lives by luck. Many are not lucky enough against guns and goons. Death sneaks around for anyone, everyone. Why did the government pit itself against its student populations when some of them are not voters yet and most of them are disinterested in politics? They are off to the wrong genies. Students mustn't have been the excuse for the government to lock everyone down in their houses.

The government proceeded from the assumption that they would weather the crisis and would come out strong, as they did in the past with protests and movements. Their tactics and rhetoric seemed tested. They appeared invincible. Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, punctured their aura of invincibility. Abu Sayed was killed live on July 16. He stood open air with a stick in his hand, pretending to dodge a fusillade of rubber bullets. The bullets hit hard. He collapsed to the ground. He bled profusely and lost consciousness before he perished on his way to the hospital. The nation witnessed how state-sponsored violence crushed innocence and courage to maintain its grip on power. People panicked. Anger intensified. The protests were no longer confined to public universities. Students from private universities, colleges, and schools joined. The whole country seemed implicated. The country that emerged subsequently was not the country we thought we knew.

Why did the students have to protest to compete for government jobs on the basis of merit? Jobs are one of the primal needs that a functional country ensures to its citizens. While the country is awash in rhetoric of development, the unemployment rate is still staggeringly high in Bangladesh. Jobs here mean government jobs, given the perks and privileges attached to them. Approximately 400,000 candidates apply for 3,000 positions in the civil service in Bangladesh each year. Such a system also contributes to

causing discrimination in social, economic, and political structures by disrupting equilibrium. Students realised that, as did everyone. When, however, the government realised it, it was already too late. The country already paid "such a heavy price," when it finally acquiesced to the students' demand, as Sushmita S Preetha, in her pitch "Did we have to pay such a heavy price for this verdict?" in *The Daily Star*, claims. It's a sobering time for the country now.

I have never felt so helpless and useless thus far in my life. I wonder what it means to be a teacher in the face of such a crisis. The more I commit to my country, the more I feel connected to my students. I'm deeply invested in helping them forge their future so that the country marches forward. Now that they are on the streets and their lives are endangered, grief and guilt consume me. During the protests, we saw authority without leadership from the merchants of dreams. Whose dream was that nightmare? They used such a big knife to cut such a small political cake. I wish they were more patriotic and political. Their hubris was puzzling!

That upsets me. The country hangs on a cliff to go further south. Every infrastructure totalled, every life perished, and every drop of blood spilt are provocations for further division and destruction. A sledgehammer approach to turning the country on the right track is apparently a recipe for disaster. When Bangladesh bleeds, no one scores any political point, however lofty their political ideologies are. The student movement demonstrates that we lose as a nation when we fight for political space and prestige amid traumas and tragedies. I apprehend times of dread ahead. Toni Morrison claims, referring to her friend, in her essay, "No Place for Self-Pity, No Room for Fear," that this is precisely the time for artists to go to work. Teaching is the art of cultivating wisdom and ethics. Being a teacher, I'm an artist. With prayers and tears, as I resolve to resume my work, I implore everyone to stop bleeding Bangladesh.

It's already ENOUGH!

NETANYAHU'S SPEECH

Congress applauds and AIPAC pays



Yousef SY Ramadan
is the ambassador of Palestine to Bangladesh.

YOUSEF SY RAMADAN

There are big differences between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's first three Congress speeches and the fourth one that he recently delivered as his war on Gaza approaches its 10th month.

The first difference appeared in the Israeli public sentiment, where Netanyahu transformed from a crowned king whose rivals could not undermine his monopoly, to a problematic figure who convinced the majority of the Israeli public to demand the downfall of his failed administration for the longest war fought by Israel since its establishment.

As for the United States itself, Netanyahu turned from an active, effective and beloved leader who united the superpower behind his leadership, to an active and effective element in provoking a division within the US political and partisan class and dispelling the consensus on

the Gaza war. This political division was evident by the empty seats of 120 Democratic Congress members who objected to his mere invitation. Outside Congress, the flag of Palestine rose high, with protesters denouncing Netanyahu and his genocide, calling on the US administration to stop its political and financial support for the war, a scene reminiscent of the strong popular uprisings against the Vietnam War in the last century.

Netanyahu came to his loyal Congress, but this time he arrived wounded and bleeding, stirred by the million demonstrations against his leadership before and during the Gaza war, and by fierce demands for a cessation of the war.

He arrived with mountains of corruption cases on his shoulders. Had it not been for the war, he would have been sent to prison long ago. On top of that, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has provided an explicit

and decisive condemnation of Israel's occupation and illegal settlements, along with its systematic exploitation of the Palestinian people and their inalienable human, historical and political rights. This is in addition to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which convicted him as a war criminal and is now awaiting his prosecution and punishment.

His fourth speech was arranged behind the backs of the Democratic administration to contribute to the undermining of Biden and the success of Trump. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) spent a hefty amount to make it the largest demonstration in support of the Republican campaign before President Joe Biden's resounding fall in the crucial debate. Netanyahu was there to deliver the fatal blow to the already weakened president.

During the speech, it was clear that Netanyahu's warm reception was the result of many filled pockets, as is usual for events organised by the AIPAC, and that the applause and standing ovations after every empty sentence were eclipsed by a small sign raised by Rashida Tlaib, with the words "war criminal" on one side and "guilty of genocide" on the other.

The small sign was more honest than the exaggerated applause, simply because it wasn't paid, and because it stood out as a symbol of



US House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) and Senate Foreign Relations Chair Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) listen as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a joint meeting of Congress at the US Capitol in Washington, US on July 24, 2024. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

morality amid a sea of Israeli criminality in front of the world's cameras.

This was a show by Netanyahu—an insult to the US, portraying it as a small Israeli settlement, a vehicle dragged by Zionist horses. Netanyahu explicitly said that Israel is the one who protects the US and not the other way around, and that the American

people who demonstrated against the Israeli war of genocide in Gaza are just groups of rogue mercenaries. The calamity is that the representatives of the American people clapped for these insults. Everything is welcome as long as Netanyahu speaks and the AIPAC pays.

Netanyahu knows all this; he is an expert on US politics and its

fluctuations, but he does not care about what he knows, especially as he is fighting his last battle.

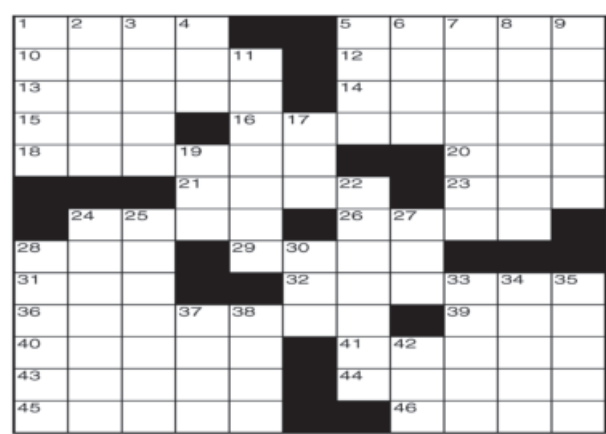
The US, in this battle, is just a bottomless fuel tank for his authoritarian aspirations. He prepares for the day the Democrats will leave the White House and looks forward to the Republicans and their leader Trump making a comeback, despite his belief that what the Democrats gave him in this war was the most generous of all that was presented to Israel by previous administrations.

Netanyahu, for purely personal reasons, longs for Trump's leadership, who gave him the deal of the century with all its consequences and tragedies, without even checking a word of its details.

This situation will not halt the momentum of popular American progress towards a balance, but it will inevitably benefit Israel and its illegal occupation and settlements. Despite this, Congress and administrations are influenced by considerations of votes and funding, so the American people, who have demonstrated and protested against the war, still have the opportunity to steer towards their goal. Ultimately, it is through the support of the people that battles are won, even those of the Palestinian people.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ACROSS | 24 Let off steam | 46 Tire tracks | 19 Family |
| 1 Places for the pampered | 26 Not new | DOWN | 22 XXII, e.g. |
| 5 Fought | 28 The Grinch's dog | 1 Scarecrow fill | 24 Wood coat |
| 10 Caruso, for one | 29 Matching | 2 Treaty goal | 25 Outlay |
| 12 Tehran native | 31 Artist Jean | 3 "West Side Story" role | 27 Squid's home |
| 13 Job reward | 32 Lab vessel | 4 Urgent call | 28 Rabble |
| 14 Nemo's creator | 36 Gym shoe | 5 Workers' home | 30 Penny prez. |
| 15 Be decisive | 39 Mendes of movies | 6 Open space | 33 Reeves of "John Wick" |
| 16 House leader | 40 Following | 7 Fruity brew | 34 Kick out |
| 18 Less powerful | 41 Be patient for | 8 Added onto | 35 Assesses |
| 20 Lumber tool | 43 School paper | 9 Like wedding cakes | 37 Mil. sch. |
| 21 A party to | 44 Jousting need | 11 Bristles at | 38 Florida feature |
| 23 Headed | 45 Throws off | 17 Old hand | 42 Simple card game |



SUNDAY'S ANSWERS

T E M P T S A B B A
I T A L I C L A I D
S E R E N A A C T S
 A T R I S K
P A R T S K I T S
U M A M E L A N I E
P I C A G E G A L
I N K B L O T U R L
L O I R E S P A S
 N E S T L E
E D G E A U D I T S
L A U D P L A N E T
I M P S S U N D A Y

edcu এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সরকারী মালিকানাধীন ঔষধ প্রস্তুতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড, গোপালগঞ্জ কারখানায় প্রোডাক্ট ডেভেলপমেন্ট (PD) বিভাগের নিম্নলিখিত পদে জরুরী ভিত্তিতে লোক নিয়োগ করা হইবে:

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স সীমা
০১।	ল্যাব এসিস্ট্যান্ট-০১ (এনালিটিক্যাল উইং)	এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)/বিএসসি	কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে এনালিটিক্যাল কাজে (Analytical) কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩২ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)
০২।	মেশিন অপারেটর-০২	ন্যূনতম এইচএসসি (বিজ্ঞান)	মেশিন অপারেটর-এর ক্ষেত্রে কোন স্বনামধন্য ঔষধ কোম্পানীতে বিভিন্ন ধরনের মেশিনের (Compression/ Mixer/ Granulator/ Coating/ Blister Machine) অপারেটর হিসাবে কমপক্ষে ০৫ বছরের কাজের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।	প্রার্থীর সর্বোচ্চ বয়স ৩৫ বছর। (অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়সসীমা শিথিল যোগ্য)

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদেরকে ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঙীন ছবি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, জীবন-বৃত্তান্ত, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র সমূহের সত্যায়িত কপিসহ আগামী ২০ আগষ্ট, ২০২৪ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর বরাবরে আবেদন করার জন্য বলা হচ্ছে। উদ্দেশ্যিত কাগজপত্রসমূহ সঠিকভাবে জমা দিতে হবে অন্যথায় আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

উপস্থিত শর্ত লিটেড প্রার্থীদেরকে সাক্ষাতকারের জন্য ডাকা হবে।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপক, এডমিন এন্ড এইচআরএম (চলতি দায়িত্ব)
এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শি/এ, ঢাকা-১২০৮।

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

Witnessing the Turkish century

Review of 'The Endless Country' (Picador, 2024) by Sami Kent

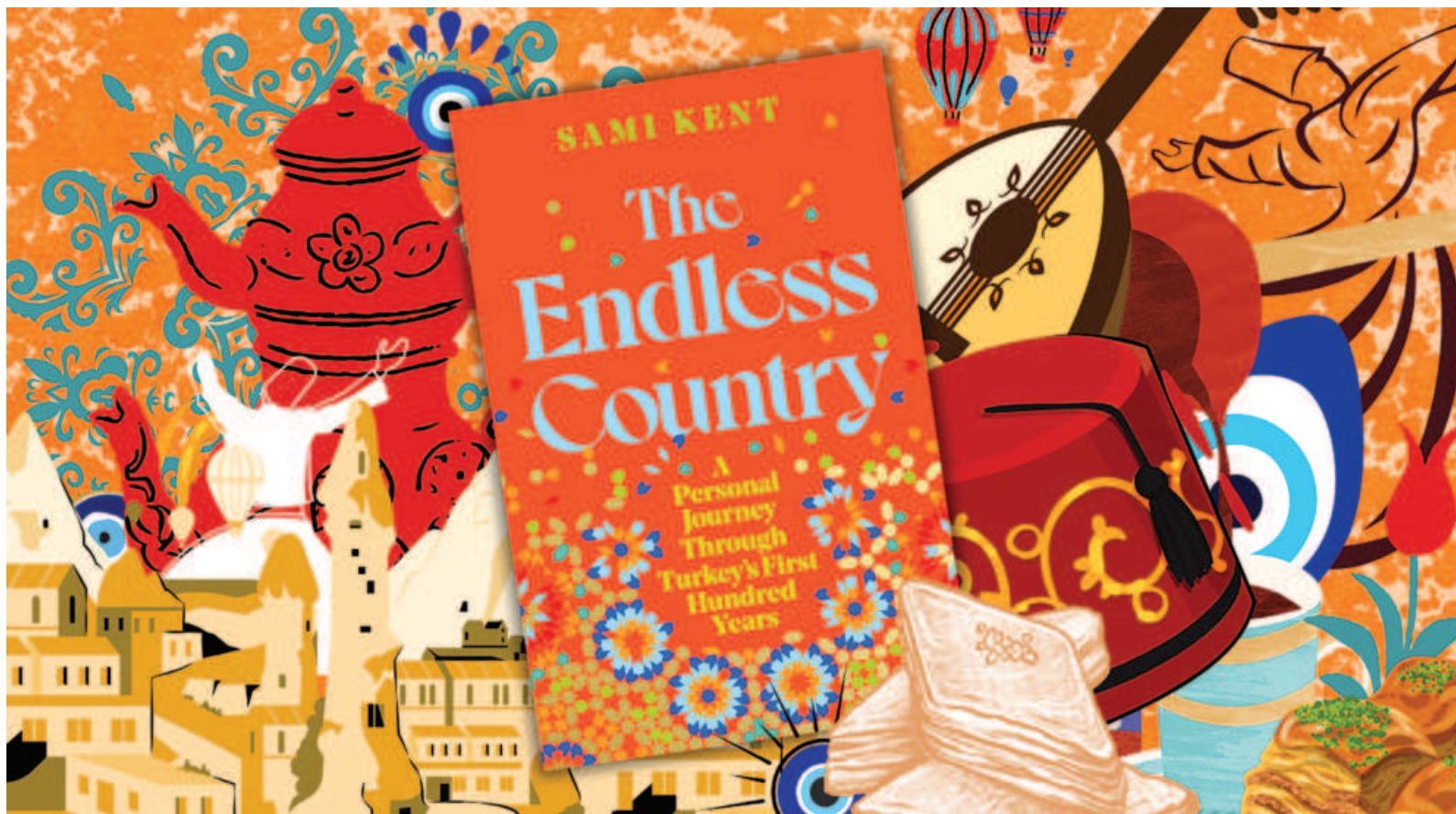


ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

ISRAR HASAN

In the post-9/11 world, no country's name has been evoked more than Turkey's (or its newly rebranded name of Türkiye) in public discussions by foreign policy pundits and politicians alike, to demonstrate the harmonious symbiosis of the East and West, Islam and secularism, and tradition and modernity. Turkey has been championed as a model that other states in the Middle East, and the broader Muslim world, can emulate. It has been 100 years since the multicultural Ottoman empire was abolished, and Turkey has long been its sole, albeit contested, successor, breaking with its past to create a new "Turkish" identity.

In his book, *The Endless Country*, Sami Kent, a British journalist of Turkish origin, takes us on a tour of a Turkey seldom known, seen, and heard

of. Part-travelogue, part memoir, and part-history, *The Endless Country* transverses through the annals of statecraft and culture to demonstrate the major events that have helped shape the country. Kent, the son of a Turkish father, finds himself "betwixt-and-between", never knowing his own culture, and notes how his "Turkishness would be lightly worn."

Over the years, the Turkish model began to assert itself on the world stage, as Erdogan's strongman style leadership steered its course from a heavily top-down secularist form of governance to one espousing conservative, Sunni Islamic values. In the same vein, Turkey has anchored not towards the East or the West, but in itself trying to craft a new beginning. It is between the beginning of the nation-state and its current prognosis that Kent tries to uncover the paradoxes of Turkish society and the state.

Kent avoids the typical reliance on past scholarly studies; instead, he leverages his journalistic acumen to offer a vivid and nuanced portrait of the nation. Through extensive travels across the country, Kent interviews a diverse array of characters: communists, Islamists, bandits, prison guards, political dissidents, and family members. These interviews are not just personal anecdotes, but rather tied to various symbols: headscarves, fezzes, hats, books, ice cream, musical instruments, and languages—each representing different eras and policies of the Turkish state over its century-long history. Kent organises the chapters decade-wise, allowing readers to witness the gradual build-up of modern Turkey. This structure helps in understanding the evolution of Turkish society and politics, balancing moments of hope and despair, and navigating through a quagmire of

complex problems.

Turkey's thrust into capitalist modernity involved a top-down approach which wanted to "blow away the Arab winds", and one of the first casualties was the fez, a hat worn by many Turks regardless of religious and political views. The fez, now seen as a "Muslim" hat and inescapably backward, was banned. This was followed by the ban of headscarves, which was uplifted fairly recently in 2013.

In many ways, the modern nation-state of Turkey has largely been synonymous with its spectacular general—the great Mustafa Kemal Atatürk—who moulded Turkey in an image very much unknown to his countrymen: Western, secular, and nationalist—all of which have various contested meanings in Turkish history. The irony is not lost, however, as Kent shows that in order to create a modern state, the founding father of Turkey, Atatürk himself, had transformed the country into a mostly Turkish and almost exclusively (Sunni) Muslim state due to an exodus of non-Muslim minorities. Through his interviews with members of the dwindling Greek and Armenian minorities, and his descriptions of decrepit churches

many Muslim majority countries often discriminating Muslim minority sects.

Kent further notes how the volatile cocktail of ethnic and religious tensions have plagued the country with numerous sides claiming victory, but none have been more everlasting than their skirmishes with the Kurds. Thrust into the modes of democracy and the Cold War, Turkey has always struggled with its "Kurdish question" from the 1930s till this day and multiple forms of repression including militarisation, surveillance, and crackdowns on civil societies have taken place. It is particularly in these chapters that Kent shows how the Turkish republic hankers to its past and how, instead of dealing with its demons of the yesteryear, it keeps bringing it to life. It is this modus operandi of the intolerance towards dissent that has led to it jailing the highest number of journalists, and housing Europe's biggest prison, Silivri Prison, earning the moniker "Prison Nation".

The strength of Kent's book lies in his ability to humanise historical, socio-economic, and political narratives. His firsthand accounts and the variety of perspectives he includes offer a rich and textured understanding of Turkey. Marking

Over the years, the Turkish model began to assert itself on the world stage, as Erdogan's strongman style leadership steered its course from a heavily top-down secularist form of governance to one espousing conservative, Sunni Islamic values. In the same vein, Turkey has anchored not towards the East or the West, but in itself trying to craft a new beginning.

and monasteries, Kent demonstrates the lost cosmopolitanism of Turkey's yesteryears. With conspicuous religious minorities no longer inhabiting the landscape, the focus on religious exclusion is geared towards the Alevi, a Shia Muslim offshoot who have routinely protested for their civil liberties. The formation of "the other" strikes a jarring resemblance to

the pivotal moments in the country's history, from the formation of the Republic to its current malaises, Sami Kent navigates the massive labyrinth of a nation with diverse misfortunes and fortunate happenings.

Israr Hasan is a research associate at BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health.

THE SHELF

4 books I was grateful to read this year

The Earth Spinner shares some central concerns with *Djinn Patrol*, such as a memorable dog, and more importantly the hate born of Hindu-Muslim conflict. But Roy is more interested in showing how art is inextricably tied to politics, and how identity politics itself is such a deeply embedded and problematic part of life in India.

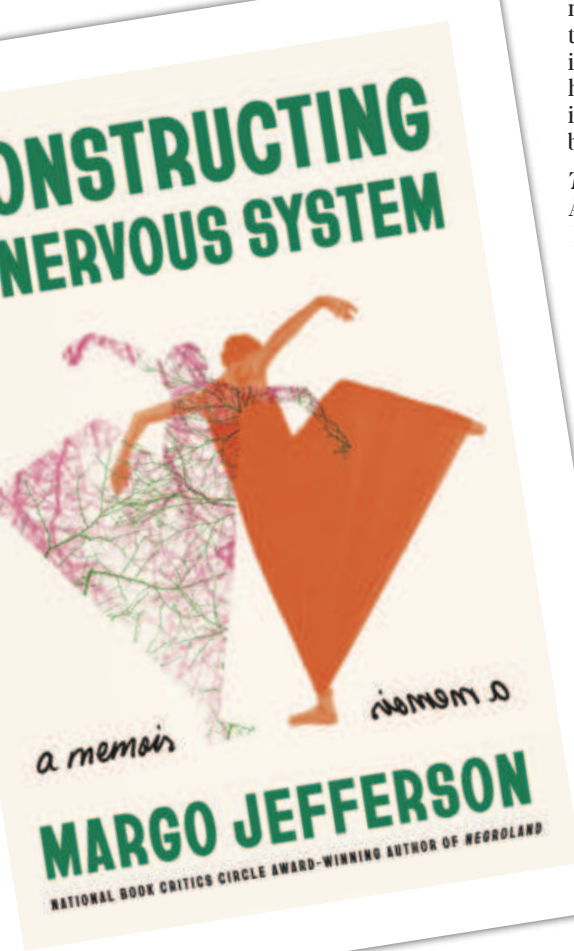
SARAH ANJUM BARI

Books are so intrinsically tied to space. A fellow writer from my MFA program recently told me that she's "only buying books [she] actually want[s] to have, not just read." It's true, I feel differently about books that I previously disliked or enjoyed reading and books that I want as a physical presence in my life. A few that fall in the latter category: An author whose voice, craft, or research moves I want to emulate; a book with gorgeous cover art; an edition with an especially insightful preface; or, books on my nightstand that left me, by turns, frustrated, intimidated, laughing, crying, or wrestling with thoughts that fluctuated as I made my way through the text. Some of these books I found through an author, professor, or friend whose taste I trust. Others were related to subjects or texts I'm already drawn to. Reading is never a solitary act; it almost always spins out through such webs of association.

I've come to recognise this as a uniquely different experience from simply liking or disliking a book. Instead, I felt gratitude for specific things about a text—things that I both agreed and enjoyed disagreeing with. Perhaps we all read this way subconsciously—our responses goopy and contradictory, often heightened by emotions. Perhaps we give (social) media rhetoric too much power when we reduce our reading responses to 'good/bad', 'one to five stars', 'would or would not recommend to a friend'.

***Djinn Patrol On The Purple Line*
Deepa Anappara
Hamish Hamilton, 2020**

Obsessed with the sleuths of Indian television (Byomkesh Bakshi, Karamchand, characters from *Crime Patrol*), nine-year-old Jai wants to do some "detectiving" into why children are going missing from the Delhi slum he calls home. As with most famous detectives, Jai decides that a skinny street dog he calls Samosa will be his sidekick and key to finding clues. Meanwhile, it's his bookworm friend Pari who gets closest to the truth, asking all the right questions to the missing children's family and neighbours. Their friend, Faiz, believes it is djinns who are abducting their classmates, while the rest of the slum soon begins to blame Muslim families



like Faiz's for the crimes. Deepa Anappara's novel delights in the tropes of mystery noir, with its world feeling familiar to that of *Slumdog Millionaire* and Katherine Boo's reportage in *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*. But while both those works brought a western, partially-outsider gaze to the poverty and corruption of slum-life in India, *Djinn Patrol* is interested in speaking through the minds of its most marginalised characters. The young, the abused, the tortured—a little boy escaping his violent home; his mother who must work through her rich employers' family party while her son is missing; a woman whose abused soul has taken to haunting a traffic signal—these are the characters we get to know intimately. A crisply choreographed climax does arrive, but the book seems to be about, instead, recentering stories and pushing the reader's perspective not

only into political peripheries, but also into the mind of a frustrating, endearing narrator who is too young and mercurial to be reliable. You believe in his passion for solving these crimes, but it's a hard ask to trust him. Mostly, your heart is caught in your throat for the child's safety. It makes for a breathless and heartbreaking reading experience.

The Earth Spinner
Anuradha Roy
Hachette, 2021

Anuradha Roy's writing is graceful and unassuming because it doesn't scream its politics. She tells simple stories that reveal complex social dynamics. Just by sharing their pasts before a reader, her characters gain some semblance of freedom or catharsis from their difficult lives.

The Earth Spinner shares some central concerns with *Djinn Patrol*, such as a memorable dog, and more importantly the hate born of Hindu-Muslim conflict. But Roy is more interested in showing how art is inextricably tied to politics, and how identity politics itself is such a deeply embedded and problematic part of life in India. Her protagonist, Elango, is a potter whose family has, for generations, devoted itself to the primarily Hindu artform. But Zohra, the woman he loves, belongs to an ancestry of Muslim calligraphy. Roy gives us multiple love stories—Elango and Zohra's, Elango and Chinna's (the dog he befriends from the woods), Chinna and the entire neighbourhood's, and that of Elango and young Sara, his pottery student and the narrator of the book.

The idea of all their unions is manifested in a clay horse that Elango is creating based on a burning horse he sees in his dreams, onto which Zohra's grandfather will etch the Arabic verses of Kabir. Descended from Hindu mythology, the burning, underwater horse denotes apocalypse as well as a balance between fire and water, desire and purity, man and woman. Its physical form in their lives becomes a site on which art and language can shed divisions of caste or religion. A tall promise and a fevered dream, one that crumbles against the harsh reality of communal violence.

Constructing A Nervous System
Margo Jefferson
Pantheon, 2022

Towards the end of a History of the Essay seminar I took last year, we had to create a family tree of essays for ourselves. It brought up the question of how we considered ourselves 'related' to certain pieces of writing—work that forms part of our

socio cultural or political history, work that we're literally, familiarly tied to, writers whose style have informed our own, essays that made us realise what we like, why we want to write, what we don't want to write.

Margo Jefferson, professor of writing at Columbia University and a Pulitzer-winning giant in the world of criticism, takes on a similar project in *Constructing A Nervous System*. The memoir presents the 'nervous system' of writers, artists, (Jazz) musicians, athletes, and other cultural milestones that have informed Jefferson's mind and heart. But she's writing particularly about engaging with art (as a Black woman) that won't imagine you unless you're white. "Too much of white art requires a negative capability that negates whole parts of one's self", she writes.

It's the way she marries language and form to replicate the concept of a nervous system that blows your mind. Her prose feels sinewy—she's teasing apart and garlanding pieces of culture across time and space, with her own mind as the connecting force. "Temperamental autobiography", she calls it. The effect is like witnessing a mind shaping itself in real time, like watching an animated x-ray.

This is an excerpt. Read the full listicle at *The Daily Star* and *DS Books'* websites.

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TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

- ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS**
Women's Artistic Individual All-Around
10:15 PM
- ATHLETICS**
Men's 20km Race Walk
11:30 AM
Women's 20km Race Walk
1:20 PM
- CANOE SLALOM**
Men's Slalom
9:30 PM
- FENCING**
Women's Team Foil
Friday 12:30 AM
- JUDO**
Men 100 kg
Women 78 kg
8 PM
- SHOOTING**
Men's 50m Rifle Three Positions
1:30 PM
- SWIMMING**
Women's 200m Butterfly
Friday, 12:30 AM
Men's 200m Backstroke
Friday, 12:38 AM



SEINE-SATIONAL TRIATHLON: Paris Olympics organisers received a pre-dawn green light for yesterday's triathlon swim leg to be held in the Seine, ending days of suspense over whether the French capital's scenic river would be clean enough for racing. In the women's race, France's Cassandre Beaugrand made her break for gold on the last lap of the run stage, while Britain's Alex Yee ran a perfectly-paced 10km to snatch a dramatic gold in the men's triathlon.

PHOTO: AFP



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Archer Sagor faces early elimination

SPORTS REPORTER

Archer Sagor Islam, the only Bangladeshi athlete to qualify directly for the 2024 Olympics, has ended his Paris campaign with a 6-0 set-points defeat against Mauro Nespoli of Italy in the 1/32 elimination round of men's individual recurve event yesterday.

The 18-year-old archer from Bangladesh, who had finished 45th among 64 participants in the ranking round of his event, failed to put up a fight against the three-time Olympic medalist at the Esplanade des Invalides.

Sagor lost the first set by 30-27 points before putting up a bit of a fight in a 27-26 defeat in the second set. However, the teenager from Rajshahi lost the third set by 28-25 points to face an early elimination.

Sagor is the third of five Bangladeshi participants in the Summer Games this year. Earlier, shooter Robiul Islam finished 10m air rifle event with a 43rd finish among 49 contestants while swimmer Samiul Islam Rafi finished 49th among 69 swimmers in 100m freestyle event.

Swimmer Sonia Khatun and sprinter Imranur Rahman are yet to compete.

Race walks launch track and field festivities

SPORTS DESK

The undisputed crown jewel of every Olympic Games, the track and field events kick off today in Paris. The eagerly awaited series of competitions begins with the men's and women's 20km race walks.

Preliminary and qualification rounds for other events will commence tomorrow, ramping up the excitement as athletes vie for their spots in the finals.

The women's 100m final will take place on August 3, followed by the men's 100m final the next day, ensuring back-to-back nights of high-speed drama.

As the games progress, all sprint and middle-distance races will unfold on the striking purple track of the Stade de France in Paris. This iconic venue will also host the various field events, making it the epicenter of athletic prowess.

Meanwhile, the marathon and race walks will wind through the picturesque streets of the French capital, offering a scenic yet challenging route for the competitors.

The grand finale of the track and field events is the women's marathon on August 11, bringing these thrilling competitions to a close on the final day of the Games.

Throughout these days, fans will be treated to a dazzling array of running, walking, jumping, and throwing competitions, underscoring the essence of the Olympic spirit.



GOAT Biles is back

AGENCIES

Simone Biles could claim her ninth Olympic medal in today's all-around final two days after leading the United States women to a gymnastics team gold in Paris.

Biles is the big favourite coming into the event after qualifying for the final by a healthy margin, and the drama may centre on the race for silver featuring a Tokyo rematch between defending champion Sunisa Lee of USA and Brazil's

Rebeca Andrade.

Lee held off Andrade for gold in the Tokyo all-around final, from which Biles withdrew due to a potentially dangerous mental block known as the "twisties".

The 27-year-old American — considered the greatest gymnast of all time — appears to be a different person to the one who abruptly pulled out of the Tokyo Games.

"After I finished vault I was relieved because, phew, there were no flashbacks or

anything," Biles told a packed press conference after clinching her fifth Olympic gold.

Biles said her second team gold — eight years after her first — felt different.

"It was just like we were a little young and naive," she said of 2016. "So it didn't hit the way that it does now."

"Now that I'm much older, we have so much more experience and we're out here really having fun and enjoying what we're doing."



Back in coaching, Maruful eyes SAFF U-20 final berth

SPORTS REPORTER

Veteran coach Maruful Haque is looking forward to guiding the Bangladesh under-20 football team to the final of the SAFF Under 20 Championship in Nepal later this month as he returns to coaching after a year-long sabbatical.

The former national team head coach, who left Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club early last year and then worked as a technical advisor to Chittagong Abahani last season, has been given the charge of the under-20 team by the Bangladesh Football Federation for the first time.

Talking to The Daily Star after conducting the first training session in Kamalapur yesterday, the successful club coach said he would try to focus on the tactical side of things in the South Asian event, which will take place in Kathmandu from August 18 to 28.

Bangladesh have been pitted against Sri Lanka and Nepal in Group A while Group B features India, Bhutan and Maldives.

"I am getting to know the players personally although I've seen most of them play in the Bangladesh Premier League," Maruful said. "With only around two weeks left for the SAFF Under 20 Championship, it will not be possible to focus on the players' fitness. So I would try to focus mainly on tactical aspects of the players, majority of

whom played in the last premier league."

The under-20 team features three players — Mehdi Hasan Srabon, Mojibor Rahman Jony, and Chandon Roy — with senior national team experience while eight players come from the BFF Academy. The coach feels the team is strong enough to make it to the final.

Bangladesh had played in the final in the last edition as well, eventually losing to hosts India after extra time.

"We were runners-up last time around. So I'm pretty confident we will reach the final this time too," said Maruful, who will also guide the team in the AFC U-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Vietnam next month.

Bangladesh will play against hosts Vietnam as well as Syria, Bhutan and Guam in that qualifying campaign, with 10 group winners and five best runners-up teams slated to qualify for the final round.

Maruful feels that he would get more time for that competition, hence he is setting the target high. "We will get more time to prepare for that tournament. Our target will be to qualify for the final round," the coach said. "We always do well at youth level and the teams like Syria and Vietnam are only mid-tier teams in Asia. So we can definitely target the final round."



Taskin on red-ball track, Shakib available

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are awaiting key returnees to the Test outfit ahead of the Pakistan series in mid-August with ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan confirmed as available while pacer Taskin Ahmed, who had decided to sit out Tests owing to injury issues at the beginning of the year, is likely to return to the red-ball format.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cricket operations chairman Jalal Yunus addressed the media yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium and gave updates on players returning from injuries or otherwise.

"He [Shakib] is available [for the Pakistan Tests]. He has talked with me, the board, and also the selectors," Jalal told reporters yesterday.

Shakib, currently playing the Global T20 League in Canada, will either return to the country before the series or join the team directly in Pakistan. Shakib has played in just four Tests in the last two years and questions regarding his availability for the longer format keep resurfacing ahead of any Test series.

"If time is not available then he will move directly from Dubai to join the side [in Pakistan]. Or else, as he has been told, he will join the side in Dhaka and go through one or two days of practice before departure," Jalal added.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh will play two Tests in Pakistan on August 21 and September 30. Keeping the series in mind, six national team stars have already been named in the 'A' team's tour of Pakistan — preceding the national team's Test assignment in Pakistan — to play the first four-day fixture on August 10.

Meanwhile, Taskin Ahmed began training in Mirpur and also gave a fitness test on Tuesday.

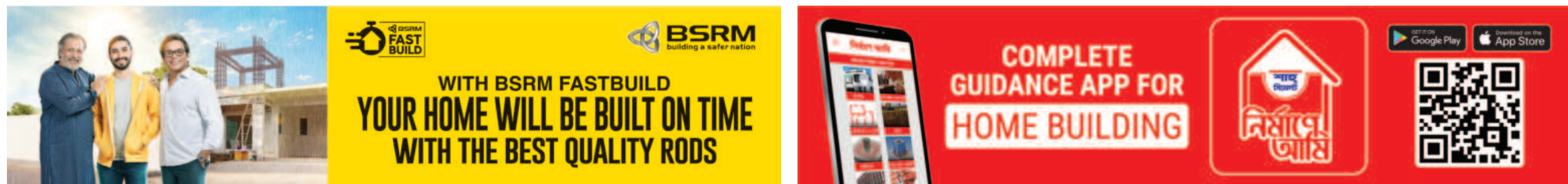
Taskin had issues bowling in red-ball cricket owing to a shoulder injury and had decided to sit out Tests. He played his last Test in June last year although he had continued in other formats, featuring for the Tigers in the T20 World Cup in the USA and the West Indies in June. On Tuesday, he bowled with a red ball during an individual practice session.

Taskin has been given the green light to continue on the trajectory to return to Tests by physios following the assessment but a final call is to be made by BCB chief physician Debashish Chowdhury when he sees the reports.

"Taskin had an assessment yesterday [Tuesday]. He is being considered for red-ball. It will be the selectors' call," Jalal confirmed to the media on Taskin being considered for Pakistan Tests.

Meanwhile, another Test prospect Ebadot Hossain had been sitting on the sidelines since an ACL injury last year in July saw him miss out both the ODI and T20I World Cups.

"Ebadot is recovering. We are in communication with him and he has recovered about 70 percent. Hopefully, he will recover more in the next two months. He is still in rehabilitation," Jalal said.



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Social media curbs lifted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday lifted the restrictions on social media platforms, including Facebook, TikTok and WhatsApp, bringing a sigh of relief to the tens of thousands of F-commerce entrepreneurs.

The development comes after Zunaed Ahmed Palak, the state minister for telecom and ICT, held a meeting with the representatives of the social media platforms yesterday.

While representatives from ByteDance, the parent company of TikTok, were present at the meeting held at the headquarters of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Authority, officials of Meta, the parent company of Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, joined in virtually from Singapore. YouTube sent an emailed reply.

"We, through the BTRC, enforced some restrictions for a certain period, but we have now withdrawn those -- there are no barriers on Facebook, TikTok and YouTube operating in Bangladesh's cyberspace," Palak said after the meeting.

The restrictions on the platforms were lifted to facilitate the business of e-commerce and F-commerce sites and students who depend on the platforms for their studies.

"Facebook, in the meeting, promised that they will be more cautious in the future. We asked Facebook how the post of Tarique Zia (Rahman), who is a convicted and absconded person, stating 'Hasina's killing force has murdered our sons on the streets' meets its community standards. Which community standards allow such words?"

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3



Bronze medalist Jonghoon Lim of South Korea takes selfie with gold medalists China's Wang Chuqin (rear R) and China's Sun Yingsha (front L), silver medalists North Korea's Ri Jong Sik (2nd L), and North Korea's Kim Kum Yong (C) and bronze medalist and teammate South Korea's Shin Yubin (rear R) at the end of their mixed table tennis doubles competition at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Olympic spirit trumps cross-border tension

AFP, Seoul

Images of Olympic table tennis players from North Korea and South Korea taking a selfie together on the medal podium in Paris went viral in South Korea yesterday, hailed as a rare show of cross-border unity.

Nuclear-armed North Korea declared the South its principal enemy earlier this year and tensions between the two countries are at one of their highest points in years.

But after South Korea won bronze and North Korea silver in the mixed doubles behind China, South Korea's Lim Jong hoon took a group photo after the medal ceremony.

North Korea's Ri Jong Sik and Kim Kum Yong, the South's Shin Yubin and the victorious Chinese team Wang Chuqin and Sun Yingsha all beamed into Lim's phone, a South Korean-made Samsung.

"A selfie with both Koreas' national flags and a Samsung phone," said the widely read daily JongAng Ilbo.

It was the first time North Korea had been on an Olympic podium since 2016, as they did not send athletes to

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Nationwide drives on

281 more held over violence centring quota protests

STAR REPORT

Law enforcers arrested at least 281 more people in the capital and elsewhere in the country in 36 hours preceding 6:00pm yesterday amid the nationwide crackdown on alleged saboteurs over the recent violence.

Of them, 205 were held in 31 districts and the rest in the capital, according to police and court sources.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police produced 76 arrestees before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka during the same period. The court sent most of them to jail and placed some of the arrestees on remand.

With the latest arrests, at least 10,769 people, including students and leaders and activists of the BNP and Jamaat-Shibir, have been arrested in 673 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts over the last 14 days since July 18. One of those cases was lodged in Chattogram on Tuesday night.

Several thousand named and several hundred thousand unnamed individuals have been accused in those cases.

The cases were filed, mostly by police, with different police stations over violence, vandalism, arson, illegal gathering, rioting and assaulting law enforcers, said DMP sources.

The country witnessed violence after peaceful demonstrations of the quota reform protesters came under attack by Chhatra League men on July 15 on different university campuses.

Among those arrested in the 31 districts, 19 were held in Pabna, six in Madaripur, eight in Rangpur, three in Feni, 31 in Gazipur, two in Tangail, 18 in Rajshahi, five in Bogura, six in Gaibandha, 16 in Narayanganj, five in Khulna, seven in Mymensingh, two in Kishoreganj, four in Satkhira, three in Cox's Bazar, seven in Naogaon, six in Cumilla, three in Panchagarh, 17 in Chattogram, three in Chandpur, two in Magura, seven in Savar, two in Brahmanbaria, 11 in Noakhali, five in Laxmipur, and two in Barishal and one each was picked up in Thakurgaon, Moulvibazar, Joypurhat, Netrakona and Natore.

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES

Academic calendars in total disarray

Most primary schools to open Aug 4

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFEAT RAHAMAN

The month-long disruption to university education and two-week long closure of schools have led to the cancellation of public and school exams, upsetting academic calendars and hampering the education of crores of students.

The government shut down all schools, colleges and universities on July 16. Activities at public universities, however, have been halted since July 1, when teachers went on work abstention to demand the reinstatement of the previous pension scheme in place of the Prottoy scheme.

Meanwhile, uncertainty hangs heavy on the academic lives of a large number of students as the reopening of secondary schools and universities are yet to be declared.

Yesterday, the primary and mass education ministry said primary schools across the country, apart from the 12 major city corporations -- Dhaka North, Dhaka South, Khulna, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barishal, Cumilla, Sylhet, Narayanganj, Gazipur and Mymensingh -- along with Narsingdi district, will reopen on August 4.

Meanwhile, the situation at universities took a more volatile turn as the students demonstrating for quota reforms are yet to call off their movement, while agitating teachers continue their protest.

Many public university students, especially those from colleges under the National University, said they were already facing session jams and this prolonged closure will only make matters worse.

"We understand that we're all fighting for our rights, but at the same time we need to continue our studies ... It's the government's responsibility to stabilise the situation for the students as well as for the teachers."

a student of Comilla University

Prof Muhammad Alamgir, acting chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), yesterday told The Daily Star that no decision has yet been taken regarding the reopening of universities.

Nizamul Hoque Bhuiyan, general secretary of the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers Association, which spearheaded the teachers' protests, said, "We're protesting as this [the

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QUOTA PROTESTS

Investigate allegations of rights violations

2 US senators, 2 UK MPs urge Bangladesh govt

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Two US senators and two UK MPs have called on the Bangladeshi authorities to urgently conduct an independent and impartial investigation into alleged human rights violations.

UK MP Rupa Huq stressed that Bangladesh's probe into the violence has an international element.

In a statement on Tuesday, US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Ben Cardin and Senator Cory Booker also called for respecting the rights of the protesters and working in good faith to address their grievances.

They condemned Bangladeshi security forces for using force and violence against student protesters. "The security forces involved in these horrific acts include a paramilitary unit whose leaders have faced US sanctions over human rights abuses."

The government put the death toll in the violence at 150.

But according to The Daily Star's count, at least 163 people were killed.

The death toll from the violence could be much higher as this newspaper could not reach many hospitals, where dozens of critically injured patients were taken.

Also, many families reportedly collected the bodies of their loved ones from the scene, and this newspaper could not contact those families.

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GRAFT ALLEGATION

Matiur goes on early retirement amid probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government granted early retirement to former customs official Matiur Rahman, who was embroiled in allegations of corruption in June.

Over a month ago, the finance ministry transferred him to the Internal Resources Division (IRD) from the Customs, Excise & VAT Appellate Tribunal of which he was the president.

The government also removed Matiur from the position of director of state-run Sonali Bank PLC in June amid allegations over his illegal wealth.

Matiur applied for voluntary retirement on completion of his 25 years in service, said an IRD order yesterday.

The application was granted, and he will go on voluntary retirement without financial benefits on August 28.

Allegations of corruption surfaced after

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Imran offers conditional talks with Pak military

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan has offered to hold "conditional negotiations" with the powerful military as he serves a year into

a jail term that he said he was given on trumped up charges designed to keep him out of power.

Khan did not specify what he wanted to discuss with the military, but in a post on his official X account yesterday said that one of the conditions for negotiations was that "clean and transparent" elections be held and that "bogus" cases against his supporters be dropped.

He said he had appointed Mahmood Khan Achakzai, a close political ally and a known critic of the military, to represent him in any talks. The military has previously ruled out talks with Khan.



Dhaka North City Corporation has recently recovered this land on the Ramchandrapur canal in Mohammadpur after evicting encroacher Sadeeq Agro, a farm that reared mostly cattle. The corporation put up a sign declaring that a playground and a park would be built here. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Female sharks make babies alone in Italy

AFP, Rome

Italian researchers have noted the first case of "virgin birth", or reproduction without fertilisation, in an endangered shark species, a scientific journal reported this week.



The findings published in Scientific Reports concern the first case of the phenomenon in the common smooth-hound shark, *Mustelus mustelus*, a species threatened by illegal fishing that inhabits the Mediterranean and other warm waters.

Researchers from the Experimental Zooprophyllactic Institute of Piedmont, Liguria and the Aosta Valley found that two female *M. mustelus* sharks under observation in captivity had exhibited parthenogenesis -- in which a female can reproduce asexually without the need of sperm to fertilise the egg -- each year since 2020.

The two 18-year-old sharks have been at the Cala Gonone Aquarium in Sardinia since 2010.