



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’

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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.



Harun or Rashid

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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 apologise 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 Rahsid, 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 Goro 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 Kustitia, 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.

## Structures can be rebuilt

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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.

“I don’t know what our fault was. The achievements of the country have faded and the image of the country was tarnished abroad in the name of movement without an issue. My question is who achieved what from this.”

The PM said power is not for enjoyment and she did not come to power to lead a comfortable and lavish life. She said she has been tirelessly working to develop Bangladesh and she has successfully done it.

“Bangladesh is a role model for development in the world. Why is that dignity ruined? I give the responsibility of judging it to the countrymen.”

Hasina said the collaborators of Pakistan occupation forces (in 1971) had dragged the country backwards time and again by hatching conspiracies, which is very unfortunate.

Talking about the fisheries resources, the PM asked the private entrepreneurs to invest in the fish processing sector to enhance export earnings.

“We are now exporting fish and fish products to 52 countries. But value addition to these exportable fish products is needed. If you can process it, we can earn more.” She said the contribution of the

fish sector to the GDP is 2.53 percent and some two crore people, including 14 lakh women, depend on this sector for their livelihoods.

Hasina said special attention should be paid to the production of fish by-products as well.

She also put emphasis on farming pearls, crabs, snails and oysters to export these items after meeting the local demand.

To mark the fisheries week, 22 individuals and organisations were honoured with the National Fisheries Medal for their outstanding contribution to the country’s fisheries sector.

The National Fisheries Week 2024 is being celebrated across the country to promote sustainable development and expansion of fisheries resources. PM VISITS KURMITOLA HOSPITAL. The prime minister yesterday visited the capital’s Kurmitola General Hospital to see the patients injured in the recent violence.

After reaching the hospital at 5:10pm, Hasina enquired about the health of the injured. She instructed the hospital authorities to ensure their proper treatment.

Brig Gen Md Rahman, director of the hospital, briefed the PM about the treatment measures taken by the hospital for the injured.

## Process underway

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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

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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.

## Quader

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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.

## EU postpones negotiations with Dhaka

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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.