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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.**

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# 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.

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## 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 six-storey building, 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



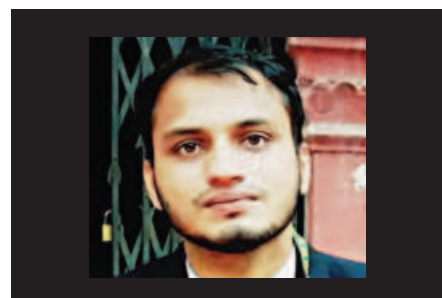
response. It took me a while to realise that she was no more. She was shot in the head. The bullet pierced through the iron grille before hitting her," Asma said while pointing to the hole in the rod of the balcony grille.

Sumaiya's younger brother, Md Sojol,

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## '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 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."

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# 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.

