



BNP-Jamaat used students as shield: PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that Jamaat-Shibir and BNP used the student protests for quota reform as their shield to unleash the recent reign of terrorism across the country.

"They [Jamaat-Shibir and BNP] just used the students as their shield," she said while Italian Ambassador Antonio Alessandro called on her at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

PM's Deputy Press Secretary Noorelahi Mina briefed the reporters afterwards.

He said the prime minister mentioned that Jamaat-Shibir and BNP are used to kill people through arson attacks.

She said she has visited different hospitals to see the injured who are getting treatments following the violence.

"We are providing medicare facilities to all equally," she added.

The Italian envoy expressed his condolences for the loss of lives and properties.

"He hoped that the

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Teachers march at Khulna University. Inset, students, teachers stage street drama on Jahangirnagar University campus.

PHOTO: STAR

Teachers, students demand justice for those killed

They march at 5 public universities, 12 students held for 'their own safety' in Barishal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers from five public universities staged demonstrations on their campuses yesterday, demanding justice for those killed during the quota reform protests.

They organised human chains, rallies, and silent marches to protest the ongoing harassment of both teachers and students nationwide.

Students also held programmes under the "Remembering Our Heroes" initiative called by the

anti-discrimination student movement.

At Rajshahi University, teachers intervened to prevent law enforcers from detaining students during a protest.

At Barishal University, police detained 12 students during a demonstration.

In Dhaka, the Bangladesh University Teachers' Network held a rally near Raju Sculpture, demanding immediate release of arrested students and withdrawal of law enforcers from campuses.

They also called for the reopening of educational institutions.

Prof Kamrul Hasan Mamun of DU Physics department said, "People have now woken up. They will not stop until justice is served for each killing and wrongdoing. We have to ensure justice."

Prof Tanzimuddin Khan of DU International Relations department said, "The recent student protests have brought people from all walks of life to the streets."

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Police, Rab and BGB were not permitted to open fire

Says Arafat, govt to conduct judicial probe

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Information and Broadcasting

Mohammad Ali Arafat yesterday said none of the police, Rab and BGB personnel was permitted to open fire, they had to work in line with the country's constitution.

"But some law enforcers might have broken the law on the ground. We will bring those to book too following an independent judicial probe," he said while addressing the media at the secretariat.

He said the government never wanted any casualties.

He also said only individuals involved in criminal activities will be prosecuted, based on specific evidence, and innocent students will not be harassed.

The government respects the protesting students and added that the destruction of state properties during the quota reform protests was carried out by miscreants, not students, Arafat added.

"They [the third party] tried to cause more casualties to escalate tension so that they can fish

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Social media has now become a danger: chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Obaidul Hasan expressed concern about social media yesterday, stating that it has become a danger.

"If a husband and wife quarrel, that now also comes to Facebook. If we say something about social media, question of rights to freedom of expression arises," he said while presiding over a bench of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court during hearing of a contempt of court petition filed against six pro-BNP lawyers for making "slandorous, derogatory and contemptuous" comments about two apex court judges.

The chief justice told them that they did not apologise but sought exoneration from personal appearance, which is not acceptable. The SC asked them to appear before it on August 22.



Train services resume on a limited scale



STAR REPORT

Movement of passenger train resumed yesterday on a very limited scale, 14 days after the suspension amid countrywide violence centring the quota reform protests.

"Operations of short-distance local, mail and commuter trains resumed this morning," said BR Director General Sardar Shahadat Ali.

On Tuesday, railway authorities decided to resume operations. No intercity trains will be operated now. The authorities suspended operations of passenger trains on July 18 afternoon amid the violence.

Rizvi placed on 3-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed six people, including BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, on a three-day remand each in a case filed over vandalising and setting Setu Bhaban on fire on July 18.

The other accused are BNP Organising Secretary Qazi Sayedul Alam Babul, its Dhaka North City unit Member Secretary Aminul Haque, Publicity Secretary Sultan Salauddin Tuku, Bagerhat district unit Convener MA Salam and Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar.

1 more dies of dengue

UNB, Dhaka

One more death was reported from dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease in Bangladesh to 57 this year.

During the period, 197 more patients were hospitalised with viral fever, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

More than just NUMBERS

A 31-year-old journalist shot dead in Jatrabari. A 45-year-old hotel employee dies from bullet wounds in Badda. A 20-year-old student fatally shot in Banasree. At least 201 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.



Journalist killed in the line of duty

Mehedi dies of bullet wounds while covering news in Jatrabari

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Mehedi Hasan, staff reporter of Dhaka Times, was not just a journalist; he was a son, a husband, a father, and the sole earner of his family.

On July 18, while covering clashes between protesters and law enforcers in Dhaka's Jatrabari area, Mehedi was shot and killed.

Mehedi was the eldest of three brothers and took on the responsibility of caring for his family at a young age.

"He worked hard to keep his parents well, thinking about the happiness of the family," recalls his aunt, Mahinur Begum. "We were so proud when he became a journalist through his own efforts. He was looking after all of us. We can't even imagine that he is gone."

She said Mehedi recently built a one-storey house for his parents in Hosnabad village of Patuakhali's Baufal upazila.

However, that came at a cost; to build the house, Mehedi had to take a loan from a local NGO. Every month, he paid off the loan installments, ensuring that his family had a safe and secure place to live.

With Mehedi gone, his elderly parents are now struggling to comprehend life

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We had to bribe hospital for his body

Says brother of Gani who died after being shot in Dhaka

SUZID DAS

With a trembling voice, Abdul Gani's wife, Lucky Akhtar, kept asking, "Who will take the responsibility of my son and daughter?"

A single bullet has devastated her family beyond imagination.

On July 19, Gani, 45, was heading to his workplace, a hotel in Gulshan, from Gupipara of Uttar Badda, when he was struck in the head by a bullet during a clash between law enforcers and protesters in the Shahjadpur Banshtala area.

Gani was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital later that day.

"He called me around 9:00am," Lucky



recalled. "He wanted to know if everyone at home had breakfast. He said he was going to work after receiving an urgent call and warned me that the situation in Dhaka was tense. He asked me to keep

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No parent should have to bury a child

Says father of 20-year-old Maruf who died of bullet wounds



NAFIS ALMAS SIAM

Twenty-year-old Maruf Hossain of Kushtia's Khoksa upazila dreamed of changing his family's future with the IT skills he possessed.

Being the eldest of two children, he felt it was his responsibility to start taking care of his family as soon as possible. With that goal, Maruf, an eighth-semester Diploma student, was going ahead with his studies in Computer Science and Technology at Kushtia Polytechnic Institute.

However, all his aspirations were dashed by single a bullet, as he was shot dead during a clash between protesters and police and BGB centring the quota reform protests in the capital's Banasree area on July 19.

His friends took him to nearby Advance Hospital.

"He was like my brother. And now he is gone. I couldn't do anything to save

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HSC exams postponed until Aug 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent exams have been postponed till August 11.

Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, chairman of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee and also of the Dhaka Education Board confirmed the information to The Daily Star yesterday morning.

Following the latest decision, the exams scheduled for August 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11 will not be held on those dates, he said.

Due to the situation surrounding the quota reform protests, the HSC and equivalent exams will be held according to a new schedule after August 11, he said, adding that all exams have been postponed until then.

Earlier, authorities postponed examinations of all education boards scheduled for July 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29, 31, and August 1.

RECENT VIOLENCE

Publish list of those who died: Shujan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) yesterday demanded the publication of a list of people who died in the violence centring the ongoing protest, along with their detailed descriptions.

It also demanded a transparent and credible investigation into the violence and bringing the people responsible to justice.

The citizen's platform placed the demand at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

Speakers at the event said the government must sit with the agitating students, university authorities, political parties, and civil society and accept the logical demands raised by all the sections, including the students, to resolve the deadlock.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said Awami League formed the government in 2008, banking on the support of the young people, but this group has now taken a stance against the government.

"We have to think about why such a situation has arisen," he said.

Expressing solidarity with the demands of the protesting students, he said students are not getting jobs, and their freedom of speech is being curtailed at the university campus.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive

of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said the events surrounding the students' movement affected the entire society.

There is no scope to forgive the deaths of so many people, she said, adding that people will not be silent unless a fair trial is conducted with the involvement of the United Nations.

"If the government wants to suppress the movement by force and even if it succeeds in that, it will face discontent again in the future, the consequences of which may be more terrible."

DILIP KUMAR SARKAR
Central Coordinator of Shujan

Dhaka University Professor Robayet Ferdous said the movement to eliminate quota discrimination is no longer limited to students only, as people of all classes and professions have gotten involved there.

He said the government suffered a moral and political defeat as it suppressed the movement by killing people.

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