



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED AND ORCHID CHAKMA

# Artistes unfazed by heavy rain, censorship DEMAND JUSTICE FOR STUDENTS

DOWEL BISWAS

In a powerful show of solidarity with the nine-point demands of the anti-discrimination protest, a diverse group of professionals from the fields of film, television, photography, theater, journalism and other visual media gathered for a rally. The demonstration started on 11:15am yesterday at the Farmgate intersection in Dhaka.

During the rally, attendees were seen delivering their speeches despite the downpour, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to the cause. Their statements focused on demanding justice for the students killed in the quota reform protests, an end to mass arrests, and the cessation of legal actions against the protesters.

The rally was a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggle for justice and reform in Bangladesh, highlighting the role of visual media professionals in amplifying the call for accountability and change.

Calling themselves Drishho Madhyam Shilpi Shomaj (Visual Media Artists Association), the members posed a significant demonstration in support of the ongoing student protests against the violence in the 2024 quota reform movement, also the



nationwide crackdown on students that has seen the arrest of thousands of students. Although the protest was scheduled to take place in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban on Manik Mia Avenue, they had to change their location to Indira Road. However, the demonstration later moved to the Farmgate intersection.

In a powerful statement, the group declared, "We demand justice for all killings. End violence, mass arrests, and harassment." This call for action aligns with the students' nine-point demands, which have sparked widespread unrest and controversy across the country. The recent violence and mass arrests have ignited a firestorm of criticism and calls

for accountability.

With slogans, including the famed *Ganatantra Mukti Pak*, *Swaichar Nipat Jak*, placards, songs, and banners — celebrities stood firm showing their staunch support for the protesters.

The protest stands as a bold assertion of the artistes' commitment to justice and human rights. The demonstrators are not just reacting to the immediate incidents of violence, but are also making a broader demand for the protection of civil liberties and the rule of law.

The association has made it clear that their protest is not just a moment of solidarity but a call to action. They demand justice for

the murders associated with the movement, an end to the violence perpetrated by state forces, the cessation of mass arrests and harassment, and the immediate release of detained students.

Reflecting on the historical context, the group notes that the great Liberation War was fought for a Bangladesh rooted in justice, equality, and human dignity. They remind the nation that these principles are enshrined in the constitution and must be upheld. "As citizens of this country, our constitutional right is to live in safety and receive fair treatment under the law," the statement asserts.

The protest has garnered significant

attention, with the group urging media houses to cover the event. They had called on daily newspapers and electronic media to send correspondents and camera crews to document the demonstration, ensuring that the voices of the protesters are heard and their demands are spotlighted.

"Salute to the young ones who had to lose their lives to get justice," said Ashfaque Nipun during the demonstration. "They are true heroes. As for the media industry, I am sure that any losses occurred will be overcome if the state becomes more humane."

Azmeri Haque Badhan, Bangladesh's only actress to officially attend the Cannes Film Festival, said, "It could have been my daughter at the protest, she could have lost her life." The actress teared up as she was saying this. "Any state, that kills its own people to assert power, cannot be a democracy. The government has to take responsibility for this."

Among the notable figures present were Shahidul Alam, Mosharraf Karim, Siam Ahmed, Akram Khan, Rafiath Rashid Mithila, Sabila Noor, Amitabh Reza, Eresh Zaker, Nazia Haque Orsha, Syed Ahmed Shawki, Wahid Tarek, Ritu Sattar, and several others who braved the rain to make their voices heard.

## NEWS

### Some 11,000 held in last 15 days

FROM PAGE 12  
Magura; eight in Noakhali; seven each in Sylhet and Chattogram; six in Satkhira; five each in Savar and Narayanganj; four each in Sirajganj and Mymensingh; three each in Tangail, Bogura, Rangpur, Kishoreganj, and Barishal; two each in Habiganj, Narsingdi, and Jhenaidah; one each in Madaripur, Gaibandha, Natore, Panchagarh, Meherpur, Manikganj, and Laxmipur.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed and five others on a three-day remand each in a case filed over the vandalism and torching of Setu Bhaban on July 18.

The others are Jamaat Secretary General Miah Golem Parwar, BNP Organizing Secretary Qazi Sayedul Alam Babul, its Dhaka North City unit Member Secretary Aminul Haque, Publicity Secretary Sultan Salauddin

Tuku, and Bagerhat district BNP unit Convener MA Salam.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam passed the order after Abu Sayeed Miah, an inspector of Detective Branch of Police and also investigation officer of the case, produced them with a 10-day remand appeal.

Earlier in the day, the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Saddam Hossain sent eight men, including former Ducus vice-president Nurul Haque Nur and BNP activist Mahmudus Salehin to jail after police produced them before the court upon completion of their five-day remand in a case filed over the vandalism of the Kazipara Metro Station in the city's Mirpur on July 19.

Moreover, a juvenile court in Dhaka yesterday again rejected a bail petition of Hasnatul Islam Faiyaz in a case filed over the killing of a police constable

during the recent violence in Dhaka's Jatrabari on July 19.

Judge Rokhsana Begum Happy of Juvenile Court 3 of Dhaka passed the order after Faiyaz's lawyer sought his bail on the grounds the client was not involved with the incident.

Meanwhile, the court of Additional Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, Tofazzal Hossain granted bail to Md Emon Khan, an HSC examinee and a student of Dhaka Udayan Govt College, in a case filed over the vandalism of an office of Chhatra League in the city's Adabor on July 19.

Besides, a Chattogram court sent a quota protest coordinator to jail after he was arrested in a case filed over the clash between the BCL activists and quota reform protesters in the Muradpur area on July 16.

The arrestee Adnan Sharif, is a student of Islamic studies department at of Chittagong University.

### Quader now says no shoot-on-sight order

FROM PAGE 12  
information and broadcasting, said none of the police, Rab, and BGB personnel was allowed to open fire, they had to work in line with the country's constitution.

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

This newspaper found at least 44 people were shot dead since the "shoot-on-sight" order was mentioned.

"According to the law, a written government order [gazette] must be sent to the forces, authorising them to 'shoot on sight'. The government order clearly outlines the circumstances under which the

forces are allowed to shoot on sight e.g. breaking a curfew. I have not heard of such a written order being published," said Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hossain, eminent security and defence analyst.

When the defence is deployed "in aid of civil power", they have to be sanctioned by a magistrate to shoot to kill.

"The army and the BGB need a magistrate present on a spot in order to shoot and kill someone. I don't know if any magistrate was present on the spot when people were killed. The police may have magistracy power to shoot to kill — that I don't know for sure. But then the question is, which rank has that power? Were members of that rank present on the spot where the shooting happened?" questioned Sakhawat, also a former

election commissioner.

"If they have been tasked with guarding a key-point installation, then they [army, BGB] can shoot to kill without a magistrate. If a magistrate is not present, then they must later answer to a magistrate why they shot to kill."

He added that according to the rules of engagement, the armed forces cannot shoot to kill without a warning. "They must draw a line on the ground and if the opponent crosses the line, then they are obliged to fire."

The home and law ministers, and the chiefs of police, Rab, and BGB did not respond to our calls and text messages seeking their comments if there were any "shoot-on-sight" order, and if not, why law enforcers shot people so indiscriminately.

### Judicial probe body gets two more judges

FROM PAGE 2  
Justice Khandaker said announcements will be made in Rangpur over loudspeakers from today to inform the people of the commission's arrival.

Statements regarding the death of Sayed will be recorded on the first day. The statements on the deaths of Sajjad Hossain, Moslem Uddin Milan

and Md Manik Miah will be recorded on August 6, and Md Merazul Islam and Md Abdullah Al Taher on August 7, he added.

The recording of testimonies would start at 9:00am every day at Rangpur Circuit House.

He urged the people to come forward for the testimonies and warned against any form of

intimidation against the people who will making statements and giving evidence to the commission.

Besides identifying those responsible for the deaths and injuries during the quota reform protest from July 16 to July 21, the commission has been tasked with unearthing the reasons behind the violence surrounding the protests.

### Spotlight on American sprint duo

FROM PAGE 12  
whether Richardson can hold off Jamaica's Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, the ageing five-time world 100m champion seeking her third Olympic gold in the discipline.

Richardson is seeking to become the first US woman to win an Olympic 100m title since Gail Devers in 1996.

While Lyles and Richardson might grab the initial headlines with the finals on Saturday for the women and Sunday for the men, there will be a huge array of talent on show in the French capital.

Sweden's pole vault king Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis will seek to push his own limits for victory with a potential tilt at a 10th consecutive world record, while two of the most mouth-watering events are in the same discipline: the

400m hurdles.

Three years ago in Tokyo, the hurdles produced two of the most astonishing races ever run in Olympic history, made all the more remarkable as they were in a spectator-less stadium.

First up, Norway's Karsten Warholm smashed his own world record by a staggering 0.76sec to win the men's hurdles in 45.94sec.

Twenty-four hours later American Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone did the impossible and improved her own world record by 0.44sec to 51.46sec.

The two hurdles race again promise to be cracking races in Paris, with Warholm under pressure from American Rai Benjamin and McLaughlin-Levrone from Dutchwoman Femke Bol.

The men and women's 800m

races also look likely to throw up two absolute must-see races, with two world records under threat.

Algerian Djamel Sedjati has his eyes on Kenyan David Rudisha's 1:40.91 while, in absence of champion Athing Mu, Britain's Keely Hodgkinson comes to Paris as the athlete to beat in the women's two lap field, having run a life-time best of 1:54.61 in London two weeks ago to show she can upgrade her silver from Tokyo.

In Paris, the irrepressible Kenyan Faith Kipyegon will be gunning for a third successive Olympic title at 1500m.

The men's 1500m offers one of the keenest rivalries on the circuit as British team captain Josh Kerr goes head-to-head once more with the defending Olympic champion Jakob Ingebrigtsen.

### Free all detainees within 24 hours

FROM PAGE 12  
enforcers in the dead of night, causing widespread fear among parents.

"Mothers can't sleep. They keep looking through the windows, with worries that cops might visit their homes to pick up their children."

She demanded immediate release of all the detained students and children.

Bac University teacher Saimum Reza Talukder said Arif Sohel, a coordinator of the quota reform movement at Jahangirnagar University, was arrested for an arson attack on Setu Bhaban in the capital though he was leading the protests on his campus.

Syed Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said they want assurance that the six

released coordinators would be able to carry on doing their works freely and safely.

"Do you think us as slaves whom you can just pick up at will and detain for as long as you wish? Then you offer us noodles, polao, chicken, or eggs and circulate those images to the media."

"We have seen political arrestees receiving treatment at the PG hospital for long. In the latest case, you picked up the tortured students without giving them treatment. We don't want this kind of law enforcement agencies."

"We don't want the police of the Awami League, BNP, or Jatiya Party... You [police] should work for the people and be the police of Bangladesh," she said.

Samina Lutfa, an associate

professor of sociology at DU, said, "You are in power to protect the people of Bangladesh, not to cause bloodshed on the streets. Stop torturing the people of Bangladesh."

Human rights activists Farida Akhter, Shireen Huq, Nur Khan Liton, Association for Land Reform and Development Executive Director Shamsul Haque, Prof Gitiaara Nasreen of DU, Prof Mirza Taslima Sultana of JU and Prof Sayeed Ferdous were also present.

Rushad Faridi, an assistant professor of economics at DU, announced that they would hold their next protest rally "Droho Jatra" at 3:00pm today in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

He called upon the people from all walks of life to join the rally.

### 16-yr-old Alfi gets bail

FROM PAGE 12  
according to his birth certificate.

Alfi's father Shahjalal told The Daily Star that his son 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 Alfi ran towards the opposite direction to his home and suffered shotgun pellet injuries to his leg, said his father.

Alfi's father Shahjalal said they looked for Alfi all day but at night he

received a call from someone claiming to be a law enforcer. The person said Alfi 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 Alfi would not be released.

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

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.

Abu Maruf Hossain, additional police commissioner of Rangpur Metropolitan Police, yesterday said police picked up Alfi and later showed him arrested in the Sayed murder case, which was filed on July 16.

He said they would drop his name from the case.