



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED AND MAISHA TASNIM SRESHTHA

MAISHA TASNIM SRESHTHA

In an inspiring display of unity and support, musicians from across the nation converged for the *Get Up Stand Up* movement. On Saturday (August 3) this rally brought together individuals from all walks of life at the capital's Rabindra Sarobar (Dhanmondi 8/A) in a show of solidarity with students advocating for justice and reform. Artists expressed their support for the students, while those outside Dhaka stood at designated locations within their respective districts. The movement also saw journalists and cameramen from various media outlets—TV channels, online platforms, and newspapers—covering this significant demonstration of unity and support.

The rally began at Rabindra Sarobar, where artistes gathered and invited everyone to march towards the Shaheed Minar. This site holds deep significance for Bengalis, as it commemorates the martyrs

of 1952, who sacrificed their lives for their freedom to speak their language. In 2024, it will stand as a symbol for those who did the same, but in a different context.

During the proceedings, legendary lyricist-composer Prince Mahmud stated, "We call for the immediate release of rapper Hannan. It's imperative that he is freed as soon as possible. Many are wondering why we have only come forward now. The fact is, we have supported the students' demands from the outset. We are losing sleep over this. We demand justice."

Miles frontman Hamin Ahmed, who recently lost his brother, Shafin Ahmed, was also present during the event. He said, "Do not fire a single bullet more.

We want the government to listen to the demands of the students."

Veteran singer Maqsoodul Haque stated, "I am seeking justice for the students who have shed so much blood. Why has there been so much bloodshed? Many lives have been lost due to the violence stemming from this movement. I expect accountability and a fair trial for those responsible."

The event saw the presence of numerous artists and bands, including Partha Barua, Sheikh Monirul Haque Tipu, Asif Akbar, Raef Al Hasan Rafa, Pantha Kanai, Miles, Souls, Shironamhin, Artcell, Nemesis, Chirkutt, Ashes, Sujit Mustafa, Elita Karim, Shaukat Ali Emon, Sandhi, Ritu Raj, Joy Shahriar,

Sujan Arif, Muhin, Earnnick, Rafat, Dola, Latiful Islam Shibli, and Someshwar Oli, among others.

Throughout history, there have been numerous instances where tyrants were ultimately brought down by the very people they once ruled with an iron fist. Today, following that, inspired by Bob Marley's song titled "Get Up Stand Up", musicians and artistes have adopted a similar approach in their efforts to challenge the government of Sheikh Hasina.

Student protests in Bangladesh against the government have escalated into a pro-democracy movement, marked by police brutality and mass arrests. Despite the government's violent crackdown, students remain determined to continue their demands for accountability and reform. The situation reflects broader issues of governance, economic instability, and the struggle for democratic rights in the country.



NEWS

ASI, constable

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Further action will be taken after receiving the full report of the investigation team, he said.

Video footage showed police shooting at Abu Sayed, who posed no physical threat to the law enforcers, during the quota reform protest near the campus on July 16. He died soon afterwards.

Just a day before his death, Sayed shared on Facebook how he was ready to sacrifice his life for the cause if needed.

At 12:37pm on July 15, he shared a photo card of Rajshahi University teacher and martyr Prof Dr Shamsuzzoha, who was killed in police firing in 1969 during a student protest.

The accompanying caption read: "Sir! We desperately need you right now, sir! Everyone of your generation has passed away, but you live on even after death. Your legacy is our inspiration. We are enlightened by your ideals.

"And to those of our generation, you too will die one day as per the laws of nature. But as long as you live, live with integrity. Support the just cause, take to the streets, stand as a shield for the students. You will receive genuine respect and honour. You won't be lost in the sands of time after your death. You will live forever like Shamsuzzoha."

Committee on nat'l security

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people, including a police constable, were killed in violence in Habiganj and Khulna on Friday.

The government imposed a curfew across the country for an indefinite period past midnight on July 19 and deployed the army to tackle the situation.

The National Committee on Security Affairs was formed in March 2019 after the approval of the National Defence Policy 2018. The committee is responsible for reviewing the problems related to national security.

The November 15, 2023, meeting discussed preventing the spread of disinformation on social media, strategies for maintaining law and order, and prices of essentials, among other issues.

See that govt officials complicit

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Senators Edward J Markey, Chris Van Hollen, Richard J Durbin, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Jeffrey A Merkley, and Christopher S Murphy co-signed the letter in the Senate, and Representatives William R Keating, James P McGovern, Seth Moulton, Lori Trahan, Joe Wilson, Dina Titus, Grace Meng, Gerald E Connolly, Gabe Amo, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Nydia M Velázquez, Daniel T Kildee, Barbara Lee, and James C Moylan co-signed the letter in the House of Representatives.

They said in responding to the student demonstrations, the Bangladeshi authorities deployed Rapid Action Battalion; condoned the use of teargas, rubber bullets, and sound grenades by riot police against protesters; imposed curfew and "shoot-on-sight" orders; and shut down the Internet.

"Given these alarming and continuing trends, we hope that you will lead the US Department of State in upholding the shared democratic principles that have long underpinned the US-Bangladeshi relationship," they wrote to Blinken.

They said their concerns have only become more acute following recent deadly clashes between student protesters and security forces and Bangladesh's national elections on January 7, 2024, which the US, UN and other observers have rightly criticised as being neither free nor fair.

The letter said since their inception, US-Bangladeshi relations

have been predicated on mutual respect for the rule of law, the promotion of democracy, and the protection of human rights, as well as enhancing regional security, and bolstering inclusive economic growth. With the support of the US and other international community, Bangladesh has made great strides in improving the lives of its citizens.

However, they said the shared principles have come under threat in Bangladesh as the ruling Awami League and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have acted in an increasingly authoritarian manner since returning to power in 2009.

They noted the US sanctions on Rab in 2021, visa policy in May last year and the consistent messages conveyed to Bangladeshi officials for free and fair elections and improving human rights and labour rights.

Sadly, the Bangladeshi government has continued to take actions that undermine democratic processes, including by holding deeply flawed elections in January, failing to improve labour regulations, and, most recently, violently cracking down on demonstrations using guns, teargas, and imposing a near-total shutdown of Internet services, they said.

The January 7 election was largely boycotted by Bangladesh's political opposition, which itself was hamstrung by a wave of arrests following demonstrations on October 28, 2023.

Most importantly, the election

was marred by violence and not supported by a large swath of the Bangladeshi electorate, they said.

Beyond members of the political opposition, workers and trade unionists have long faced violence, repression, and labor rights violations.

The Bangladesh government has yet to amend its labour laws to protect workers' freedom of association in line with the ILO standards, the letter said.

They urged the US Department of State to redouble its efforts to support the democratic aspirations of the Bangladeshi people.

Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has urged for immediate steps by the Bangladesh government to prevent further violence and ensure accountability.

In a post on X, formerly Twitter, he yesterday said as rallies and internet restrictions continue, along with appalling new reports of violence by security forces and groups affiliated with the government, the government needs to take immediate steps to ensure right to peaceful assembly and right to information.

Earlier on July 23, Turk wrote to Hasina, offering to deploy an independent fact-finding team to assist the Bangladesh government in building trust among all stakeholders and to help de-escalate tensions.

"In these challenging times, my office is ready to support your efforts in resolving the current crisis," he said in the letter.

Protesters roll out 15 points

FROM PAGE 1

1. Don't pay taxes.
2. Don't pay any utility bills.
3. All government and private institutions, offices, courts, mills, and factories will remain closed. Don't go to work, but collect your salaries at the end of the month.
4. All educational institutions will remain closed indefinitely.
5. Don't send remittances through banking channels (addressed to expatriates).
6. Boycott all government meetings, seminars, and events.
7. Don't go to work; don't unload any kind of goods (addressed to port workers).
8. Don't go to work (addressed to RMG workers).
9. Public transport services will remain suspended; workers won't go to work.
10. Banks will only remain open on Sundays for urgent transactions.
11. Offshore transactions will remain suspended so that not a single taka is smuggled out of the country.
12. The police will only perform

their routine duties at their respective stations. They won't perform any protocol, riot, or protest duties.

13. Except for the BGB and navy, other forces won't perform duties outside their respective cantonments. The BGB and navy will be in their respective barracks and coastal areas.
14. Bureaucrats won't go to the secretariat; DC or upazila officials won't go to their respective offices.
15. Luxury goods shops, showrooms, shops, hotels, motels, and restaurants will remain closed.

EXCEPTIONS

1. Hospitals, pharmacies, emergency transport services such as transportation of medicine and medical equipment, ambulance services, fire service, media, transportation of daily necessities, emergency internet service, emergency relief assistance, and transport services of officers and employees on duty in these sectors will be out of the purview of these directives and remain functional.
2. Shops for essential commodities will remain open from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

No children died

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Asaduzzaman said, "Many of the bullets [shells] we have retrieved were not fired from police rifles. The police do not use those [bullets]."

Regarding the student's demand for his and some other ministers' resignation, he said, "If the prime minister thinks ... We always work for the country; we will do it [resign]."

The movement has now been taken over by political parties, who were always involved in anti-state activities — the Jamaat-e-Islami and the BNP, he added.

"We have accepted all the demands of the quota protesters, including bringing the police officials under trial," said the home boss, adding that the government has already taken steps to release the arrested students, who do not have any specific complaints against them.

Regarding the noncooperation movement, the minister said, "As all of their demands have been met, we think they should withdraw their movement."

He said the ongoing curfew will remain in force from 9:00pm to 6:00am. The decision will be effective for four districts — Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, and Narsingdi. In other districts, the local administration will take the decision on the timing of the curfew as necessary.

Gono Bhaban

FROM PAGE 1
"I repeat I still want to hold talks if the agitators want. They can come at any time (to Gono Bhaban). They can also bring their guardians."

The premier also announced the cancellation of the proposed, universal pension scheme "Prottoy" for universities, autonomous and state-owned organisations.

Ensure the security of people's lives

FROM PAGE 16
He was speaking at "officers' address" at the Helmet auditorium.

Highlighting the country's current situation, the army chief gave different instructions to its officers about the activities of the force and answered their queries.

He also asked the officers to be aware of rumours on social media.

The army chief instructed the officers to discharge their duties with honesty and sincerity.

Top officers of the Army Headquarters, among others, joined the event via videoconference.

Cheptegei relishes 'special day'

FROM PAGE 16
and is expected to aid the sprinters more than the previously-used brick-red track — finished 18 seconds faster than Kenenisa Bekele's 2008 Olympics run.

"Barely 16 years ago when I was watching the great Kenenisa Bekele win in Beijing, it was something that grew in my heart.

"My collection for this run is really complete. I'm so excited," he told reporters.

Berihu Aregawi, part of a three-pronged Ethiopian front-running group almost from the start, finished strongly for silver in 26:43.44 and Grant Fisher took a superb bronze

in 26:43.46 — only the United States' fourth medal over the distance since the event was added to the Games in 1912.

A pack of 13 athletes ran the last two thirds of the race together and, remarkably, all of them finished in under 27 minutes as recent advances in shoe and track technology continue to redraw traditional race times.

Cheptegei, world champion in 2019, 2022 and 2023, was surprisingly beaten to gold by Ethiopian Selemon Barega in Tokyo and was desperate for revenge.

Barega, Aregawi and fellow Ethiopian Yomif Kejelcha started to

stretch the race out after the first few laps and kept up sub-27 minute pace relentlessly to hit halfway in 13.23 minutes.

Frenchman Jimmy Gressier was hanging on to the lead pack of 13, drawing huge noise from the Stade de France crowd and he eventually finished 13th in a huge personal best time and a national record 26:58.67.

Unusually, that pack remained solid for the next half-dozen laps. Cheptegei had stayed tucked behind the leaders as they chopped and changed, but he put the hammer down coming around the final bend on the penultimate lap and did not let up.