



Hasina falls, flees

Army chief meets politicians, civil society members to discuss formation of interim govt



Hundreds of jubilant people at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex soon after Sheikh Hasina resigned and left the country yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

TANIM AHMED and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

Bangladesh's iron lady of 15 years bowed out to a people's uprising yesterday. Serving as the prime minister since 2009, Sheikh Hasina was forced to resign and flee the country as hundreds of thousands marched towards Dhaka defying a curfew amid a continual morning drizzle.

The streets of the capital that had convulsed with violence and death over the last three weeks, reverberated with wild celebrations as soon as the Bangladesh army chief, General Waker-Uz-Zaman, confirmed the rumours of Hasina's resignation. He went on to say that a new interim government will be formed soon.

Millions took to the streets gridlocking the entire capital well into the evening while many found it hard to believe that Hasina's absolute hold on authority and Awami League's fabled political fortress could crumble, faced with a three-week campaign initiated by students.

Reverellers stormed the prime minister's residence, office and the parliament. They also ransacked Awami League offices and residences of high-ranking ministers across the country.

Even while thousands converged on Shahbagh from early afternoon, there were reports of violence between demonstrators and police officials on the fringes of Dhaka and from around Bangladesh amid the vacuum that was left in the wake of Hasina's hasty departure without so much as a statement or press release.

A fledgling student protest against reserved quotas for government jobs that began on July 1 started to gain momentum as the government dealt with them harshly. Despite reassurances of no harassment, the AL government employed excessive force to subdue a campaign leading to over 300 deaths. That protest transformed into

outside the capital and marching towards it, braving all obstacles. The strong tide turned on the back of university students.

About 43 years after Hasina had flown into Dhaka as the newly elected AL president for the first time, she took off on a military helicopter with her younger sister Sheikh Rehana to India.

chaired a high-level meeting with key ministers and intelligence chiefs who briefed him about the unfolding situation in Bangladesh, according to reports in Indian media.

Hasina's son Sajeb Wazed Joy, the former PM's ICT affairs adviser, told BBC that his mother would not "come back" to politics.

Back in Dhaka, before he took the podium at the army headquarters to address the nation, flanked by the air chief and naval chief, General Waker-Uz Zaman met with several politicians and members of the civil society including representatives of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, other politicians and teachers. The AL was not represented. The student campaigners were not present there either. Leaders of the student protest campaign have announced that they will present an outline for the interim government soon.

In the context of hundreds of violent deaths, the army chief reassured everyone that justice would be ensured for each. He said it was now everyone's responsibility to remain calm.

"Together, we hope to go towards a better situation," he said addressing the media. "I am taking full responsibility."

"The country has suffered a lot, the economy has been hit, many people have been killed. It is time to stop the violence."

On his way to the presidential palace, Bangabhaban, the army chief was greeted by jubilant crowd. Hundreds thronged around

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- Parliament to be dissolved soon, an interim govt to be formed
- President asked armed forces to be strict in protecting lives, properties
- Outline of interim govt within 24 hours: protest organiser Nahid Islam
- President orders release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia
- Offices, factories to open today, educational institution soon

a strong anti government campaign over the last week and culminated in a people's uprising yesterday as the student campaigners called for their compatriots to "march to Dhaka". This was particularly in reply to AL's show of political force on Sunday, which left at least 93 dead in a single day's violence. Another 66 were killed yesterday in Dhaka alone.

Droves of people began gathering in neighbourhoods of Dhaka and its outskirts ready to converge in the capital's Shahbagh from early morning. There were also thousands gathering

The five-time prime minister landed in Agartala, the capital of India's northeastern state of Tripura. Thereafter, the 77-year-old premier was flown to Hindon Air Force Base in Ghaziabad, about 30km from the Indian capital of New Delhi, according to Indian news outlets India Today and NDTV.

Hasina was reported to have met with the Indian national security adviser, Ajit Doval, in the evening at Hindon. It is widely reported that Hasina will seek asylum in London. Later in the evening Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Justice will be served

Says president about recent killings



BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday urged political parties to restore law and order and stop looting and destructive activities.

"I ask the armed forces to take strict action to protect the lives and properties of the people," the president, also the supreme commander of the Armed Forces Division, told a televised address to the nation.

The Head of State urged

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Help restore peace and discipline

Army chief urges the nation



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz Zaman yesterday urged all, including the students, to cooperate with the armed forces and refrain from vandalism, killings and clashes.

Seeking cooperation from all quarters, including the political parties, the media and civil society

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Jubilation as freedom in the air

STAR REPORT

Hundreds of thousands of jubilant people poured out into the streets of the capital, celebrating Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure.

The crowds chanted slogans and waved the national flag as complete strangers shook hands and hugged each other.

Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Mirpur Road and Rokeya Sarani were filled with people of all ages. Large groups of people walked through Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue from 2:30pm to 7:00pm. Many said they would go to the Gono Bhaban.

Coordinators of the quota-reform movement, which spearheaded the movement that led to the fall of the government, Nahid Islam and Asif Mahmud said in a joint statement, "Power must be transferred to the proposed interim national government of the students. No other government will be accepted. A new Bangladesh and political settlement will be established. No one will leave the streets until the ultimate victory is achieved."

Dhaka University student Rafat Alam said, "I have goosebumps. We waited for this day for a long time. I was not able to talk freely, I was not allowed to cast the vote."

Hasina had been the prime minister for 14 and a half years. In the 2008 national election, her party, the Awami League, won two-thirds of the seats in parliament.

She took power again in 2014, when 153 MPs, out of 300, were "elected" without any competition. The election was boycotted by the main opposition.

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The organisers of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement pose for a photo during a live television programme yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Hindu houses, businesses attacked in 27 districts

STAR REPORT

Hindu houses and business establishments were attacked by mobs while their valuables were also looted in at least 27 districts yesterday.

In Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, they vandalised and plundered the house of Pradip Chandra Roy, secretary of Lalmonirhat Puja Udjapan Parishad, in Telipara village last evening, reports our district correspondent.

They also ransacked and looted a computer shop owned by Muhin Roy, a municipality member of the district's Puja Udjapan Parishad, on Thana road.

Besides, homes of four Hindu families were vandalised and looted in Chandrapur village in the district's Kaliganj upazila.

In Hatibandha upazila's Purbo Sardubi village, 12 Hindu houses were torched last night, reports our district correspondent.

In Panchagarh, several Hindu houses were vandalised and looted in Sadar upazila.

Contacted, Monindra Kumar Nath, SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A man flying the national flag as he travels on a rickshaw in the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque area after Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country yesterday. Top right, people rejoice on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Bottom right, an endless stream of people march towards Bijoy Sarani to celebrate Hasina's departure.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED, ANISUR RAHMAN

Hasina moved to a safe house in India

Reports PTI



AGENCY

Former prime minister Sheikh Hasina has been moved to a safe but undisclosed location in India, PTI reported quoting unnamed sources.

It was unlikely that she would leave India last night, it added.

The sources said Hasina's plan was to leave for London. However, certain issues have made that plan uncertain.

India decided to provide a safe passage through the Indian airspace to Hasina's aircraft following a request from Bangladesh, the sources said.

Bangladesh's military aircraft carrying Hasina landed at Hindon Air Base near Delhi last evening.

Indian government sources said New Delhi is closely following the fast-paced developments in Dhaka.

There is no official word in India on Hasina's arrival in Delhi.

Hours after Hasina landed at the airbase near Delhi in a C-130J military transport aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force, Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval met her, the sources said.

Separately, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the rapidly unfolding situation in Bangladesh.

Jaishankar also separately apprised the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi of the developments.

Modi later chaired a meeting of his cabinet committee and discussed the developments in Bangladesh.

Help restore peace and discipline

FROM PAGE 1
members, he said, "Please cooperate with me. We will not be able to achieve anything through confrontation. So, please refrain from all kinds of destruction, anarchy and conflict. If Allah wills, together we will move towards a beautiful future."

The army chief was addressing the nation following a meeting with the leaders of some key political parties at the Army Headquarters in the afternoon.

"You should not take the path of confrontation anymore. Return to the path of peace and discipline."

He said the country has suffered a lot, the economy has been hit, and many people have been killed.

"We will ensure justice for all killings and injustice. Please keep faith in the army and the armed forces. I am taking all the responsibilities

Hasina falls, flees

FROM PAGE 1
the general's convoy and some even rode on his car as the convoy slowly glided through the teeming millions who hailed the army chief like a triumphant hero.

Aside from his announcement of an interim government, there were no statements about the nature of the government or the transition process till later in the evening when the president met with the military chiefs, political parties and civil society representatives.

A Bangabhaban press release said that the meeting had unanimously decided to immediately free BNP chief and former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

The meeting also decided to form an interim government immediately and urged everyone to show patience and tolerance. The military will strictly maintain law and order and prevent lawlessness. Parliament will be dissolved and all those arrested during the anti-quota protests will be

Jubilation as freedom

FROM PAGE 1
She won the 2018 election amid widespread allegations of voter fraud. There were reports of Awami League men stuffing ballot boxes the night before the voting day.

The latest election held in January, in which she won a landslide victory, was boycotted by the major opposition parties.

Hasina's government was facing a financial crisis as high inflation eroded the value of taka and foreign currency reserves fell. People were angered by corruption and rising costs of living.

The student protest started on July 1 with a demand for reformation of quotas in public service. It turned into an anti-government movement on Saturday.

From July 16 to August 3, at least 208 people were killed amid widespread violence. Most of the deaths were caused by indiscriminate firing by law enforcers, members of Border Guard Bangladesh and ruling party activists.

At least 93 people were killed on Sunday in a fresh wave of violence as ruling party activists and police clashed with anti-government protesters on the first day of the student-led non-

and vowing to protect the people's lives and properties. I am giving you a word, you will not be disappointed."

Waker-Uz-Zaman said all the demands will be met and peace and discipline will be restored. "Have patience. Give us some time. Together, we will be able to solve all the problems."

He said much damage has been done, properties have been damaged and people are dying. "Refrain from such activities and help me."

Regarding his discussion with the leaders of different political parties, the army chief said, "We had a nice discussion. We have decided that we will run the country after forming an interim government."

He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has resigned.

The army chief said Prof Asif Nazrul of Dhaka University has conveyed a message to the students.

released.

The delegation included BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir; BNP leaders Mirza Abbas and Major General (Retired) Fazle Elahi Akbar; Jatiya Party (JP) chairman GM Quader; JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunu; JP Senior Co-chairman Anisur Islam Mahmud; Nagorik Oikya Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna; Hefajat-e-Islam leaders Mamunul Haque, Monir Kasemi and Mahabubur Rahman; Jamaat chief Shafiqur Rahman; Jamaat leader Sheikh Md Masood; Jaker Party Secretary General Shamim Haider; Bangladesh Khilafat Majlis leader Maulana Jalal Uddin Ahmad; Zonayed Saki of Gonosonghoti Andolon; Gono Odhikar Parishad leader Golam Sarwar Jewel; Dhaka University teacher Asif Nazrul and Firoz Ahmad; and student protest leaders Abdullah Al Hossain, Arif Talukder, Omar Faruq and Mobashwera Karim Mimi and Engineer Md Anisur Rahman.

cooperation movement.

The day started yesterday amid tension as the protesting students were set to defy the curfew and enforce the Dhaka March programme, demanding the government's resignation and justice for the killings.

Students started to gather in Uttara, Jatrabari, Mirpur, Shahbagh and other places. Before noon, thousands of them were marching towards Central Shaheed Minar.

Protesters and law enforcers chased each other on Badda-Rampura road. As the news of Hasina's resignation spread, the protesters rejoiced. A big portion started to march towards the Shaheed Minar while some went towards the Gono Bhaban, the official residence of the country's PM.

People started to gather at Shahbagh at noon. The intersection was filled with people by 2:00pm. The crowd cheered at the news of Hasina's resignation, chanting slogans that literally translates as "People are free as the dictator has fallen".

Many of the protesters then left for the Gono Bhaban.

Thousands of people took to the streets at Motijheel, Paltan, Press Club, Malibagh, Mogbazar, Mirpur and other places.

He hoped that the students will bring the situation under control after hearing his message.

Waker-Uz-Zaman said the army will continue working to maintain peace and discipline in the country.

Replying to a question, the army chief said if the situation improves, there would be no need for imposing curfew and an emergency rule.

"I have ordered the army and police not to open fire. I hope the situation will improve after my speech. We are moving towards a beautiful environment."

Top leaders from the BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Hefajat-e-Islam, Gonosonghoti Andolon, Islami Andolon Bangladesh, and civil society leaders, including Prof Asif Nazrul, were present.

However, no Awami League leader attended the meeting.

Hindu houses, businesses attacked in 27 districts

FROM PAGE 1
senior joint general secretary of the Oikya Parishad, said they never thought they would see such attacks on their community.

"There are no areas or districts left where communal attacks have not taken place. We're continuously getting reports from different parts of the country about attacks on houses and business establishments ...

"They're crying, saying they are being beaten up, and their houses and businesses are being looted. What is our fault? Is it our fault that we are citizens of the country?"

Mentioning that the Hindus in the country are fearing more attacks, Monindra asked, "Where would we go if such attacks continue here? How can we console the members of the Hindu community?"

In Dinajpur town and other upazilas, at least 10 Hindu houses came under attack.

The attackers also tried to vandalise a temple at Railbazarhat in the town, but locals obstructed it.

Sources said the houses of late Koilash Chandra Roy of Barabandar area; Nitya Gopal of Barabandar; Bunu Biswas of Gunjabari area; and Roma Kanta Roy of Biral upazila, in Dinajpur came under attack.

In Khansama upazila, three Hindu homes were attacked, said Uttam Kumar Roy, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha Christian Oikya Parishad.

Goutam Mazumder, assistant organising secretary of the Oikya Parishad in Laxmipur, said over 200-300 attackers torched his two-storey building around 7:30pm.

In Khulna, the houses of the Oikya Parishad President, Biman Bihari

Justice will be served

FROM PAGE 1
everyone to come forward to ensure communal harmony and security for minorities and protect government properties.

He requested everyone to play an effective role in keeping the country's economy, administration, and industries running.

President Shahabuddin assured that educational institutions would soon be opened, subject to discussions with agitating student representatives and teachers.

Besides, he said, those who are involved in the recent killings and violence, will be brought to justice through impartial investigations.

According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the current parliament will be dissolved immediately, said the president.

"All offices and courts in the country will start functioning as usual from tomorrow [today]," he added.

President Shahabuddin informed the countrymen that "Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has submitted her resignation letter to me today [yesterday] and I have accepted it."

The prime minister's resignation and the situation arising from

Amit, and Jubo Oikya Parishad President Animesh Sarker Rintu were ransacked around 5:00pm, our district correspondent reports.

The homes of Shyamal Kumar Das and Swajan Kumar Das of Haisgati village under Rupsha Police Station were also attacked and looted.

Biman added that they were getting reports of attacks and looting of Hindu houses and business establishments in Rupsha, Paikgachha, and other upazilas.

In Barishal's Gouranadi, mobs attacked, vandalised, and looted the house of Aditri Adhikary at Mahilara Union around 6:00pm, said Anwar Hossain, officer in charge of Gouranadi Police Station, our district correspondent reports.

He added they were also getting reports of attacks on other Hindu homes and establishments across the district.

Oikya Parishad General Secretary Tapan Kumar Chakrabarty of Bogura said a warehouse and a shop of his were looted at Sathmatha and Sonatola.

Another warehouse owned by a Hindu family was also looted at Sathmatha, he said.

In Patuakhali, a Hindu house and a temple were attacked, vandalised, and set on fire, our district correspondent reports.

Ananta Mukherjee said a group of 20 to 25 attackers suddenly carried out the attack.

Oikya Parishad claimed that there were attacks in 21 more districts and gave details on a few of them.

In Sherpur, the house of Sreebordi upazila Jubo Oikya Parishad President was vandalised and looted.

In Narsingdi, Puja Udjapan Parishad member Dipak Saha's house

and office suffered the same fate.

In Kishoreganj, two Hindu houses were set ablaze in Kuliarchar.

In Chattogram's Raozan upazila, two other Hindu homes were attacked and ransacked.

In Jashore, the warehouse of Babul Saha, chairman of Bhagarpara's Narikelbaria, was attacked and looted, while 22 shops of Hindu community there were looted, and several houses vandalised and plundered.

In Satkhira, several shops belonging to the Hindu community were ransacked and looted in Kolaroa area.

The house of Biswajit Sadhu, the Oikya Parishad president, was looted and torched.

In Habiganj, the shop of Asit Baran Das, Shayestaganj upazila Oikya Parishad president, was attacked.

In Narail, Hindu homes were attacked and plundered in Lohagara upazila.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust in a statement demanded that the Bangladesh Army and administration identify the perpetrators of the arson, vandalism, and lootings, and take appropriate steps for the security of the minorities.

"An anarchic situation is prevailing across the country, which is illegal and against the constitution. Article 32 of the constitution states that no person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty save in accordance with law. Article 28(1) of the constitution states that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth."

It also urged everyone to ensure public safety and maintain peace.

N Korea deploys 250 missile launchers to southern border

AFP, Seoul

North Korea has deployed 250 ballistic missile launchers to its southern border, with leader Kim Jong Un describing the weapons as a "powerful treasured sword" to defend its sovereignty, state media said yesterday.

The olive green mobile launchers were displayed during a special "transferring" ceremony in the capital Pyongyang on Sunday, the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

The missile launchers were an "up-to-date tactical attack weapon", Kim was quoted as saying in a speech.

It was the first time North Korea had publicised the scale of an arms transfer to its border units, Han Kwon-hee of the Korea Association of Defence Industry Studies told AFP.

Each launcher was designed to hold four missiles, Han said, adding that Pyongyang's supply of arms to Moscow might have "interfered with the North's capacity to actually produce 1,000 missiles".

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Clockwise from left, a torched AL office in Barishal city. Vandalised SP office in Sylhet. Karnaphuli Police Outpost set on fire in Chattogram. Inset, residence of Ahmadiyya families burnt in Panchagarh. A pharmacy being vandalised in Sylhet.

PHOTO: STAR

Violence sweeps the country

STAR REPORT

Widespread violence rocked the nation yesterday after the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government was ousted following a mass uprising.

Residences and offices of ministers, lawmakers and AL leaders, government establishments, police stations and business institutions were attacked and vandalised in at least 17 districts.

In Chattogram, miscreants attacked different government establishments including the Chattogram Metropolitan Police Headquarters, Dampara Police Lines, and Chattogram Circuit House. They tried to attack Chattogram Central Jail where prison guards opened fire to disperse the marauders.

A mob attacked Chattogram Circuit



House in Kazir Dewri at around 4:40pm, threw brickbats at it, and vandalised at least 10 vehicles on the premises.

Some 100-150 people attacked CMP Headquarters and Dampara Police Lines around 5:00pm.

Different police stations -- including



ones in Patenga, EPZ, Kotwali and Sadarghat -- came under attacks. The marauders set the police stations on fire, alongside vandalism and looting.

At least 200 people were admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital till 8:00pm, and one man was brought dead

around 6:00pm, said Rajib Kumar Dey, ward master of CMCH.

Tension was prevailing in the port city till the filing of this report at 11:00pm.

In Sylhet, miscreants vandalised, looted and arsoned several government establishments, and many houses, offices and businesses of AL leaders.

The office of Sylhet District Police, residence of superintendent of police in Sylhet, and police outposts in Bandarbarazar and Sobhanighat were set on fire in the afternoon.

The residences of former state minister for expatriates welfare and overseas employment Shafiqur Rahman Chowdhury and parliamentarian Ranjit Chandra Sarker; Sylhet city AL president Mashuk Uddin, and AL leaders Azadur

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Tarique urges calm, calls for election at the soonest

STAR REPORT

BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman yesterday issued a statement from London, England, where he is currently residing.

He commended those involved in the quota reform protests and the general public for toppling the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government that was in power till yesterday afternoon.

"Bangladesh has been freed from the grasp of evil forces. In the past 15 years of this fascist regime, many children lost their beloved fathers, many wives lost their husbands. Numerous mothers lost their children to killings and forced abductions. After many years, Bangladesh saw victory on August 5."

"Numerous people were arrested and thrown into jail on false and politically motivated charges brought by the Hasina administration. I demand their immediate release and cancellation of the cases against them. Along with this, I expect quick steps to ensure that students be allowed to return to classes and take exams normally," the statement added.

"After this, 125 million voters will be able to cast their votes in a free and fair election and establish a government with accountability."

"So, to take the revolution to the final point of

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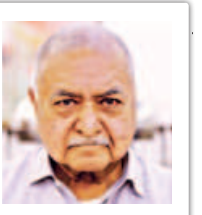
Dr Kamal Hossain commends students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoforum founder and its emeritus President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday congratulated protesting students and people for making the historic mass upsurge successful.

He made the statement while holding an emergency meeting at his residence on the capital's Bailey Road. Dr Kamal also congratulated the proposal of army chief on formation of an interim government.

He demanded unconditional release of all detainees during the mass arrests and punishment of those involved in the recent killings.



MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

A 16-year-old shot dead in Dhaka. An HSC examinee died from bullet wound at DMCH. A driver fatally shot in Dhanmondi. Another student died at a Dhaka hospital. A construction worker shot dead in Narayanganj. At least 204 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 five such names among these tragic numbers. In this report, we try to know the stories of five such names among these tragic numbers.



I rushed to aid bullet-hit teen, only to find it's my son
Says father of 16-year-old Md Amin

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Obaidul Haque Khan, an auto-rickshaw driver in Dhaka, was driving in Dania area of the capital on July 21 evening when some locals called him to take a bullet-hit teen to the hospital.

"I went near the body to pick him up and take him to hospital. Then my heart skipped it bit... it was Amin, my son!" Obaidul told this correspondent over the phone.

Police had fired at quota reform protesters in the area when Md Amin, 16,

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When will bhaiya come home?
Asks 8-year-old sister of Shahriar, who died in Mirpur-10 firing

NILIMA JAHAN

Sheikh Mumtahina Binte Matin, 8, is yet to realise that her older brother, Sheikh Shahriar Bin Matin, 18, is no more.

Shahriar was shot dead during a protest where students were demanding for quota reform in Dhaka's Mirpur-10 area on July 18.

"Every day, my daughter wears a jersey that belonged to Shahriar and keeps asking when will bhaiya come home?" said their father Sheikh Abdul Matin.

"On that day, around 5:00pm, Shahriar

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Who will look after us now?
Asks wife of Titu, who was shot dead in Dhanmondi

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Titu Howladar, 35, who worked as a driver for a doctor, was shot dead in the Dhanmondi area on July 19 amid the violence centring quota reform protests.

He hailed from Dakshin Hosnabad village of Barguna's Betagi upazila.

On July 21 night, his cousin Md Rakib took Titu's body from Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue to his village home. Titu was later buried at the family's graveyard the same night.

Now an uncertainty looms over Titu's family. He left behind three children -- Tanjila, 10; Saimun, 7; and four-month-old Tamanna.

"My husband used to work hard to

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Shafe wanted to go abroad for higher studies

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

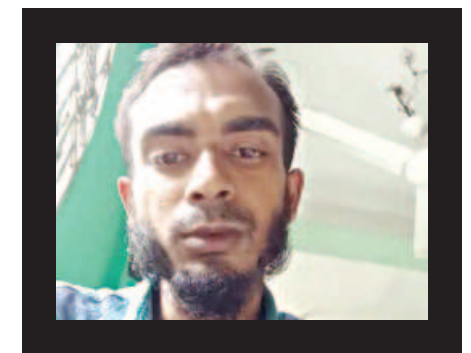
Sarkar Md Shafeur Rahman, 19, a student of the Institute of Marine Technology in Chandpur, aspired to go abroad for higher studies after graduating.

However, his sudden, untimely demise put an end to his aspirations.

On July 25, he died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He was later buried at his ancestral home in Shalikka village under Pabna's Chatmohar upazila. His family members are still at a loss over his death.

"Shafe was an activist of the quota reform protests in Chandpur since the beginning. He was supposed to return home as the institution was declared closed. However, we got informed that Shafe was admitted to DMCH with fever,"

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We didn't have much, but we were happy
Says wife of Foyez who was shot dead in Laxmipur

ANWARUL HAIDER, Noakhali

The world around Noor Nahar Begum, 28, has turned bleak after her husband, Md Foyez, 32, was killed in a shooting on July 21 in the Signboard area of Narayanganj on Dhaka-Chattogram highway.

A construction worker by profession, Foyez used to work with a mason named Abu Taher at a construction site in the Signboard area.

He lived with his wife Nahar and 22-month-old son Rafi in the same area.

He was shot near Chandni Hotel when law enforcers opened fire on protesters who were demanding for quota reform.

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Star BUSINESS

Trade thru Ctg port disrupted for second day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Export and import activities through the Chattogram port were significantly disrupted for a second straight day yesterday due to the students' countrywide non-cooperation movement, which led to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation.

Assessment activities of imported and exported goods continued as normal, but clearance of imported goods was slow, a customs and port official said.

In the last 24 hours to 9am yesterday, approximately 1,175 TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) of containers were cleared from the port, down from the daily average of around 7,000-8,000 TEUs.

The transport of cargo containers bound for the Kamalapur inland container depot was also halted due to the closure of railway wagons for a second straight day, according to the port officials.

All officials are working as usual, but only a few importers and agents came to release their goods, said Mohammad Fyazur Rahman, commissioner of Chattogram Custom House.



A solitary truck exits the Chattogram port around 1:00pm yesterday. Although the gates are usually jam-packed around noon, very few vehicles dared to venture out given the tense atmosphere yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Garment factories not reopening today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) yesterday decided not to reopen factories from today as their management wants to observe the situation further for the change in the political situation.

The BGMEA took the decision at an emergency meeting held at its office in Dhaka.

In a statement, the BGMEA said considering the current situation, the trade body instructed factory owners not to reopen their units until further notice.

Earlier on Sunday, the BGMEA in a statement instructed factory owners to announce the closure of their factories for an indefinite period because of the political crisis.

They announced the factory closure as the immediate past government announced general public holidays for three days following the student movement across the country.

In the first round of the crisis, the garment factory and textile millers announced closure of their units for four days. The exporters could not ship goods from the ports and could not continue production at the factories because of the violence.

AHSAN HABIB

Bangladesh has no time to spare when it comes to ensuring the stability of the economy, which has fallen into a crisis mainly due to the absence of democracy for over a decade.

Following Sheikh Hasina's resignation as prime minister and the announcement that an interim government would be formed, economists yesterday said reforms should be taken immediately to address economic challenges.

The challenges include high inflation, falling foreign exchange reserves, the high burden of default loans, poor governance in the banking sector and, above all, corruption.

The government must also stem further destruction before taking steps to revive the economy.

It is unclear what type of government is going to be formed now, but there is no time to spare when it comes to reviving the economy, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The economy was already in crisis and the recent political turmoil, which included internet blackouts and supply chain disruptions, only rubbed salt in its wounds.

So, the priority now should be the economy, he said.

To bring back normality, social equity and justice need to be ensured, which also aligns

with the students' demands.

Internet connection and other communications should not be disrupted further while education should be resumed with full priority, Hussain said, adding that such measures would provide confidence to people and normalise economic activity.

Due to the turmoil over the recent weeks, which included the deaths of over 300 people including students, there was supply chain disruption.

Now, everything should be operational. The metro rail and elevated expressway in Dhaka as well as railways and all other connections should be operational as soon as possible, he said.

In order to rein in inflation, the supply chain disruption should be addressed and money should not be printed, the economist added.

Budgetary reforms are also necessary, according to Hussain. The interim government must examine areas where it can save as well as where it needs to increase expenditure.

As poor people are suffering, the government should take measures to increase support for them.

He also said all barriers in making the foreign exchange market transparent and market-based will have to be removed.

Eradication of corruption should be prioritised and all the regulatory bodies

should be reformed, he added.

According to Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh, if the political system is inadequate, the economy cannot perform well. So, he said, a participatory and democratic political system is necessary.

Democracy and accountability should be ensured as well.

He added that the country is facing several short-term challenges as well as structural problems.

Due to stubbornly high inflation, low-income individuals have been suffering.

Annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, which was the highest rate in the past 12 years. The inflation rate has remained above 9 percent since March of 2023, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Alongside attempting to stabilise exchange rates, the interim government will also have to focus on reducing expenditure in order to tame inflation, Mansur said.

To solve structural problems in the financial sector, a committee of analysts must be tasked with unearthing problems in the banking sector and finding out exactly how big the hole is.

If a proper diagnosis is not conducted, the problem cannot be solved, he added.

Other areas like the stock market, bond market and insurance industry should also

be analysed by a separate committee and restructured if necessary, he recommended.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank can provide support in these areas if necessary.

He also said the existing revenue management system has been a silent killer, adding: "It is destroying the whole economy."

An economy cannot develop with a low tax-GDP ratio and Bangladesh has one of the lowest in the world.

In FY23, Bangladesh's tax-to-GDP ratio stood at 7.3 percent despite rising per capita income, according to the Ministry of Finance.

So, the whole system should be reformed to raise tax revenues, he said.

Along with financial support, empowering local government agencies is also necessary as it will help decentralise the economy and development, Mansur added.

Fahmida Khatun, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the economy needs huge reforms, adding that it had been weakened by a lack of political will.

Bangladesh has been following the wrong political system of non-democracy for more than a decade. When a political system is devoid of democracy, one group benefits and rent-seeking prevails.

So, the country's people suffer despite higher GDP growth because proper distribution is absent, she said.

RMG exporters expect new vigour in business

REFAYAT ULLAH MIRDHA

Garment exporters are expecting a strong recovery in exports and business as normalcy is being gradually restored with the changing political scenario.

The business environment was facing an impasse because of the latest spells of violence and frequent shutdown of factories, for which they were unable to manufacture goods for export.

Exporters also said, though July, August and September comprise the peak season for shipping goods meant for Christmas and for booking work orders for the coming summer and spring seasons, they were facing challenges in sending goods to retailers through Chattogram port amid violence.

They were also unable to communicate with their business partners both at home and abroad because of the recent internet blackout across the country and for the violence.

The apparel manufacturers are now planning to reopen their production units and to restart with a new vigour as they have been facing shutdowns, difficulties in transportation and shipment of goods over more than one month because of the political crisis.

The Bangladesh Garment

Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) called a meeting yesterday at 7:30pm to discuss the next course of action as the prime minister resigned, said a director.

They decided that the garment factories and textile mills will stay shut for now considering the current situation. The owners may take a decision on factory reopening today.

They had earlier shut down their units two weeks ago for four days amidst violence and curfew. During the first round of shutdown, they could not even communicate with their international clothing retailers and brands because of an internet blackout across the country.

Because of the latest spell of student movement and political impasse, the BGMEA has already said they have lost Tk 6,400 crore while the textile millers said the amount of their loss is more than \$58.8 million.

The garment and textile millers have shut down their production units across the country fearing labour unrest and vandalism, which will cause a massive loss for the sector.

During the first round of violence and curfew, the international clothing retailers and brands expressed concern over the situation as they were facing difficulties in placing work orders with factories



Garment exporters have lost Tk 6,400 crore due to the recent unrest and shutdown of factories, said Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

PHOTO: STAR/FILE

and receiving shipments of goods from Chattogram port.

"We mainly discussed the issue of reopening the factories. However, we may take more time to reopen the factories considering the change in

the political situation," said BGMEA Vice-President Arshad Jamal Dipu over the phone.

"We want to restart production in the factories very soon. But we need help from the administration for the

smooth running of the units as their instructions are important for us," Dipu added.

Also, it recently became difficult to do business and international trade because this is the time to renew

bond licences but many, especially the Chattogram based exporters, are complaining that the customs department is not renewing the bond licences.

Many have been forced to adopt expensive air shipments because of delays in production and transportation of goods to the factories.

Also, many have been forced to provide discounts and accept cancellation of work orders from international retailers and brands because of the latest spells of violence and curfew.

Banks are charging a higher interest rate on loans, he said, adding that all these things are affecting business and all those issues need to be broadly discussed with the trade bodies and administration soon for resolving the issues.

"We have to work seriously now," Dipu also said.

"I hope everything will change now and business will soon be restored," said a garment exporter asking not to be named.

The work orders from international retailers and brands will also be restored soon as normalcy has also started to return, the exporter added.

"We are getting ready to reopen our factories as soon as possible," said a director of the BGMEA asking not to be named.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Rows of roadside shops that were left closed in Purana Paltan in the capital around noon yesterday amidst the changing political scenario.

Supply chain disruption hits commodity traders and farmers

SUKANTA HALDER

The risk of violence amidst a political crisis that culminated in the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday disrupted supply chains of essential food commodities, hitting consumers, traders and farmers.

Traders said many vehicles with fresh vegetables such as spine gourds and pointed gourds could not reach Dhaka from different districts.

As a result, prices of essential food commodities have already increased at the wholesale and retail levels.

For example, the price of onion rose to Tk 120 per kilogramme (kg) yesterday from Tk 116 a week ago. The price of pointed gourd rose to Tk 80 per kg from Tk 60 earlier at different kitchen markets in Dhaka.

Mostafa Kamal, a wholesaler of Karwan Bazar, one of the largest kitchen markets in Dhaka, said three goods-laden trucks were supposed to come to Dhaka from Dinajpur and Ishwardi at midnight of Sunday.

The trucks, carrying goods worth Tk 6

lakh, got stuck in Bogura for violence on the roads. Of those goods, there were gourds, cauliflowers, pointed gourds and sponge gourds in the truck.

"If it does not enter Dhaka within a day, there is every possibility of the vegetable rotting. If that happens, it will be a big loss," he said early yesterday.

Tensions ran high amidst a curfew and a "March to Dhaka" programme called by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement over the recent killings of people.

Over 300 people were killed in just three weeks since July 16, making it the bloodiest period in the history of Bangladesh's civil movement.

The government on Sunday reimposed a curfew for an indefinite period from 6:00pm and announced a three-day general holiday starting yesterday, which brought transports to a standstill.

Mohammad Sohail, a wholesaler of Karwan Bazar, said two trucks with 30 tonnes of potatoes were supposed to come from Bogura and Rajshahi early yesterday. Only one could

enter Dhaka while another was stuck in Sirajganj's Ullapara.

Salam Sheikh, an onion wholesaler of the same market, said a total of 20 sacks of onions were supposed to come from Pabna and Rajshahi. But they could not even decide on loading them onto a truck, he said.

Mohammad Jashim Uddin, a rice wholesaler of Mohammadpur Krishi Market in the capital, said amidst the current situation, no order for rice has not been placed over the last two days despite there being a lot of demand.

The price of rice per kg has increased by Tk 2 to Tk 3 on average since Sunday, he said.

Goods cannot be sent to other big cities of the country, including Dhaka, due to a lack of transport, said Rahidul Islam, a vegetable stockist and wholesaler in Bogura's Mahasthan Bazar, one of the main wholesale vegetable depots of the northern region.

However, the prices of almost all products there have come down. Farmers are facing huge losses, he said, adding that gourds are being sold at Tk 20 per kg, brinjal at Tk 5 to Tk 15 and green chilies at Tk 100.

High inflation, banking crisis are key hurdles for new govt: analysts

JAGARAN CHAKMA and MEHDI HASSAN

The interim government's immediate duty will be to address inflation and repair weak financial institutions as it seeks to rebuild the economy, according to experts.

They added that weak governance in financial institutions and the central bank's lack of autonomy have been seriously affecting the economy.

"The interim government's immediate task should be addressing inflation. The economy has been suffering from high inflationary pressure for years," said Fahmida Khatun, executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, the highest since 2011-12, when it was 10.62 percent, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

She also said financial institutions had weakened immensely due to corruption and a lack of good governance.

The CPD executive director said the nation has witnessed a change and the need now is to rebuild the economy.

According to her, overcoming the destruction of public and private property is not the major challenge. Rather, repairing the country's image is the major challenge.

Sumon Chowdhury, secretary general of the Bangladesh Steel Manufacturing Association (BSMA), said the interim government needs time to ensure discipline in business.

Although it is unclear what steps the interim government will take, any decision should be made after consulting with all

stakeholders, he added.

Chowdhury said businessmen faced huge financial and non-financial losses during the movement, adding that they had already been suffering for a long time due to a gas crisis.

In such circumstances, the interim government should provide incentives or other benefits, he said.

He also condemned attacks by miscreants on businesses, which particularly targeted establishments owned by pro-Awami League (AL) businessmen.

"It is true that pro-AL businessmen got plenty of benefits. But practically all businessmen became pro-AL as the party has ruled the country for the past 15 years."

Raved Akthar, president of the Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), refused to comment in advance.

But he said that the nation sustained a lot of damage, both literally and metaphorically.

"We have to rebuild our nation," he said.

Syed Mahbubur Rahman, a former chairman of the Association of Bankers Bangladesh, said: "Whoever comes to power, we are looking for good governance in the banking sector."

Rahman, also managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, told The Daily Star that companies and banks owned by people close to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will have to tread carefully.

He also fears bad loans will rise further as companies owned by political leaders may face trouble.



PHOTO: STAR/FILE

The economy of Bangladesh has been suffering from high inflationary pressure for years, as annual inflation rose to 9.73 percent in 2023-24, the highest since 2011-12.

Banks see lower offshore lending amid forex crisis

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Lending from offshore units of banks in Bangladesh has declined amid the ongoing foreign exchange crisis, leaving the segment in a fragile situation.

By the end of March this year, the total disbursed loans of offshore banking units (OBU) stood at about Tk 72,437 crore, down 7.68 percent year-on-year, as per the latest central bank data.

OBUs were a lucrative business for banks when the forex flow was good. But now their operations have practically come to a standstill as foreign funds are unavailable, industry people said.

Bangladesh has been facing a foreign exchange crisis for more than two years now, which adversely impacted their OBUs, as per industry insiders.

The country's forex reserves have fallen more than \$24 billion since August 2021 following the Covid-19 pandemic.

The forex reserves stood at \$21.78 billion (BPM6) on June 30 this year, as per the latest central bank data.

Besides, Bangladesh Bank found proof that some banks laundered money through their OBUs, prompting the banking regulator to strengthen monitoring of the segment.

An OBU is a specialised unit within a licensed bank that offers financial services, such as loans, in foreign currencies to non-resident customers.

Generally, the unit borrows from foreign banks as well as the central bank to lend funds to various organisations for import payments, export bill discounting, refinance, and mid and long-term loans.

Loans from OBUs started to fall after the central bank instructed banks not to take funds from their domestic unit to finance OBUs, said Mati Ul Hasan, additional managing director of Mercantile Bank.

In January, the Bangladesh Bank barred banks from transferring foreign currency to their OBUs to tackle local forex shortages and reduce the dependency of units abroad on those back home.

Mati Ul Hasan said most banks used to take funds from domestic units to OBUs but they have had to adjust as per the central bank's instruction.

"That is why lending from OBUs has declined," he added.

From 2020, banks were allowed to transfer up to a maximum of 30 percent of their regulatory capital in foreign currency from domestic units to OBUs.

There was no prior limit on transferring or

OFFSHORE BANKING: KEY POINTS (As of March 2024)

- » Loans stood at Tk 72,437.17cr
- » Loans at state banks were Tk 676.64cr
- » Private commercial banks' loans were Tk 57,983.72cr
- » Defaulted loans stood at Tk 1,876.91cr
- » Offshore banking was allowed in the country in 1985
- » Govt introduced Offshore Banking Act 2024 in May

mobilising funds for OBUs.

A senior Bangladesh Bank official said they observed that many banks were excessively transferring foreign currency to OBUs, creating an imbalance in the demand and supply of foreign currency in the local market.

Till March this year, loan disbursement from offshore units of state-run banks fell by Tk 802 crore to Tk 677 crore. Meanwhile, loan disbursement from OBUs of private commercial banks fell by Tk 2,482 crore to Tk 57,984 crore.

Likewise, loans from the OBUs of foreign banks fell by Tk 2743 crore to Tk 13,776 crore.

Amid the forex shortage, foreign lenders are very cautious about providing funds to local banks, which is another reason lending through OBUs declined, said Shaheen Iqbal, deputy managing director and head of treasury at BRAC Bank.

However, Iqbal said lending through BRAC Bank's OBUs has increased.

DEFAULTED LOANS OF OBUs

Defaulted loans at OBUs stood at about Tk 1,877 crore at the end of March this year, up from Tk roughly 1,402 crore in the same period of 2023, central bank data showed.

Bad loans at the OBUs of private commercial banks stood at Tk 1,198 crore while bad loans at foreign banks stood at around Tk 679 crore till March this year.

Life cannot go on like this

A street vendor shares his hardships during the widespread unrest

AM JAHID

"Brother, please take at least four bananas. If not, my family will have to go without food. They are already starving," said Shukkur Ali while pleading with this reporter to make a purchase.

Ali, a roaming vendor who sells fruits in Dhaka's Farmgate, said that he has had next to no sales for the past several weeks due to the unrest and curfew.

"Risking my life, the amount I could sell and profit I made would not cover my own expenses. So, how can I bear the expenses of my six-member family in such a situation?" he asked.

Ali, who hails from Rajbari, said he has been selling bananas in the Farmgate area for the past 10 years.

By selling bananas, he has been bearing the expenses of his son, who is studying at Government Rajendra College in Faridpur, and daughter, who studies at a school near his village in Bahadurpur of Pangsha upazila.

"I have no savings. The money I had has already been spent on family expenses. At present, I am unable to afford the living expenses of my family. Life cannot go on like this," Ali said.

While pointing out that his son passed SSC with a golden GPA-5 while his daughter is also an outstanding student, Ali said people think the two could enjoy great success in the future.

"I don't want my son's future to be like mine. That's why I am doing my best to pay for their education," he added.

Ali, the lone breadwinner for this family, said he spends at least Tk 10,000 every month on his son's education apart from the regular expenditures of his family who live in his village home.

"But right now, I am very helpless. Owing to the adverse situation, the condition of my business is horrible. In the last few weeks, I made sales of a maximum of Tk 400 per day," he added.

On a normal day, Ali can sell bananas worth about Tk 8,000.

When this reporter was talking to Ali, a vegetable vendor named Badal Mia also approached, requesting to write about his hard times during the widespread violence.

Mia shared a similar story about his hardships as the sales of his business significantly reduced owing to recent unrest centring the students' movement.

This reporter also spoke with other

hawkers and street vendors, who all claimed that they are suffering huge losses due to clashes between law enforcement agencies and demonstrating students.

This is hampering economic activities and affecting peoples' daily lives, they said.

The clashes have left several hundred dead and thousands injured since it began on July 15-16 for the quota reform movement declared by the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.



A vegetable vendor named Badal Mia was waiting for customers on a deserted sidewalk between Khamarbari intersection and Farmgate yesterday noon. Hardships of street vendors like him deepened in recent days as sales dropped significantly amid the unrest and curfew.

PHOTO: AM JAHID

A new dawn rises on Bangladesh

After Hasina's fall, we must strive to build a pro-people, inclusive society

This is a day that will be remembered for generations to come. A day when a 15-year long authoritarian rule has finally come to an end. A day when people truly rose to power, putting aside their differences and uniting in their desire for freedom and a better tomorrow. It will not be an exaggeration to say that the extraordinary showing of the student-mass movement that has led to the downfall of Sheikh Hasina—who came to power for a fourth consecutive term only this January—will henceforth be the new reference point in our history of mass uprisings.

The anticipation was building up even before the day began, with the planned "March to Dhaka" preponed by a day because of the urgency created by the events of the previous day. In what many called the second wave of violence, about a hundred people perished that day as ruling party activists and police clashed with anti-government protesters. During the first wave on July 18-21, over 200 people had died. So desperate protesters, seeing their demand for justice frequently trivialised, wanted an end to all the farce and violence with a final push. And at 3PM on Monday, with crowds from across the country heading to Dhaka to siege Gono Bhaban, disregarding a curfew, the army chief announced the resignation of Sheikh Hasina. An interim government will likely be formed soon to run the country.

In the coming days, we will know more about the interim government which we hope will swiftly deliver on the promises of justice for each of the killings and a peaceful democratic transition. But right now, let's recognise this moment in our history. Perhaps nothing describes the events of the past few weeks better than what the Russian revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Lenin once said: that there are decades where nothing happens, and then there are weeks where decades happen. We have seen such eventful weeks in 1952, in 1969, and in 1990. But none of those uprisings claimed so many lives. None of them were against a democratically elected government, however questionable those elections were. This makes it all the more crucial that we remember the background in which this latest uprising was set, and ensure that our future actions align with it, otherwise the huge sacrifices that went into making it successful will have been for nothing.

The first goal of this movement was establishing justice for those who perished during protests marked by brutal crackdowns by security forces, aided by ruling party cadres. But then, because of the constant refusal of the government to recognise the gravity of the tragedy and conduct fair investigations, it transformed into a bigger fight against the very seat of power that favours the interests of a few over that of the vast majority of the people. It is this fight that has galvanised the whole nation, bringing together foes and friends alike. On Monday, people claimed their first victory in this fight. But the destination is far ahead. So, the fight must be on.

The extraordinary scenes that unfolded after the fall of the Awami League government underscored both long-awaited joy and long-suppressed anger. Soon after the announcement, millions of people poured into the streets all over the country. Despite the lingering grief over the loss of over 300 lives during the brutal crackdowns, the atmosphere was electric and filled with hope and possibility. Families with children, elders, students—everyone was out on the streets. It was a kaleidoscope of colours and sounds. Marching down the streets, many were waving flags or chanting slogans, their voices rising in unison, a powerful testament to their shared struggle and newfound liberty.

These upbeat scenes on streets, however, starkly contrasted the scenes of devastation in other places. It was painful to see a repeat of the vandalism that once stained the movement so soon after its victory. Some observers called it a total anarchy, as mobs went about destroying and pillaging houses of ruling party leaders, ruling party offices, public buildings and properties, and key symbols of power including Gono Bhaban, Prime Minister's Office, police stations, etc. Even the parliament and the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 came under attack. Equally alarmingly, many houses, businesses and places of worship of minority communities were destroyed. A number of lives were also lost. The breakdown of law in the aftermath of the government's fall is a reminder of how important it is to ensure calm and peace so that we don't end up ruining this special moment in our history.

As we enter a new era, we must do so with optimism but also caution. While it is vital to stay watchful so that no untoward incident like what happened yesterday happens again, we also must start thinking about the kind of future we want. To truly honour the sacrifices of our fallen heroes, we must strive to build a future where democratic and egalitarian values trump narrow political interests. The time to rebuild our nation is now.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima

On this day in 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan—the blast killed more than 70,000 people and destroyed most of the city—in an effort to hasten the end of World War II.

The cheapening of life, the cracks in the system, and the fall of Hasina

Seuty Sabur and Shehzad M Arifeen
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SHEHZAD MARIFEEN and SEUTY SABUR

We have reached a point of no return. The era of Sheikh Hasina has come to an end, although we do not yet know exactly what comes after. While many are celebrating, now more than ever it is necessary to take stock. How did we get here, and what do we do so that we never get here again? The quota reform movement and its aftermath have served as a prism, casting light on the tremendous inequalities that have been produced in Bangladesh over the past decade. From the beginning, this regime staked its existence on the power of accumulation and patronage—opening Bangladesh up for business to all in exchange for loyalty. In the process, this once proud party became a violent, extractive club that anyone could join by saying the right words. State, government, and party have become one, through a process that Gramsci called "passive revolution": an elite, state-led effort to catalyse economic development while absorbing competition and neutralising enemies (that is why this is different from fascism).

That is what "being like Singapore" really means. This development has been real, despite what many like to claim. Bangladesh has transformed beyond recognition, a transformation concretised in the new national monuments (like the Padma Bridge). Enormous fortunes have been made, making this once "basket case" the home of countless millionaires. Certainly, some of that wealth has "trickled down." But our exports bring in billions because we can squeeze down wages by any means. We have rented out vast swathes of the land as EZs and EPZs, where the "normal" rules don't apply. Scandal after scandal have revealed the fortunes made using connections, or by directly using the state apparatus, funneling their wealth to tax havens, businesses in Dubai, or homes in Canada. We boast of remittance income, while the people who make and send that money—often in terrible conditions—receive nothing but neglect. These are not accidents; accumulation needs disposability. Wealth grows at the cost of someone else's life.

Those who could find patrons, who could "buy in" their fealty, could claim a share of the pie, which is precisely what the 30 percent freedom fighter quota came to represent: a loyalty card. The quota reform movement was reborn when the frustrations of primarily middle-class students—facing jobless growth and a lifetime of precarity—combined with increasing resentment at blatant corruption,



VISUAL: DEBASHISH CHAKRABARTY

state violence, and clear disdain for the public. The official reaction to the carnage on July 19—the obsession with vandalism and indifference to the human cost of repression—only reinforced the sense that this was a government for itself. After that point, nobody was really interested in talk about "third parties," real or otherwise. Why was it that the first to join the students on the streets were those who will neither pay tax nor ride on expressways? Why did Dhaka's rickshaw-pullers bring out solidarity processions? Just as these students recognised their disposability—which is what turned government jobs into lifelines worth fighting for—they found natural allies in those the nation leaves behind, who have no other means of laying claims on the state. As the crackdown unfolded, however, many of us who do pay taxes and ride the metro remembered that we are punished with higher tax rates than money launderers, that our wallets are worth less and less while some build resorts, and that our students, our children, are being

and enroll enough investors into their gamble, they could ignore the land and river-grabbing, the broken roads, the waterlogging, the unemployment, the inflation, the energy crisis, the money-laundering and corruption, and the brewing resentment; the last could be dispelled by the might of the ever-ready foot soldiers and police, seemingly given a limitless "right to violence." Perhaps they truly believed that they had a permanent, historical mandate to rule. But the true fragility of this project has now been laid bare. This movement has many troubling dimensions, and we have written about some of them. But what it has done is provide a conduit, through which students and others have learned to transform their frustrations into structural questions to put to the state, questions that it has failed to answer with a consistency that almost begs belief. The scale of death and destruction—and the license to kill—defies anything that our predecessors faced in the 50s and 60s, or during the anti-Ershad

movement. They have crossed the "red line," making any more talk of negotiations suspect.

There is much to learn from these repeated comparisons to the past. In the 1960s, a group of Bengali economists put forth the famous "two economies" thesis, an articulation of internal colonialism based on extractive development: channeling the resources of the East to furnish the development of the West, leaving some scraps for the "peripheral" elite and keeping the rest in line by force. The struggle for Bangladesh was born when those scraps were no longer enough, when middle-class frustrations aligned with the dispossessed. But what happens when the "two economies" are not separated by geography and language? When we cannot distinguish "the enemy" from ourselves?

We have been trapped in this cycle of "peacetime war" ever since the end of the war itself, toppling regime after regime with little to show for it. Our state has remained a colonial apparatus, designed for extraction and middleman-rule. Since the transition to democracy, each regime has busied itself with enrichment, patronage, and (mutual) annihilation. The institutions we built have either fallen to partisanship or have had to insulate themselves for survival. The absence of any civil society interventions in the quota reform debate while there was still time is no less a failure than the state's. For years, we academics have made no real attempt to address the misalignment between graduation and employment rates. The media's role in engineering the "rajakar" fiasco should not be forgotten either, nor the unwillingness of so many university administrations to protect their students. We all have much to answer for.

It really did not have to come to this. Elite club politics, the counsel of sycophants, and the passion for vengeance have squandered all of the potential the last 15 years had held. The 2008 elections had carried many hopes: a thriving economy and a mature political system amongst them. If only we had learned to respect human life and make the state-civil society-people triad function. Instead of fulfilling her father's dreams, Sheikh Hasina has repeated his mistakes, and has walked straight into the same trap. And while this is a new horizon in many ways (especially for this generation), we have also been here too many times before. No hero, technocrat, or general will deliver us, nor will the death of party politics. Either we finally build a people's republic—which requires a lot more than elections—or we condemn ourselves to repeat this "legacy of blood" until there is nothing left to fight over.

A walk through free (?) Dhaka

Azmin Azran and Syeda Maisha Ali
are journalists at The Daily Star.

AZMIN AZRAN and SYEDA MAISHA ALI

People in Bangladesh went to sleep on Sunday night, August 4, shaken by the horror of the death of around 100 people throughout the day. The days leading up to it were no less horrific. What started as an anti-discrimination movement became a nine-point movement for government accountability and eventually morphed into a one-point demand for the government's resignation. The death of hundreds in the span of just under three weeks over these reasonable demands had kept the nation suspended in dread.

The morning of August 5 was no different. The Anti-Discrimination Student Movement had called for a "Long March to Dhaka" the day before. As people were expected to pour into Dhaka from across the country, first the prospect, and then the news of more needless deaths consolidated the dread we had carried over from the month of July into August.

But then the tide turned. The first sign of the shifting winds came with the Chief of Army Staff's announcement to make a rare address to the nation at 2:00pm. In different parts of Dhaka, news of clashes between protesters and law

enforcement turned into news of law enforcement standing aside as people flooded the streets.

We dared to join the tide as well. From inside Bashundhara R/A, where people famously keep to themselves, processions of 20, 40, or even more came out of each block. The chants of *Palaise re palaise, Hasina palaise* (Fled, fled! Hasina has fled!) rang out through the usually quiet streets, all the way to the raucous intersection in front of Jamuna Future Park at Nadda. Groups gathered in circles, dancing, clapping, and chanting. Their faces betrayed unbound happiness, relief, and the outpouring of anger and dissent that had been repressed for years. To us, it seemed that many were at a loss as to what they wanted to say. Most of them could only muster one immensely strong word: "Bhua."

The expressions of happiness, although simple, felt raw. People randomly handed out food and water for free, to our surprise—surprise because we don't remember in our collective memory what these little acts of kindness and camaraderie in this country looked like. Rickshaw-pullers and CNG auto-rickshaw drivers joined in the celebrations. The first

rickshaw-puller we asked to take us towards Dhaka South apologetically refused, saying he wanted to go the opposite direction and celebrate with the crowd, understandably so. The rest of the way, no rickshaw-puller or CNG auto-rickshaw driver refused to go the mile towards any direction, nor did they try to negotiate the fare. One of them said, "*Joto khushi den bhara*" (Pay however much you want to).

In Gulshan, we saw people chant slogans from inside their Land Rovers. On foot, people were louder. On the streets, there were children dressed in red in the arms of their parents, there were elderly citizens with energy beyond their years, and there were groups of young people whose beaming faces reflected their sense of achievement. We could see it on their faces—the unfettered show of joy and the proud show of freedom in their gait. The collective sigh in the air was almost audible.

It was not all rosy. As expected, a deluge of people angry at law enforcement after weeks of face offs, when left to their devices on the streets, lashed out at any symbol of perceived government power. Police boxes, political offices of the Awami League, and a number of unidentifiable streetside structures were set on fire in Tejgaon Industrial Area. Smoke hung thick in the air and it was hard to breathe, and while people everywhere were armed with sticks and pieces of wood, in some areas, the weapons were of a more sinister nature. In Karwan Bazar,

buses in front of government offices lay burnt and broken. On Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, which served as the main artery for people moving from Shahbagh towards Ganabhaban, the crowd hurled brickbats towards the building that houses the office of ATN News, disregarding the safety of parts of the same crowd who were walking on the road right under it.

By 4:30pm, some were using the same road to return after having played their part in the breach of the Ganabhaban and the Prime Minister's Office in Bijoy Sarani. People displayed their loot, which included everything from expensive looking china to useless looking sofa cushions. The expressions on their faces, that would have otherwise looked brave, seemed unnerving. In the same procession where a police car was being flattened by a score of angry citizens, a hundred yards behind, a boy plucked a yellow flower from a roadside garden inside a building for the girl who was with him, making vivid the fact that it is a day for the chaotic expression of emotions—both good and bad.

Bangladesh has gone through a day of historical proportions, and the people on the streets seem to know this. While the struggles, sacrifices, and sentiments that led to this moment make us hopeful that history will look favourably upon August 5, 2024, the people of Bangladesh need to learn how to pull together and build the country back up for that to happen.



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

The collective spirit must not be lost



Dr. Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan
is professor at the Department of International Relations in
Dhaka University.

MOHAMMAD TANZIMUDDIN AHMED

Beginning with Abu Sayed, a great amount of sacrifice was made to reach this point. Our students and children were martyred, while many more were injured after being attacked by tear gas and rubber bullets. Many were arrested, some of whom were minors. Though this is a kind of victory, we are still mourning the lives lost. Even today, we lost people. We will always remember and respect the people in the protests of bloody July.

Occasions such as this has repeatedly arisen in Bangladesh's history, whether 1971 or 1990. In truth, we missed the opportunity each time. The expectations people had from different political parties

in the past were dashed many times, and our politicians have only acted in their own interests without keeping in mind the best interests of the people.

The most significant factor of this protest has been that this has not been carried out under the banner of a specific political party; its success lies in the participation of all people. Those who failed to understand history, and weaponised the spirit of the Liberation War to create an environment of corruption and suffering—we have been able to bid them farewell. If we consider the atrocities over the past 15 years, we want justice for all of these actions. Those who used anything

and everything, from shotguns to assault rifles and sniper rifles, to take lives during the movement in July, must be brought to book, as per national and international laws. In addition, people's sufferings must be addressed, particularly the increase of the prices of essentials and the burden of taxes being placed on the people.

In the past, we have faced disappointment; we don't want to return to a state where politicians work for their own benefit. We want to build a better nation in the memory of the martyrs of 1971, the martyrs of July and August 2024. We want an inclusive governance system where all people are recognised as equal citizens of Bangladesh, regardless of their gender, religion or any other factor. We want to see this initiative from the state and we want it to be institutionalised. Let Bangladesh begin anew, and let this new Bangladesh reflect the dreams of all those who lost their lives.

Much work remains to be done, however. We must determine a list of all those who passed away, provide treatment to the injured, and ensure safer means of

livelihood for families that are in great distress due to this situation. These matters must be resolved at the earliest.

To reiterate, the success we have attained now cannot be attributed to any party, it belongs to the students, particularly the six coordinators along with various others who organised this at great risks to their lives.

We know that military rule never bodes well for any nation. Hence, the creation of an inclusive government is vital. This national solidarity that has arisen must be utilised to create a healthy and peaceful Bangladesh—different from what we have seen in the last 53 years. We must remain united and integrated, and we cannot let the collective spirit and unity that has emerged from this movement dissipate in any manner. We cannot fall into the trap of a cult of personality again. We are all the same, we are all equal and we are all Bangladeshi people, regardless of how we identify or what class or segment of the population we belong to. The nation must be able to retain this collective identity.



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA



PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

How will the interim government shape up?



Mujahidul Islam Selim
is former president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB).

MUJAHIDUL ISLAM SELIM

It is too early to react to the speech by the army chief because he has said we will get more information on the interim government after he discusses it with the president. But one thing to note here is that he mentioned the name of a banned political party—Jamaat-e-Islami—when he said a discussion had been held with the main political parties of the country. Also, he said that he had discussed the current situation with all the big political parties of the country, which is not true. For instance, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) was not contacted.

Moreover, they did not contact the coordinators of the protesting students' platform (the Students' Movement against Discrimination). He said Prof Asif Nazrul had taken the responsibility of informing the students. These are vague comments. He said things would be clear



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

tomorrow. As long as the demands of the quota reform movement are not fully implemented, the protesters should remain alert.

The enthusiasm seen during the current movement is unprecedented. Such enthusiasm was not even present

during the 1969 Mass Uprising, which was led by an organised leadership. Although the quota reform movement does not have the same format, I have not seen any mistakes made by its leadership so far. Rather, the movement gained more public support and there does not seem to be any

loss of momentum. We are witnessing the determination of very ordinary students ready to sacrifice their lives to establish their rights.

The Awami League government lost public support. To stay in power, they applied brutal force. We heard the

VOICES FROM SHAHABAGH

We can't celebrate yet. Not until there is justice for our brothers who have been killed. Sheikh Hasina's resignation was, of course, a must. But for all the deaths that happened, there must be thorough investigations into the role of the administration, party activists, Chhatra League and others. Once that has been achieved, then we can finally celebrate.

We do not know who will come to power next, but the army is likely to take over in the immediate future. We hope whoever it is, they will take prompt and proper actions to deliver justice for the killings. Those who have been unjustly detained must be unconditionally released.

I don't think there is any country in the world where the government has tried to stay in power by raising its hand on its own students so many times like this. Students are a nation's assets. Students have a special place in peoples' hearts. This regime didn't just kill one or two students. According to newspaper reports, it killed more than 300—even though we believe the number is higher. Many ordinary citizens have also been killed. It is because this regime killed so many students that people have come out flooding the streets to lend their support. If you look around, you will see thousands and thousands of ordinary people around you—there are no political parties here. Why is that? They are here to support those who have been killed, the students, who are our brothers and sisters.

No government in the world, I believe, can stay in power by killing its own students. And we have proved that here in Bangladesh.

A university student

The prime minister had no other alternative but to resign. After creating the situation that she and her party did, how could she speak of finding a compromise? Everything had gone out of control by the time she was willing to listen to the students. So, resigning was the best decision for her.

All these people have gathered together for independence. A government that shoots at its own people is not wanted by anyone.

A BRAC university student

We are very happy right now for achieving this independence. We achieved this victory in return for our blood. Now, we want to celebrate it fully and with everyone.

Now, we need to ensure that the perpetrators of the killings are held to account, alongside those who gave the orders. Even if they manage to flee the country, they should be brought back and tried properly, so that no one ever dares to commit such crimes again.

A university student

We want thorough investigations into all the killings. Even if any of them were committed by the army, it has to investigate them also. My point is, no one who fired at students and ordinary people should be spared. As a student of Dhaka University, what some law enforcers did in our university over the past weeks is unacceptable. What the vice-chancellor and other responsible persons did must be looked into as well.

Even today, when we went to the campus, people fired at us. Who were involved in these shootings? Do we not deserve to know as students of that university, who were shooting at us in our own campus? Whoever comes to power next, they should know by now the power of Bangladesh's students and its people. So, if they do not investigate these incidents, we will once again unite.

A Dhaka University student

The students' initial one-point demand of quota reform turned into a one-point demand for Sheikh Hasina's resignation. It turned into a movement to bring back democracy. How could she get away with carrying out mass murders so she could stay in Gono Bhaban? I held back my child from joining the protests before, but not today. We've been here since the morning and we won't leave till she resigns. We've seen a lot of bloodshed; we will not accept any more of it.

Nipa
Housewife from Lalbagh

I am here observing the mob. I am really happy. The students have achieved a lot, they have done the hard work of bringing us here. We love our country and we want to save it. The students should work towards establishing peace in the country where no one is suppressed.

Syed Afzalul Karim
Dermatologist

Whatever happens, it has to be done through a peaceful, amicable way and we do not want any military intervention in this whole process. The transition has to be done with the leadership of the students, and with constructive consultation with political parties, civil society, and other actors in the movement.

Dr Samina Luthfa
Associate professor, sociology
Dhaka University



IMAGE: UNSPLASH

Transitioning to remote work amidst an ongoing crisis

Transitioning to remote work during a crisis can be challenging, but with the right strategies and mindset, it can also be an opportunity for growth and increased flexibility.

As the national landscape continues to be mired with unforeseen crises and unpredictable lockdowns, many workplaces have found themselves transitioning to remote work. This shift, while providing flexibility and safety, can also bring about challenges in productivity, communication, and maintaining work-life balance for employees. If you are having difficulties transitioning back to remote work, here is a brief guide to help you navigate this change as smoothly as possible.

Setting up the workplace

Before jumping into your remote work, make sure you have a dedicated space in your home to actually work from. Choose a quiet and comfortable area that can serve as the workspace. Ensure the space is ergonomically set up so you don't face physical strain when sitting for a long time. Since you will be working on your laptop or home desktop, make sure you have a good chair, desk, and proper lighting so there are no sudden difficulties during work.

Since you will need uninterrupted internet during your work to stay connected with coworkers, choose a place where your home router's WiFi signals are the strongest - which is usually close to the router itself. Aside from your computer, make sure you have other essential tools or software required for your job. If you haven't used collaborative apps in a while, take some time to familiarise yourself with Zoom, Slack, Discord, Microsoft Teams, etc.

Maintaining a routine

One of the main problems employees face

when suddenly transitioning from on-site work to remote work is inconsistency in their work schedule. Chances are, you will have different work hours when working from home - as there are different requirements and break hours needed. However, to keep your work going at a steady rate, stick to a consistent schedule, preferably one you have made for yourself.

Begin and end your workday at the same time each day. Take regular breaks in between work to avoid burnout. The Pomodoro technique can be effective here. Basically, after deciding on a specific task to be completed first, set a timer for 25 minutes and work on that task only. Once the timer ends, take a break for 5 to 10 minutes. After which, set a timer for 25 minutes again until you either complete the task or finish these 'pomodoro' loops at least four times - which would equate to at least two hours of productive work-break balance.

Stay connected, even remotely

Working from home means that you won't be physically present in front of your colleagues, which might hamper in-person communication, especially for teams during group assignments. As such, even when working remotely, make sure you are sufficiently connected with your coworkers through messaging or communication apps. If you are a team supervisor, constantly check in with your team to see how they are doing, including asking for regular progress updates and asking how they are doing mentally and physically. A small gesture of goodwill can go

a long way in driving employee motivation during trying times.

A key method of staying connected during remote work is hosting regular video meetings or group audio calls. This will help maintain a sense of connection and collaboration; similar to how it would be in a physical workplace. If you're in charge of workplace communications, be clear and precise, and give specific instructions, so that no misunderstandings may occur among coworkers.

Maintain boundaries

Whether you are working from home or somewhere else, committing to remote work means that as an employee, you are still respecting your company's time and your contribution to the workplace. As such, clearly communicate your working hours to your household members, and be sure to state your exact available hours to your colleagues so they know when they can reach you. When working at home, avoid personal commitments unless emergencies occur. Similarly, avoid work-related communications outside your designated working hours. Doing so will help you maintain the crucial work-life balance many struggle to uphold when working remotely.

Transitioning to remote work during a crisis can be challenging, but with the right strategies and mindset, it can also be an opportunity for growth and increased flexibility. Remember, it's a continuous process of adaptation and learning, and with time, you will find what works best for you.

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Eligibility:

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Marico Bangladesh Ltd.

Senior Brand Manager



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Eligibility:

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Minimum experience: 4 years

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Save the Children

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Eligibility:

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Minimum experience: 6 years

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PELÉ

How to approach the tricky topic of workplace mental health

Mental health is increasingly being recognised as a critical aspect of overall well-being, especially in the workplace where many of us spend a significant portion of our lives. During the ongoing national crisis, many employees being forced to resume work either at home or at the office will have severe mental hurdles to overcome to get back to the flow of things.

As an employee, understanding and implementing innovative approaches to mental health can not only enhance your personal well-being but also contribute to a healthier, more productive work environment. Here are some practical guidelines to help you navigate this important aspect of your professional life, especially during times of uncertainty.

Embrace flexible work arrangements

Ask your supervisor or employer if flexible work arrangements can be made, such as shifting to remote work, integrating flexible work hours, or compressing workweeks to reduce workload. Such arrangements will allow both employers and employees to have better control of their work-life balance.

If you're looking for flexible work arrangements, communicate with your higher-ups about your specific needs and preferences. Be specific, and mention the general interest in mind over looking selfish or conceited. If you're working remotely, create a structured routine that you can follow to divide your work and tackle tasks at your own pace. If your employer asks why you need more flexible work arrangements, tell them that these will increase your job satisfaction and reduce burnout, which in turn will produce higher quality and quantity of work.

Promote a healthy work culture

Many modern workplaces offer mental health programs and training sessions which can provide insights into managing stress and building resilience.



IMAGE: UNSPLASH

Be sure to attend any workshops or webinars on mental health topics, and especially engage in company-sponsored wellness programs. Have your close colleagues join these sessions with you; in turn, you will be contributing to a more positive work environment.

Many companies also offer Employee Assistance

Programs (EAPs) that provide confidential counselling and support for a range of issues, including mental health. Familiarise yourself with the EAP services available through your employer, if any. Don't hesitate to use these resources when needed and provide feedback to your employer on how these programs can be improved.

Promoting a healthy work culture is an obvious yet often overlooked aspect of maintaining mental health during work. Whenever you can, try to create an open conversation about peer support and inclusion; and if needed, request your supervisor or employer to do the same. If you know a colleague who is particularly struggling, do not hesitate to offer a lending hand. If you take the first step in encouraging a culture of empathy and understanding, others will slowly follow your step.

Prioritise self-care

At the end of the day, nothing you do may help improve your mental health during work. That is when you should set clear boundaries between your work and your personal life. Your jobs may come and go, but you have just one life to live. As such, prioritise your self-care, and take a break from work if absolutely needed. At a time when uncertainty abounds, you can't be shamed for asking for some time off.

Whether you take a break or continue working, you should regularly communicate with your supervisor or employer about your mental health needs. If you feel your workplace isn't offering its employees enough support, advocate for mental health initiatives and policies that benefit the entire workforce. You can do this via employee surveys or feedback sessions.

Maintaining mental health in the workplace is always a tricky task. Doing so becomes even more difficult during a national or global crisis. However, as long as you are embracing flexibility and taking breaks at your own pace, you are already taking your first steps in embracing an improved outlook. Remember, taking care of your mental health is not only beneficial for you but also contributes to a more productive and positive workplace for everyone.

'World's fastest anime fan'

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese media hailed Olympic 100m gold medallist Noah Lyles as the world's fastest anime fan after the American celebrated his win by miming an attack from "Dragon Ball".

Wrapped in a US flag after the race, an over-the-moon Lyles thrust his hands forward, fingers splayed, imitating the "kamehameha" attack used to unleash a powerful burst of energy in the Japanese manga and anime franchise.

The 27-year-old Lyles has made no secret of his love for Japanese pop culture, including comics and cartoons such as the global 1990s megahit "Dragon Ball".

At the Olympic trials in June, he delighted fellow anime enthusiasts by whipping out his "Yu-Gi-Oh!" cards and showing them off to the cameras.

"Yu-Gi-Oh!" ran in the Japanese weekly comic magazine Shonen Jump between 1996 and 2004 and gave rise to a media franchise including a trading card game.

"Mankind's fastest otaku", blared a headline in Japan's Daily Sports using the term for hardcore superfans in a new nickname.



World champion Noah Lyles celebrates after clinching the victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday. Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five-thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson. Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish and it made the 27-year-old the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games. PHOTO: REUTERS

USA women bag swim medley gold with world record

REUTERS, Paris

The United States smashed their own world record in the women's 4x100 medley on Sunday to close the Paris Olympics swimming meet with one last gold that lifted them clear of Australia at the top of the medals table.

Australia, who finished with seven swimming golds to the United States' eight, took the silver at the La Defense Arena and China the bronze.

The U.S. quartet of Regan Smith, Lilly King, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske touched out with a final time of three minutes 49.63 seconds at the La Defense Arena to avenge their defeat to Australia by 0.13 in Tokyo three years ago.

"We've brought it (the record) down a lot, so it's really cool to continue to be a part of that relay and watching it faster and faster and faster, but pretty much the same people," said King.

The U.S. team led all the way, with Smith leading off and King increasing the advantage with her breaststroke leg before Walsh finished her stint 1.33 seconds inside the record and handed over to Huske.

The gold was a third of the Games for Huske, second each for Smith and Walsh and first since 2016 for King who was a double champion in Rio de Janeiro.

TODAY'S GOLD RUSH

EQUINE
Jumping Individual
2:00 pm

SAILING
Women's Dinghy Medal Race
6:43 pm

DIVING
Women's 10m Platform
7:00 pm

SKATEBOARDING
Women's Park
9:30 pm

WRESTLING
Men's Greco-Roman 60 kg
11:55 pm

Men's Greco-Roman 130 kg
12:30 am (Wednesday)

Women's Freestyle 68 kg
1:15 am (Wednesday)

CYCLING (TRACK)
Men's Team Sprint
12:10 am (Wednesday)

ATHLETICS
Women's Hammer Throw
11:57 pm

Men's Long Jump
12:15 am (Wednesday)

Men's 1500m
12:50 am (Wednesday)

Women's Steeplechase 3000m
1:14 am (Wednesday)

Women's 200m
1:40 am (Wednesday)

BOXING
Women's 60 kg
3:06 am (Wednesday)

'Wolf' Lyles claims 100m glory in thriller

AFP, Paris

World champion Noah Lyles roared to victory in 9.79sec to claim gold in a dramatic men's Olympic 100m final in Paris on Sunday.

Lyles won in the closest Olympic 100m finish in modern history as just five thousandths of a second separated him from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson.

Both were given the rounded up time of 9.79sec but the American's name carried the all-important (.784) to Thompson's (.789).

It made Lyles the first American, male or female, to win the event since Justin Gatlin took gold in the 2004 Athens Games.

"It's the one I wanted... to prove that I'm the man amongst all of them. I'm the wolf amongst wolves," said Lyles, whose winning time was a personal best.

Lyles' victory was only confirmed after a photo-finish.

The American said of the wait for the final results: "And I was fully prepared to see his [Thompson] name pop up and to see my name pop up, I'm like goodness gracious. I'm incredible."

Lyles added: "It's been a rollercoaster, ups and downs. I'm usually a guy who likes to come out blazing in all my rounds, especially in the 200m. But the 100m, it's my first time here on the Olympic stage."

The relatively unknown Thompson, the fastest man this year with a best of 9.77sec, said he hadn't been "fresh enough" over the final 30 metres.

"I couldn't really see Lyles, I wasn't sure," 23-year-old Thompson said of the photo-



finish. "It was that close.

Lyles' US teammate Fred Kerley took bronze in 9.81sec, just one-hundredth ahead of South African Akani Simbine, who timed 9.82sec.

"Whoever came off the best is the best. It's my second time around and I'm going off with a medal," Kerley said.

In an astonishing race, defending champion Marcell Jacobs of Italy was fifth in 9.85sec, Botswana's Letsile Tebogo sixth in 9.86sec, American Kenny Bednarek seventh in 9.88sec and Jamaican Oblique Seville eighth in 9.91sec.

Starting in lane seven, outside Seville and inside Tebogo, Lyles got off to an average start but was soon into his stride pattern.

Head tucked down through to the

40-metre mark, the American opened up, but the whole field pushed him all the way.

As Lyles dipped for the line with Thompson charging alongside him, the crowd erupted and a photo-finish was called before Lyles was confirmed as gold medallist.

There was an electric pre-race atmosphere in a 69,000-capacity Stade de France, a light show and booming music keeping the crowd entertained as the sprinters adjusted their starting blocks.

The lights then went off and the sprinters leaving the track to remake their entrance like prize fighters in a colosseum, with each sprinter individually introduced behind an image of their name above their flag.

Thompson roared, hands clenched in fists as his head rolled back. Kerley patted his heart.

Lyles bounded out like a kangaroo, bouncing 20 metres down the track. Jacobs was the definition of cool, raising both arms and calmly walking to his blocks.

Then came the moment where the sprinters set, at the starter's beck and call. The shot was fired and the field moved as if one up the purple track to the dramatic denouement.

The photo-finish officials examined the evidence and Lyles walked away with gold to bury the demons of the Tokyo Olympics three years ago where he harvested a mere 200m bronze.

Asked whether he was confident of doubling up in the 200m, an event in which he is a three-time world champion, Lyles said "That's my better event and now that I've got a new PR in the 100, I'm ready to take it to the 200."



Refugee team's Ngamba makes history

REUTERS, Paris

Cindy Ngamba became the first representative of the refugee team to win a medal at the Olympics after making it to the boxing semi-finals of the Paris Games on Sunday, guaranteeing her at least a bronze although she is gunning for more.

Ngamba beat France's Davina Michel by a unanimous decision in front of a crowd who were heavily behind their countrywoman at the North Paris Arena to progress to the last four of the women's middleweight category.

The 25-year-old who was born in Cameroon has lived in England for 15 years but is still awaiting citizenship, and is competing for the refugee Olympic team, which was established at the Rio Games in 2016.

"It means the world to me, to be the first ever refugee to win a medal. I'm just a human, just like any other refugee, athlete and refugee all around the world. But I hope I can change the medal on my next fight," Ngamba said.

Graham Thorpe: A shining light for England

AFP, London

It is a measure of Graham Thorpe's class that despite emerging during one of English cricket's most difficult periods, he still managed to win exactly 100 Test caps.

Left-handed batsmen are often described as either "stylish" or "gritty" yet Thorpe, whose death aged 55 was announced on Monday, somehow managed to be both in an often struggling England team.

He enjoyed a spectacular start to his Test career with an Ashes hundred on debut in 1993 and retired 12 years later having won 99 more caps - no mean feat in an era of inconsistent England selection.

England went through the whole of the 1990s without winning a single Ashes series yet Thorpe averaged more against Australia than he did in his career overall (45.74 against 44.66).

But the collapse of his first marriage, which took place in the full glare of media publicity, led to a bout of depression and separation from his children, with Thorpe taking an indefinite break from cricket in 2002.

As he movingly wrote in his autobiography, Rising from the



Ashes: "There came a time when I would have given back all my Test runs and Test caps just to be happy again."

Thorpe, who enjoyed a happy second marriage, did manage a successful return to the Test arena.

Born on August 1, 1969 in the market town of Farnham, Surrey, Thorpe was both a promising schoolboy cricketer and footballer.

But it was cricket that claimed him and his first-class debut against Leicestershire saw the best England left-handed batsman of his time dismiss the one of the previous generation when Thorpe took the

wicket of David Gower with his rarely-used medium-pace bowling.

His Test debut in the 1993 Ashes against Australia at Trent Bridge, saw Thorpe score a second-innings 114 as he became England's first debutant century-maker since Frank Hayes 20 years earlier.

One criticism levelled at Thorpe was that a man who got past fifty on 55 occasions in Test cricket, should have ended up with more than 16 hundreds.

But many of those centuries were memorable, be it his first overseas hundred for England on the notoriously quick WACA pitch in Perth against a formidable Australia attack in 1995 or an unbeaten 119 when facing West Indies greats Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh in Barbados in 2004.

Thorpe returned to England duty for the final Test of the following home season against South Africa, where his 124 at the Oval helped England to an unlikely series draw with the Proteas.


Thorpe's last Test was against Bangladesh two years later, with Kevin Pietersen effectively taking his place for England's celebrated 2005 Ashes triumph.




Overwhelmed with joy, An Seyoung of South Korea collapses in celebration after beating Bing Jiao He of China 21-13 in the women's badminton singles gold medal match at the Paris Olympics yesterday. "I dreamed, I spoke about the dream, I carried on the dream, and it was the moment that I achieved the dream. Now I have nothing to be scared of," An told media after win. PHOTO: REUTERS





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Anti-government protesters display Bangladesh's national flag as they storm the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka yesterday. *Top right*, the motorcade of General Waker-Uz-Zaman, chief of the army, entering the Bangabhaban as the crowd celebrating the exit of Sheikh Hasina makes way for it. *Bottom right*, people climb onto an APC and stand alongside army personnel as they celebrate in front of the PMO. PHOTO: AFP, PALASH KHAN

'Will come up with outline of interim govt in 24 hours'
Say organisers of quota protest movement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Key organisers of the anti-discrimination student movement last night said the outline of the interim national government will be formulated within the next 24 hours.

Addressing a press conference in the capital's Tejgaon, they said the power must be handed over to the interim government proposed by the students and citizens who protested.

"I'm dedicating this victory to the martyred students who were killed during the movement," said Nahid Islam, a key organiser.

He said they will hold discussions about the outline with all the coordination committees, the civil society, and political and state stakeholders, and will later inform who else they will meet in this regard.

"But within the next 24 hours, a complete outline of the interim government will be provided."

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66 dead as city convulsed with violence

More than a thousand hurt in clashes between agitators and law enforcers

STAR REPORT

Clashes between mobs and law enforcers at different parts of the capital left at least 66 people dead and over a thousand wounded yesterday.

In the morning, clashes began in some areas of the capital when law enforcers opened fire on protesters who were trying to take part in the march to Dhaka, announced the day before, defying the curfew.

Around afternoon, when hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets celebrating Sheikh Hasina's resignation, angry mobs attacked several police stations and key structures.

Police opened fire which caused most of the deaths. Columns of thick smoke covered parts of the Dhaka sky as the mobs set fire to three Awami League offices, the police headquarters, several police stations, the residence of Dhaka superintendent of police, three TV stations and the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32.

The inspector general of police and several other top police officials were air lifted from the police headquarters while other officials managed to flee, said an official who escaped the attack unscathed.

"Many vehicles parked on the PHQ premise were burning when I managed to flee," said the officer. Among the 66 dead, 41 were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while 21 to a hospital in Uttara. Among the bodies taken to DMCH, 21 came from the Jatrabari area. At least four bodies were lying in front of Jatrabari Police Station.

DMCH
All the bodies that turned up at the DMCH had bullet

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Protesters storm Gono Bhaban, PMO, parliament building

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Bhaban never hosted so many people in its lifetime before yesterday. Minutes after Sheikh Hasina fled the country, a never-ending stream of people defied the curfew and marched towards the official residence of the

prime minister. Inside, the mood was of celebrations. Some were dancing, some clapping, some singing, some hugging, and some chanting slogans against Hasina. Some called her a killer; others called her an autocrat who has blood in her hand. Some were seen offering prayers.

Within minutes, some of the



People stormed Gono Bhaban yesterday and took anything and everything they could get hold of, *right*, a group of young boys taking a bath in a pool there. PHOTO: STAR

prime minister. It seemed every city street and alley led to Gono Bhaban, the Bangla for house of the people, as people of all ages descended upon it from almost every part of capital Dhaka.

The main entrance was left ajar, and for hours since about 2:30pm tens and thousands of men, women, and children occupied the premises. Hundreds were seen climbing the thick brick walls - which is otherwise heavily guarded and inaccessible to members of the public - to enter the red brick palace.

crowd scaled the roof and hoisted the national flag, while others entered the main residential building and started vandalising and smashing things.

Some photos taken by The Daily Star and social media videos show many went inside some of the bedrooms and lay on them, as they took selfies.

The scene resembled the occupying of Sri Lankan presidential palace in July 2022.

"So many lives have been lost

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76 killed in attacks, clashes outside capital

STAR REPORT

At least 76 people were killed and around 500 others injured in attacks and clashes outside the capital city yesterday.

The clashes took place between law enforcers, Awami League men and protesters as angry mobs attacked AL leaders, their men, properties, homes and offices soon after the news of Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure spread.

In Savar and Dhamrai upazilas, at least 20 people were killed and around 300 were wounded in separate clashes between police, Awami League men and demonstrators.

Eight bodies were kept in Enam Medical College in Savar, six in Gonoshasthaya Hospital, three Nari O Shishu Hospital and two in Habib Clinic in Ashulia.

The families of the deceased took the other bodies.

In Jashore, at least 13 people were burned to death and 19 others were injured after unidentified arsonists set

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DISTRICT	DEATHS	DISTRICT	DEATHS
Dhaka	86	Chandpur	4
Jashore	13	Chattogram	3
Kushtia	8	Khulna	3
Gazipur	6	Barishal	3
Habiganj	6	Patuakhali	1
Satkhira	4	Brahmanbaria	1
Jhenaidah	4		
TOTAL		142	

UN, EU, US call for restraint

UK for ensuring democracy; Indian cabinet body briefs Modi

STAR REPORT

The United States has commended Bangladesh Army for its restraint yesterday and urged that formation of an interim government be democratic after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled the country.

"The United States has long called for respecting democratic rights in Bangladesh, and we urge that the interim government formation be democratic and inclusive. We commend the army for the restraint they have showed today [Monday]," a White House spokesperson said yesterday.

The White House and the State Department separately urged parties to refrain from violence and restore peace at the earliest, reports Reuters.

A State Department spokesperson said Washington welcomed the announcement that an interim government will be formed.

US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer also urged the establishment of a balanced interim government in Bangladesh that could set up swift democratic elections.

"PM Hasina's violent reaction to legitimate protests

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Hasina will not return to politics

Joy tells BBC

STAR REPORT

There will be no political comeback for Sheikh Hasina, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy told BBC yesterday, hours after the former Bangladesh prime minister resigned and left the country.

Joy said Hasina was "so disappointed that after all her hard work, for a minority to rise up against her".

Speaking to Newshour on the BBC World Service, Joy - who was an official adviser of the prime minister until today - said his mother was considering resigning since yesterday and had left the country for her own safety after her family insisted.

"She has turned Bangladesh around. When

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An aerial photo shows Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Dhanmondi-32 burning yesterday afternoon after Sheikh Hasina resigned and left the country. PHOTO: AFP

Fakhrul urges calm and restraint



UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called upon people to remain calm and exercise restraint to maintain peace and stability in the country following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government.

"On behalf of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Acting Chairman

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