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A torched AL office in Barishal city. Vandalised SP office in Sylhet. Karnaphuli Police Outpost set on fire in Chattogram. Residence of Ahmadiyya families burnt in Panchagarh. A pharmacy being vandalised in Sylhet.

PHOTO: STAR

Violence sweeps 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 Rahman Azad and Rezwana Ahmed also came under similar attacks.

News on more attacks on AL leaders' houses in different areas were surfacing till the filing of this report.

Several business outlets -- including those of Aarong, Yellow, Maha, Rajbari Restaurant, Uthan Restaurant, Unique Pharmacy -- were also vandalised and looted.

In Natore, a mob set fire to Natore-2 lawmaker Shafiqul Islam Shimul's house

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Tarique Rahman urges calm, calls for polls at the soonest

STAR REPORT

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

In the statement, 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.

"Our beloved 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

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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 the general populace 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, one of the framers of the constitution, also congratulated the proposal of Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz Zaman on formation of an interim government.

He demanded unconditional release of all detainees during the countrywide mass arrests and that those involved in the killing during the anti-quota protests be brought to book.

MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

A 16-year-old shot dead in Dhaka. An HSC examinee dies from bullet wound at DMCH. A driver fatally shot in Dhanmondi. Another student died at 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, was shot on the road.

Obaidul quickly rushed to the hospital to save his son, but it was too late. The on-duty doctor declared Amin dead on the spot.

"When the doctor said that my son had died, it seemed like the sky fell on my head. He was my only child. For whom shall I live now?" he said.

According to the family, Amin, who worked at an electrical switch manufacturing factory, stepped outside to have breakfast when he got shot.

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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 and his cousin were with other protesters during a demonstration near Mirpur-10 intersection when police and Chhatra League activists fired at them. A bullet pierced through Shahriar's right eye," said Matin.

"He was rushed to a nearby hospital and later referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he remained on life support until doctors declared him dead on July 20," he added.

Shahriar, who lived with his parents and sister in Dhaka's Kuril area, was appearing for HSC exams from Ishwarganj Ideal

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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 support the family. He did not join any protest, yet he had to give his life. I have become helpless after losing him. Our three children are very young. How am I going to provide for them?" asked his wife Ayesha Begum.

Titu's father Abdur Rahim Howladar, 60, is a rickshaw puller, who cannot work much any more due to old age. His brother Imran Hossain also pulls a rickshaw.

"The family didn't even have the money to bring Titu's body from Dhaka. It took Tk 47,000, of which I paid Tk 27,000, and Titu's brother-in-law Hasan gave

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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.

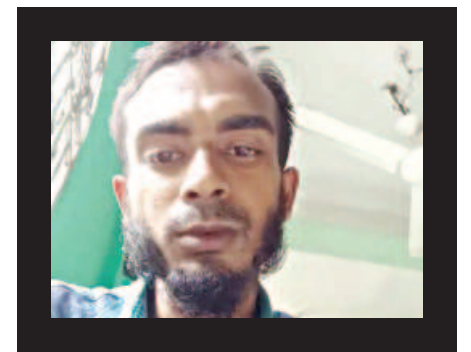
"Shafe was an activist of the quota reform protests in Chandpur since the beginning. He was supposed to return home as the institution was declared closed. However, we got informed that Shafe was admitted to DMCH with fever," said his father Rezaul Karim Pasha.

"I rushed to DMCH on July 24 and found my son severely ill. He passed away the next day."

"The hospital authority told me that Shafe was suffering from a respiratory tract infection. However, he had no respiratory complication earlier. It was surprising to learn how he got infected all of a sudden. I want to know the truth behind my son's death," he also said.

Asked if Shafe had any injury in his body, Rezaul claimed there was an injury in Shafe's chest.

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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.

Foyez hailed from Char Ababil union under Raipur upazila of Laxmipur. He left his family after his parents, Ala Uddin Bepari and Safura Begum, did not approve of his marriage to Nahar.

"Foyez was a very hard-working, honest and cheerful person. On the afternoon of July 21, Foyez and his two coworkers were returning home after work through a lane adjacent to Chandni Hotel, when law enforcers were firing at agitating protesters. Two bullets hit Foyez in his head and neck, leaving him critically

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