



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Students paint over vandalised walls, GIVE DU NEW LIFE

In the absence of the city's usual traffic management, a group of students have taken matters into their own hands. From directing vehicles to repainting the urban landscape, the young students are transforming Dhaka's streets in unexpected ways.

Different student-led groups have taken the initiative to revitalise the walls of Dhaka University and adjacent areas.

The walls have now come alive with powerful messages, rebel poetry, and artistic expression. While the quality of the graffiti varies, the shared purpose is clear - to inspire change and elevate the spirit of the community.

Some murals display technical mastery, their striking visuals demanding attention. Others convey raw emotion through simple strokes. One graffiti painted in the Dhaka University area is

particularly striking, as it conveys the message of a secular Bangladesh. The graffiti features quote from Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani. Another graffiti has been dedicated to the martyr Abu Sayed, who was brutally killed by police during the quota reform protests.

Together, these student-led initiatives have transformed the cityscape, injecting it with renewed energy and purpose.



NEWS

Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee no more

FROM PAGE 7

Known for his simple lifestyle, Bhattacharjee breathed his last at the two-bedroom flat at Palm Avenue from where he once ran the state. His organs will be donated for medical research as per his wishes.

His body will be kept in the CPM headquarters for his followers to pay respects and the last journey will take place tomorrow.

An alumnus of Presidency College, Kolkata, Bhattacharjee was a school teacher before he joined politics full-time. After serving as an MLA and a state minister, he was elevated to deputy CM before Basu stepped down in 2000. As chief minister, he led the CPM to Assembly poll victories in 2001 and 2006.

During Bhattacharjee's tenure, the Left Front government adopted a relatively open policy towards business as compared to the Jyoti Basu regime. Ironically, this policy and land acquisitions related to industrialisation paved the way for the Left's stunning defeat in the 2011 election.

Trinamool Congress, which won

just 30 seats in the 2006 elections, led the movement against the Tata Motors plant in Singur. Eventually, in 2008, Ratan Tata decided to shift the project to Gujarat and cited the movement by Mamata Banerjee as the reason. This was a big setback to Bhattacharjee's government. Equally damaging was the violence in Nandigram where police action against a group protesting against land acquisition for a chemical hub project led to 14 deaths.

Banerjee's Trinamool Congress reaped the political dividends of the anti-incumbency of the Left Front rule and the negative perception of the state government's land acquisition policies, winning 184 seats in the 2011 election. The Left's defeat in the 2011 polls started a decline it is yet to recover from. Over the next decade, the BJP overtook it as the main opposition and the Left now is reduced to a minor force in the state it once ruled unchallenged for decades.

President Droupadi Murmu wrote on X, "Saddened to learn that former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee

is no more. The veteran leader personified dignity and was an epitome of principled politics. He will be long remembered for dedication to the welfare of the people of West Bengal. My heartfelt condolences to his family and followers."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was saddened by the news. "He was a political stalwart who served the state with commitment. My heartfelt condolences to his family and supporters. Om Shanti," the PM tweeted.

In her condolence message, Mamata Banerjee said she had a decades-long association with the veteran Left leader. "I am very upset. My condolences to Meera di, Suchetan and to all supporters of CPM. We have already taken a decision that we shall give him full respect and ceremonial honour during his last journey and rites," she said.

Leader of the Opposition, BJP's Suwendu Adhikari, said he is "deeply saddened" by the news and expressed his condolences to Bhattacharjee's family and admirers.

democracy by ensuring voting rights," he said.

It is not possible to ensure a free and fair election unless reforms are made to the structure of the state as well as to the Election Commission, he observed.

Speaking to reporters, Asif said they are ready to take on the challenge to serve as the youngest advisers to an interim government.

"All the state institutions were made dysfunctional under the fascist Awami League government. We aim to eliminate fascism by reforming these institutions."

Though the major political parties could not unseat the autocratic government in the last 17 years, the students managed to do so in just four days after announcing their one-point demand, he said.

"We will prove that the members of the younger generation can also serve the country with passion and patriotism," Asif said.

Stern action to be taken to end anarchy

FROM PAGE 16

IGP Mainul Islam on Wednesday evening instructed all police personnel to return to their respective police lines, offices, and barracks within 24 hours to ensure law and order.

Yesterday morning, the Police Headquarters said people from all walks of life, leaders of political parties, and students were extending all-out support to ensure the safe return of police members to their work.

Witnesses said a small number of police personnel were seen going to Rajarbagh Police Lines in plain clothes. They were seen signing on the attendance book and chatting.

However, they were not going to their posts, like in police stations, out of security concerns.

While visiting police stations and other police establishments in Dhaka, other metropolitan cities, and districts, it was found that most stations hardly had any police personnel in them.

There were almost no police activities as the police personnel either did not join work or had left the station out of security concerns.

A few policemen reported to police lines and offices of different police units in Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet, Rangpur, six districts under Rangpur range, Bogura, Noakhali, Shariatpur, Gazipur, Kusthia, Jhenedah, Patuakhali, Noakhali, Jamalpur and

Natore, report our correspondents.

Students and Ansar members were seen guarding the capital's Mirpur and Pallabi police stations, which were attacked by mobs. Only eight Ansar members were seen guarding Kafrul and Bhashantek police stations.

Many policemen are scared of being at the receiving end of public wrath and further violence since the police had opened fire on protesters and people at the fag end of Sheikh Hasina's rule.

More than 400 people, including police personnel, were killed in violence centring protests by students against discrimination.

Sources said many police personnel loyal to the outgoing Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Habibur Rahman were yet to join work. Many of them were in hiding, they claimed.

A superintendent of police said some top police officials ordered the firing on people and that they were still conspiring to prevent police personnel from returning to work.

"They have taken refuge in secure locations but are spreading propaganda to instigate police personnel. These culpable officers should be brought to justice," the SP told The Daily Star.

A constable, preferring anonymity, said, "We are in a dilemma over joining

work and risking our lives."

Another official said, "We do not want to be used for political purposes. We want reforms to the police force and a change of uniform before we join."

Police personnel of different ranks met the IGP and made various proposals yesterday. The IGP assured them of taking steps in the shortest possible time.

Later, an eight-member committee, led by Assistant Inspector General Nazmul Islam, was formed for making recommendations on compensations for the families of deceased policemen, treatment of the injured, and implementations of other proposals.

The committee is composed of an SP of police hospital, an additional SP, an assistant commissioner, an inspector, a sergeant, a sub-inspector, and a constable.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Retired Police Officers Welfare Association yesterday said, "Some unprofessional and biased policemen on behalf of the dictatorial government have tortured, oppressed and killed innocent students." It demanded that those be brought to book.

The association also appealed to the people to create a safe working environment for the police force.

It demanded reforms to the force and urged policemen to return to work.

Nahid, Asif make history

FROM PAGE 16

the DB office on July 30 protesting their detention and the brutal crackdown on students nationwide.

The student movement soon resonated with the ordinary people and the protest ended the Awami League's rule.

Nahid is a master's student of sociology at Dhaka University. He is also the member secretary of Ganotantrik Chhatra Shakti, a group formed by breakaway members of Chhatra Odhikar Parishad, led by Nurul Haque Nur, a former vice president of Ducsu.

Asif, another coordinator of the quota reform movement, is a master's student of linguistics at the same university.

A friend of Nahid, Asif is the convener of Ganotantrik Chhatra Shakti.

After taking oath as advisers yesterday, both Nahid and Asif said they will now fight for the

people's voting rights and work for restoring democracy and eliminate discrimination and injustice from the society.

"People relied on the young people and took to the streets. The young people shed blood and the countrymen also did so. If the people think that the young citizens should take the top positions of the state, the young people would be ready to do so," he said replying to a query.

Nahid said the interim government has been formed with representatives from the young and experienced people from all opinions.

"The participants of anti-discriminatory student movement will not only work in the government but will also remain on the streets. Together, we will lead the country to prosperity."

"The people of Bangladesh have been deprived of voting rights for a long time. The main objective of the interim government is restoring

Modi offers best wishes to Yunus

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interim government.

"India remains committed to working with Bangladesh to fulfill the shared aspirations of both our peoples for peace, security, and development."

Sheikh Hasina resigned on August 5 and went to India following an uprising.

During Hasina's 15 year rule, Bangladesh and India deepened relationship, especially in the areas of connectivity. Bangladesh supported India in ensuring security in India's northeast.

In the wake of Hasina's resignation, India sealed its borders with Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, our New Delhi correspondent reported that hours before members of the interim government took oath, India said it was too early to evaluate the situation in Bangladesh and the "interests and well-being" of the people of Bangladesh is New Delhi's primary concern.

At a weekly media briefing in New Delhi, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for Indian Ministry of External Affairs, was repeatedly asked what stand India would take on the interim administration in Bangladesh.

He said, "As far as we are concerned, the expectations and the interests of the people of Bangladesh are on top of the mind of the government and the people of India."

Earlier in the day, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy spoke to Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and discussed the developments in Bangladesh and West Asia.

"Received a call from UK Foreign Secretary @DavidLammy today [Thursday]. Discussed the situation in Bangladesh and West Asia," Jaishankar said in a post on his official X.

Asked at the media briefing if the issue of Hasina's possible asylum in the UK figured during the conversation, Jaiswal said, "I don't have any information on that."

Responding to a query about Hasina's plan and whether she would continue to stay in India or seek asylum in any other country, he said, "We don't have any update on that. It is for her [Hasina] to take forward her plan."

On attacks against the minorities, their properties, and temples in Bangladesh, Jaiswal said India has noted how individuals and groups under different banners have come out to protect the minorities and their set-ups.

"It is the responsibility of every government to ensure proper law and order and take care of its people. The restoration of law and order as early as possible is in the interests of both the people of Bangladesh and the region at large."

The Indian visa centres in Bangladesh will open once normalcy returns, he said.

Jaiswal said India is in talks with Bangladesh authorities about the safety and security of its high commission and assistant high commissions so that they can discharge their work.