

## Two suspected robbers beaten to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two people, including a teenage boy, were beaten to death by a mob while they reportedly attempted to rob a battery-run autorickshaw in Dinajpur Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The incident took place at Nawshan Dighi (Ramsagar) village under the upazila's Auliapur union shortly after Saturday midnight.

The deceased were identified as Shuvo Meraz, 20, son of Sabbir Hossain of the town's Neemnagar Balubari area and Md Tareq, 17, son of late Md Jewel block-4 of the Newtown area.

Farid Hossain, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station, quoting locals, said, "Shuvo and Tareq stopped an autorickshaw at Ramsagar around midnight on Saturday and tried to rob the vehicle at knifepoint. At one point, they stabbed the driver and tried to get away with the vehicle."

Later, locals caught and beat them, leaving both injured critically, the OC said.

They were brought to Dinajpur M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared them dead on arrival around 3:20am, said Md Mortuza Rahman, a physician at the hospital.



Several thousand Hindus join a rally at Khulna city's Shibbari intersection yesterday afternoon, protesting the attacks on their homes, businesses, and temples since the fall of the Awami League government. Bangladesh Sachetan Sanatan Student Society organised the event.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Video clip of Yunus' motorcade stuck in traffic goes viral

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The motorcade of Prof Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government, was spotted in the capital stuck in traffic.

Usually, the motorcade of the head of the government gets the full VIP treatment – a clear path to his destination without any traffic on the street, not even pedestrians on pavements or people on footbridges.

A video taken by a commuter of the stuck motorcade has gone viral on social media.

It was not immediately clear when the video was taken.

The footage shows the motorcade stuck in front of the Jibon Bima Tower in Motijheel.

The car's licence plate read, "Prime Minister".

His car was flanked by Special Security Force personnel who got out of their vehicles and encircled the car.

As people attempted to get a closer look, an SSF officer with a megaphone told people not to approach the vehicle that had tinted windows.

Previously, the prime minister and the president would opt for seamless journeys by completely blocking and emptying the road they would be travelling on without prior notice.

For the duration of the VIP movement, pedestrians would not be allowed on the pavements or on the footbridges. Even street hawkers had to close their shops and leave.

## All contractual

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"Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus will immediately sit with the representative bodies and other concerned groups to find ways to resolve such heinous attacks," said another adviser.

The advisory council of the interim government also decided that a list of all injured protesters would be prepared at the earliest and their treatment would be funded by the government.

The health ministry will instruct all hospitals accordingly. The government will also support the families of the deceased protesters.

More than 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the protests on quota reforms for government jobs. Several thousands were also injured.

The ministry of foreign affairs will immediately start consultation for the release of the 57 Bangladeshis arrested and sentenced by the UAE authority for protesting in support of the Bangladeshi students and people.

"If needed, the chief adviser himself will talk to the concerned government," said an adviser.

The interim government has also accepted the resignation of Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder and Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Shibli Rubayat-Ul Islam.

The governor of Bangladesh Bank will be appointed soon, while a three-member search committee has been formed to recommend appointments for the vacant posts of deputy governors.

The advisory council decided that the supply of all essentials shall be ensured.

Operations of metro rail, suspended since July 18, will resume from Saturday. The train, however, will not stop at the damaged stations of Kazipara and Mirpur until repair works are complete.

## BBC, dismislab

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Dismislab said that an X account called Daily Latest Updates first shared that video along with the hashtags "#AllEyesOnBangladeshiHindus" and "#SaveBangladeshiHindus". The account is run from India, said dismislab.

They found that the video was even run on an Indian channel called RepublicTV.

Similarly, Factwatch, the fact-checking wing of University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, found that an old video of a shop on fire was being shared as evidence of arson attack on Hindu establishments.

"The post says that the video shows that Hindu shops are being set on fire in Lakshmipur's Maju Chowdhury's Haat. Whereas this is an old video from July 11, 2024, of when the market caught on fire," said Factwatch.

Dismislab debunked the same video and found that it was primarily posted by an Indian X account, along with the hashtag "#AllEyesOnBangladeshiHindus".

The video was also carried by Sudarshan News, an Indian news channel.

Dismislab also found that a fake photo is being shared as evidence of a Hindu woman getting raped in Bangladesh. The photo stems from an incident of sexual assault and trafficking in Bangalore in India from 2021.

However, the photo is primarily being carried by an X account from India.

Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha-Christian Oikya Parishad and Puja Udjan Parishad recorded 205 incidents of violence against minorities in 52 districts.

## Cops call off strike, set to join work today

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will face punishment.

Over 400 people, including 42 policemen, were killed and many injured during the student mass movement that eventually forced Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee.

Sakhawat said they had decided to take action against those involved in the Rangpur shooting and killing of Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed.

A probe has begun and the officer-in-charge who filed the FIR and "framed a 12-year-old boy" has been suspended.

Asked about many policemen accusing their commander of ordering the shooting of protesters, the adviser said, "I cannot respond immediately. But those in command also have their higher command. What did the man sitting here [at the ministry] do? I will blame the man sitting here, before blaming others."

Replying to a query, the adviser said they would discuss the probe in

this regard at the cabinet. "I am not a dictator. I will make a decision now."

Coordinators for the protesting policemen Inspector Zahidul Islam and Constable Shoaib Ahmed announced the withdrawal of the police strike after meeting Sakhawat.

They were assured that most of their demands would be met.

Formation of a police commission and a change in uniform were two of the 11 demands made by the policemen.

Earlier in the day, Sakhawat said all police personnel have to report to their stations by this Thursday or else they would be considered "unwilling to be in the force any more".

Talking to reporters at his secretariat office, Sakhawat said, "Police's morale is very low now."

As of yesterday, 599 out of 639 police stations in the country resumed partial operations with assistance from the armed forces and Ansar members.

Most of the stations were not fully

staffed. General diaries were being filed, and some office tasks were being carried out.

Police were yet to start patrolling as of last night.

Sakhawat yesterday also visited the Central Police Hospital in Dhaka and enquired about the health of the injured police personnel.

Talking to reporters there, Sakhawat said, "Police have been given lethal weapons. I was surprised to see 7.62 [7.62mm rifles] in the police's hand... Police should not be given these weapons."

"I am saying clearly, whether politicians like it or not, it will be difficult to do politics now. You can't use police like killers and henchmen any more."

"Our society cannot function without police. I am receiving reports of robberies every day," he said, adding that what the army is now doing is not their job. But they are still doing it. They were even attacked in Gopalganj.

## Metro rail service to resume

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Operations of the metro rail and passengers' trains had been suspended since July 18.

METRO

MAN Siddique, the managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd, yesterday said they have begun preparing to resume operations.

They were expecting to start trial runs within a day or two, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Asked about the two vandalised stations, he said the committee formed to assess the damage and all other technical issues was yet to submit a report.

"We are hoping the committee will submit the report soon, and we will move forward on the basis of the report."

Attackers vandalised the two stations on July 19 and authorities at that time said it would take at least one year to make the stations operational.

Over three lakh commuters used to travel on the metro rail daily.

RAIL SERVICES

BR will resume railway operations from today, after more than three weeks.

The operations will restart with freight trains while mail, express, local, and commuter trains will start services from Tuesday and intercity trains from Thursday.

Tickets for intercity trains will be available online from 5:00pm today.

However, operation of Parabat Express and Jamalpur Express trains will remain suspended, Nahid Hasan Khan, director (public relations) of BR, said in a press release yesterday.

Operations of passenger trains were suspended on July 18 amid the violence. Some freight trains continued to run for one or two days after July 18.

In another development, the authorities of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway formally resumed its

operation from 3:00pm yesterday, said an official.

However, entry ramps at Banani and Mohakhali and an exit ramp near the FDC gate (Karwan Bazar) will be closed.

"We have resumed formal operation of expressway by starting toll collection from vehicles at the airport ramp," Captain (ret'd) Hasib Hasan Khan, manager (operations and maintenance) of First Dhaka Elevated Expressway Company Ltd, which operates the expressway, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Attackers torched the Banani toll booth on July 18 and the Mohakhali toll booth the following day amid unrest centring the quota reform protest. Toll collection had been suspended since then.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5, people started using the expressway without paying tolls as the toll collection mechanism was absent.

Hasib said they closed the two entry ramps at Banani and Mohakhali as the toll booths were torched. They also closed the exit ramp near the FDC gate as one of the expressway pillars there was set on fire. "We are checking the pillar..."

The first elevated expressway was opened to traffic partially from the airport area to Farmgate in September last year, and the FDC exit was opened early this year, giving much relief to the city commuters.

On average, over 50,000 vehicles used the expressway daily.

BUS SERVICES

Long-route bus services resumed last week.

However, the number of passengers is very low, Mosharraf Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, told this correspondent yesterday.

He said they were operating 50 to 60 percent of buses in their fleet.

## Gunfire, clash at Islami Bank

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The protesters are demanding the cancellation of appointments made after 2017 without following the proper recruitment process and the reinstatement of persons illegally terminated after 2017, said Anisur Rahman, an Islami Bank official.

The protesters decided not to allow any executive who joined after 2017 to enter the bank.

Most of the officials who joined the bank after 2017 did not come to office after the resignation of Hasina, including the bank chairman, managing director, additional managing director and deputy managing directors, according to people familiar with the matter.

financial health started deteriorating after S Alam Group took control.

There is an allegation that the conglomerate took out huge amounts of money from the bank in the name of loans.

The Islami Bank recently faced a huge liquidity crisis and its current account with the central bank faced a deficit for a long time.

On the other hand, the central bank is providing liquidity facility to the lender in a special arrangement.

Mohammed Monirul Molla, managing director of the bank, could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, a group of employees of Social Islami Bank, where S Alam Group owns significant stakes, are

Since then, the group along with its associates and with the direct support of the Awami League government has embezzled thousands of crores from the bank's stakeholders and laundered the money abroad, the demonstrators said.

The employees urged the current interim government to dissolve the existing board and establish a new one composed of the bank's original owners and founding entrepreneurs, to "free the institution from the grip of money launderers".

Also yesterday, sacked IFIC officials gathered in front of the head office around 10:00am demanding their jobs back.

They also demanded exemplary



A group of Islami Bank employees, some holding cricket stumps, demonstrating in front of the bank's headquarters in Motijheel demanding the cancellation of appointments made after 2017 without following the proper recruitment process.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

But yesterday, a group of officials appointed after 2017 gathered around the head office at around 10:30am and tried to enter the office. Protesters blocked their way, which later transformed into clashes.

Six of the protesters were wounded by gunshots, they said.

Last week, Muhammad Qaisar Ali, additional managing director of Islami Bank, was forced to resign.

Once one of the most robust banks in Bangladesh, Islami Bank's

demanding the dissolution of the existing board.

The officials, all of whom were appointed before S Alam Group took over Social Islami in 2017, placed their demands from a human chain in front of the National Press Club in Dhaka.

At the programme, they alleged that S Alam Group seized control of the bank in 2017 by taking hostage the then board of directors at gunpoint.

punishment for the bank's chairman Salman F Rahman, a Sheikh Hasina loyalist, and former managing director Shah Alam Sarwar.

Meanwhile, the central bank yesterday instructed banks to refrain from undisciplined work at banks.

Such actions could cause depositors to lose their confidence, and these activities are punishable offences under the Bank Companies Act, the notice said.

## Every attack on minorities

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foreign ministry officials yesterday, he shared the priorities of the interim authorities.

He said the interim government condones all such attacks, whether for religious or political identity.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is likely to meet the leaders of the minority communities today, Touhid said.

He also requested the media to factcheck before publishing news reports.

About the India-Bangladesh relations, he said there is no doubt the two governments had a very good relationship in the past, adding that the interim government will try to ensure the relationship is not only between the governments, but also between the two peoples.

"The people are very important in this relationship. They should feel that the relationship with India is very good... We want to take it forward and seek India's support in this regard."

About the deals Sheikh Hasina signed during her recent visit to India before her ousting, Touhid said, he is yet to look at them.

The foreign adviser also said the international community has expressed its readiness to work with the interim government, which is also committed to work with all for the best interest of Bangladesh.

About the UN's willingness to deploy a fact-finding mission to probe recent killings and violence, he said they can certainly be involved in

this regard.

Today, Touhid will hold a meeting with foreign diplomats based in Dhaka and give a briefing about the country's latest situation while also seek their support. The issue of restarting visa issuance will also come up.

He also said the government will maintain the policy of anti-discrimination in all spheres of life, and especially emphasise on the welfare of the more than 10 million Bangladeshis abroad. "We want to ensure they get better services."

Chief Adviser Yunus himself will speak to the high authorities of the UAE to release over 50 Bangladeshis, who were jailed for holding rallies in solidarity with the students in Bangladesh.

Regarding former Hasina's son Sajeb Wazed Joy's claim that Hasina has not resigned, he said he has confirmation that her resignation letter was sent to the president.

## Chief justice

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The interim government was sworn in on Thursday, three days after the resignation and departure of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina amid a mass upsurge.

Suprudeep, Bidhan and Farooq e-Azam could not be sworn in that day as they were outside the capital.

According to sources, Farooq has yet to be sworn in as he is still in the United States, and the date of his arrival is not confirmed.