

## ‘False cases to be withdrawn by August 31’ BNP focused

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But it did not happen as most of the police officials could not work on this, he added.

Over 400 people, including students and police personnel, were killed in the violence centring the protests.

According to the court records, over 270 cases were lodged with 39 police stations in the city between July 16 and August 4. The complainants in most cases were police personnel.

The charges in the cases include illegal gathering, rioting, assaulting law enforcers, damaging assets, and arson.

According to the police sources, at least 10,134 people, including students, leaders and activists of BNP and Jamaat-Shibir, were arrested in 872 cases filed in the capital and 51 districts between July 18 and 30.

Asif Nazrul, also a teacher at Dhaka University, said they decided that the trial for the killings that took place between July 1 and August 5 will be held at the International Crimes

Tribunal.

He said they were trying to ensure that the investigation by the ICT is held under the supervision of the United Nations. They will sit with the UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh and seek its cooperation, he added.

Asif Nazrul said victims of enforced disappearances and their families can file cases with the ICT.

Asked whether the trial will be held at the ICT, he said, “You can go to the International Criminal Court only if you are unwilling or unable to try the cases at your own criminal court. We are not incompetent.”

The adviser said a list of the repressive laws on media has been prepared and sections the sections used for harassing journalists “will either be cancelled or amended”.

He said the murder case of journalist couple Sagar Runi will be tried.

Asif Nazrul asked officials and employees of the judiciary to submit their wealth statements within 10 working days.

during clashes with protesters.

Describing the events of the 24 hours leading up to his mother's departure from Bangladesh on August 5, Joy said neither he nor Hasina anticipated how rapidly the situation would deteriorate even a day before the situation spiralled out of control.

“She [Hasina] had no intention of leaving the country. She was going to resign, submit a resignation to the president and announce it in a public statement. I believe she was drafting the statement and preparing to record an interview. Everything was planned. In fact, she was about to start recording when the special security said, ‘Ma’am, there’s no time. We have to go now,’” according to Joy.

He said Hasina was adamant on not leaving but he convinced her to do so.

“The Special Security Force took her to a safe location inside the military air base, they had a helicopter ready for her, but she did

He said they have taken some initiatives to reform the judiciary, he added.

“The law ministry has cooperated in appointing the chief justice and the judges of the Appellate Division.

“We’re getting praise from all over the country. We are focusing on quality and integrity.

“Partisan appointments were earlier made by the Attorney General’s Office. About half the officers have already resigned.”

Asif Nazrul said they appointed a number of law officers hurriedly subjected to as much scrutiny as possible. “There may be a couple of mistakes, there will be scope to correct those.”

He said they banned the use of plastic products at courts to improve the environment.

Asked whether the special act on electricity and energy will be repealed, the law adviser said he would talk to the chief adviser. “I believe it will be revoked very soon.”

not wish to go ... that’s when my aunt [Sheikh Rehana, Hasina’s younger sister] called me. I convinced my mother that ‘no, for your safety you have to leave’. If this mob finds you, catches up with you somewhere and there’s shooting, lots of people will die. Either you’ll get blamed or, if they catch you, they will kill you. So, your best option is to leave the country. And I’m the one who convinced her to leave.”

Asked what his message to India would be, Joy said he would urge New Delhi to take a leadership role and ensure the constitution of Bangladesh is upheld.

“...especially this being on India’s doorstep... I would hope India would ensure that elections are held within the constitutional timeframe of 90 days, that the mob rule is stopped and that the Awami League is allowed to campaign and reorganise. If that is ensured, I’m still confident that we will win the election... We still remain the most popular party,” he said.

EU’s Spanier in a post on X said the bloc looks forward to supporting the interim government and the transition process with a range of instruments at its disposal.

In a statement, the British High Commission said the UK will support the interim government in its efforts to restore peace and order, ensure accountability and chart a peaceful pathway to an inclusive, prosperous and democratic future for the people of Bangladesh.

British High Commissioner Cooke said she discussed with Tuhid how the UK can support the interim government’s work towards a democratic and prosperous future, and other issues of mutual interest, including the Rohingya crisis.

Cooke praised the students and the people for their bravery in the protests for a different future for Bangladesh.

In a statement, Dan Jorgensen, the minister for development cooperation and global climate policy of Denmark, yesterday said his country wanted the interim government to focus on good governance, respect for human rights and democracy, including impartial investigations into the many tragic deaths during the protests.

their Sten guns at Bangabandhu and pressed the triggers. Burst fire from the submachine guns hit him.

The president collapsed on the stairs.

After killing Bangabandhu, the soldiers ran riot all over the residence. Bangabandhu’s family members had taken shelter inside the bathroom of the main bedroom. But they were not spared.

The soldiers knocked on the door and fired a few rounds at it. Begum Mujib opened it and begged for the lives of her family.

The killers gunned Begum Mujib, Sheikh Jamal, his wife Rosy, and Kamal’s wife Sultana. The bodies fell in a heap.

Then they took Sheikh Naser and Sheikh Russell to the ground floor and made them stand in a line. Naser pleaded to live, but the killers took him into the bathroom attached to Mohitul’s office and shot him.

Naser begged for water, but a soldier shot him again.

Then happened the cruellest thing. Trembling, Russell, Bangabandhu’s 10-year old son, waited to be taken to his mother. Clutching Mohitul he asked: “Bhaiya, will they kill me too?”

“No Bhaiya, they won’t kill you,” Mohitul had tried to console him.

One of the soldiers took Russel upstairs to the spot where his mother lay dead. Then came a burst of gunfire.

After a while, Major Farooq Rahman met Bazul Huda at the gate and asked him something.

“All are finished,” Huda replied.

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Talking to The Daily Star, BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, “We were busy over waging movements for many years. But now it is the time to do politics, and we will do whatever required to do so. Withdrawal of politically motivated cases against our party leaders and workers is at the top of our agenda as an oppressive regime filed the cases.”

He said they placed their demand in this regard before the interim government.

According to party sources, the BNP leaders will continuously create pressure on the interim government to hold elections at the soonest.

But the party will not have a confrontational stance since it has

## Beximco leaves Janata

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parliament from Dhaka-1 (Dohar-Nawabganj) from 2018 until the dissolution of the 12th parliament on August 6, took out huge volumes of loans with the help of the Janata board and central bank higher-ups bypassing banking rules and regulation, The Daily Star has learnt from several Janata officials of past and present.

And the loans have increased at a brisk pace over the last three years.

In 2015, Beximco and its concerns’ loans amounted to Tk 2,045 crore, which increased to Tk 6,400 crore in 2020. At the end of June, the figure hit Tk 25,000 crore.

Between July 2021 and July 2022, Beximco opened nine new companies; in just one month of 2022, it created eight new companies and availed loans in the name of those companies, documents show.

Salman, vice chairman of Beximco Group, used his clout in the Sheikh Hasina administration to get the central bank to grant special approval for large loans, the Janata officials said on the condition of anonymity to speak candidly on the issue.

For instance, on August 1 last year, the Bangladesh Bank gave a no-objection certificate to extend loans amounting to Tk 479 crore to Beximco although the amount violated Janata’s single borrower exposure limit.

Despite objection from the Department of Off Site Supervision, the central bank wing responsible for monitoring and regulating banks,

## AL attempt

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Islami Chhatra Shibir.

The leaders and activists of leftist organisations, including Student Union, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, had participated in the programmes of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, but they did not take part in yesterday’s rally.

However, leaders of Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir spoke at the rally.

The rally attendees also took an oath that they would never compromise with the national dignity and sovereignty and to raise their voices against the state power if it became oppressive or attempted to be so.

Attending the rally, Santosh Sharma, general secretary of Bangladesh Puja Udjapan Parishad, said, “The minorities are still being subjected to torture in our country due to a culture of impunity. We want to see a Bangladesh where no place of worship will be attacked.”

Afterwards, the students brought out a procession around 5:45pm, which ended at Dhanmondi 27. Students offered prayers for those killed in the July-August violence. The students stayed at Dhanmondi 27 until midnight, according to witnesses.

Similar rallies and processions were held in Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal and Rangpur.

## Salman and Anisul

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defend themselves, lasted only around three minutes.

Army, BGB, and additional police personnel were deployed on the court premises.

Salman and Anisul were arrested in Dhaka’s Sadarghat on Tuesday in a case filed with New Market Police Station over the killing of Shahjahan, 24, during quota reform protests on July 16.

Shahjahan was critically injured and later died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, according to the case statement.

In the police forwarding report, the investigator said the accused’s involvement in the incident was preliminary found.

Salman and Anisul were trying to flee through the waterway, police earlier said.

Coast guards detained them in Narayanganj’s Pagla area and handed them over to police, said the media wing of Bangladesh Coast Guard on Tuesday night.

## UN team to visit

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cornerstone of his administration, and the protection of every citizen is the utmost priority of the government.

Prof Yunus also sought UN cooperation to rebuild the country and uphold human rights, said Shafiqul.

decided to give the government the time required to create an atmosphere conducive to polls.

After meeting Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Monday, BNP high-ups believe that the gap between the interim government and the party was narrowing. They think they will be able to have their demands fulfilled by having a good relationship with the government.

At the meeting, withdrawal cases against party chairperson Khaleda Zia and BNP’s acting chairman Tarique Rahman and others had come up for discussion.

Party insiders said the party wants to influence the interim government to have its like-minded people at top positions in the bureaucracy, police force, and other places.

It will also try to bring back to

work those who had been sent into forced retirement by the previous government for their soft spot for the BNP. Those who are now above 60 would be posted under contracts, they said.

The BNP will also go for trust-building programmes like market monitoring, curbing food inflation, they said.

To this end, the party has already started work. It has expelled or suspended about 100 of its leaders for their involvement in violence and breach of party discipline after the fall of the AL government to send the message that there is no room for violence in the party.

Around 50 more party leaders were served showcase notice for their alleged involvement in vandalism.

Tk 5,030 crore is from the Export Development Fund, which was formed by taking funds from the country’s foreign currency reserves.

Asked about Janata’s hazardous exposure to Beximco, Md Abdul Jabbar, the bank’s managing director, said some of the loans were approved or extended from the branch level and were not placed at the board meeting.

As much as 60 percent of the loans were taken from one branch: Janata’s local office in Dilkusha, Motijheel, documents show.

“That is why a single group availed a huge amount of loans. That type of misuse has come down after my appointment as the MD. I did not allow further deterioration of the financial health of the bank,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Jabbar was appointed the MD on a three-year contract on April 13 last year.

Once one of the most reputed banks in Bangladesh, Janata’s financial health worsened thanks to a series of loan scams involving AnonTex and Crescent.

Its other large borrowers are S Alam Group, AnonTex, Crescent, Orion Group and Ratanpur Group

In 2017, Janata Bank’s bad loans stood at Tk 5,818 crore. At the end of June, it stood at Tk 48,000 crore.

At the end of June last year, Janata had a capital shortfall of Tk 2,189 crore, according to data from BB.

Beximco Group declined The Daily Star’s request for comment.

## Govt scraps contractual appointments

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(senior secretary) of Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council, has been made senior secretary of the home ministry’s Public Security Division.

Mohammad Emdad Ullah Mian, member (secretary) of Planning Commission, has been transferred to the agriculture ministry.

Md Abdur Rahman Khan, secretary of the Financial Institutions Division under the finance ministry, was transferred to the Internal Resources Division and made the NBR chairman.

### CONTRACTS REVOKED

The top 11 bureaucrats, whose contracts were cancelled, include Rahmatul Muneem, NBR chairman (senior secretary); Lokman Hossain Miah, executive chairman (senior secretary) of Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA); KM

Abdus Salam, senior secretary of the Parliament Secretariat; Satyajit Karmaker, senior secretary of the Planning Division; Mokammel Hossain, senior secretary of the civil aviation and tourism ministry; ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of the Road Transport and Highways Division; Humayun Kabir, secretary of the railways ministry; Md Ali Hossain, secretary of the science and technology ministry; Wahida Akter, secretary of the agriculture ministry; and Akter Hossain, principal coordinator of SDG affairs at the Prime Minister’s Office.

The contractual appointment of Khairul Islam as a member (secretary) of BIDA, was also cancelled.

In another development, Lamiya Morshed, executive director of Yunus Centre, was appointed as the principal coordinator of SDG affairs at the Chief Adviser’s Office.

## Sudan ceasefire talks start despite army no-show

AFP, Geneva

US sponsored talks on agreeing a ceasefire in the devastating conflict in Sudan kicked off in Switzerland yesterday, despite the Sudanese government staying away.

War has raged since April 2023 between the Sudanese army under the country’s de facto ruler Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by his former deputy Mohamed Hamidan Daglo.

“The talks have started,” a spokesman for the US mission in Geneva told AFP, adding that there was “no change” to the non-participation of the Sudanese government.

The brutal conflict has triggered one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises.

While the RSF is taking part in the talks, the Sudanese armed forces (SAF) are unhappy with the format arranged by Washington.

“The RSF delegation has arrived in Switzerland. Our US delegation, and the collective international partners, technical experts and Sudanese civil society, are still waiting on the SAF. The world is watching,” Tom Perriello, the US special envoy for Sudan, said before the talks began.

He urged the government to “seize the opportunity”, saying after the opening session that it was “high time for the guns to be silenced”.

The talks, which could last up to