

Constable injured on August 5 dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police member, who was beaten and pushed off the rooftop of Shyamur Police Station during clashes with protesters on August 5, died at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday evening.

The deceased was identified as Khalilur Rahman, 53, a constable of the police station.

On the afternoon of August 5, a group of people beat him up and threw him off the roof of the police station. With severe injuries, he was admitted to a private hospital in Dhanmondi, where he breathed his last around 5:00pm, his colleague, Sub-Inspector Torgul Hasan, mentioned in the inquest report.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Along with him, at least 43 police personnel were killed so far during the mass protests, during which many police stations and offices across the country were attacked and looted as law enforcers opened fire indiscriminately, killing many protesters.

Over 500 people, including many students, were killed during the protests, which eventually forced prime minister Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee the country on August 5.

Intercity train services resume after nearly a month

UNB, Dhaka

After nearly a month of suspension, intercity train services resumed across the country yesterday.

The services resumed with the departure of Mohanganj Express from Kamalapur Rail Station in Dhaka around 1:15pm.

Other intercity trains have been departing as per schedule from various destinations for Dhaka.

Passengers expressed satisfaction at the full restoration of train services after the long hiatus.

The Bangladesh Railway suspended operations of passenger trains on July 19 amid the violence centring the quota reform movement.

Although operations of passenger trains resumed on a limited scale on August 1, the authorities on August 3 suspended it for August 4 and later halted the operations of all kinds of trains until further notice.

Power outage hits rural areas

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The country, especially the rural areas, is experiencing frequent power cuts over the last couple of days due to insufficient electricity production from coal-based power plants, alongside the prolonged delay in increasing LNG regasification facilities.

According to the data of Power Grid Bangladesh PLC, the average generation shortage stood as high as 1,500 megawatts (MW) a day for the last week. The country has been producing around 13,500MW to 14,000MW daily, while the demand is over 15,000MW.

Shiuly Akhter, a resident of CO Bazar area in Rangpur, said frequent power cuts started there about a week ago after a three-week respite.

"The situation stays normal from midnight till 6:00am. Then the power goes out at one or two-hour intervals throughout the day," she said, adding that it was unbearable amid the sweltering heat.

Ayesha Begum, a resident of Habiganj Sadar area, said the power cut happens every alternate hour for the entire day —

meaning they stay without electricity for six hours during daytime.

It stabilises after 11:00pm. However, power cuts sometimes happen at midnight as well, she added.

Officials said they have been getting insufficient electricity from the coal-based power plants due to various technical issues, while gas shortage became a regular scenario.

At least 10,000MW of generation capacity has been sitting idle due to fuel shortage or maintenance — 6,100MW for fuel shortage and 3,800MW for maintenance. Compared to last month, idle power capacity due to fuel shortage has increased significantly.

Among the 6,100MW — at least 4,079MW are caused due to shortage in gas supply, according to data of Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB). The country has a total of 11,428MW installed capacity from gas sources.

The data shows that at least 25 gas-fired power plants remain closed due to gas shortage since May 27, when cyclone



Students under the banner of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement hold a rally in front of National Museum in Shahbagh yesterday as part of their "Resistance Week" programme.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

RICE PRICE RISES

So do other essentials; traders point at supply shortage, rising production costs

SUKANTA HALDER

Prices of several daily essentials, including rice, soybean oil, and sugar, have surged in the capital's kitchen markets, causing hardships for the city residents, particularly the lower and middle-income ones.

Apart from those, prices of palm oil, broiler chicken, green chillies, eggplant, and tomatoes have also increased.

During visits to the kitchen markets in Duaripara, Mirpur 1, Karwan Bazar, and Mohammadpur Krishi Market yesterday, The Daily Star found these products to be sold at increased prices.

According to data from Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, the price of medium rice increased by 2.68 percent, coarse rice by 2.88 percent, soybean oil by about 1 percent, and sugar by about 2 percent in the past week.

Traders attributed the price hikes to a supply shortage, rising production costs, and the country's volatile economic situation.

Mohammad Jashim Uddin, a rice wholesaler at Mohammadpur Krishi Market in Dhaka, reported that the price of coarse rice increased by Tk 2-3 per kg last week, citing millers' claims that higher paddy prices were driving up rice costs.

In the retail market, medium rice is being sold at Tk 55-60 per kg, while the price was Tk 54-58 a week ago, said Mehedi Hasan, a retailer at Karwan Bazar kitchen market.

Coarse rice is being sold at Tk 52-55, while the price was Tk 50-54 in the last week, he added.

The vegetable and broiler chicken markets have also witnessed a significant surge in prices.

Abdul Mannan, a vegetable seller at Karwan Bazar kitchen market, said the price of eggplant increased from Tk 30 to Tk 40 per kg over the past week, while green

Meanwhile, the prices of soybean oil and palm oil increased by Tk 100 per drum (204 litres) over the last week, said Alam Sheikh, a wholesaler at the Mirpur 1 kitchen market.

The prices of potatoes, onions, eggs, garlic, ginger, and pangas fish have decreased, while the price of tilapia remains unchanged.

Amid the situation, consumers are facing severe challenges.



chilli prices rose from Tk 200 to Tk 240, potatoes from Tk 55 to Tk 60, and cabbage from Tk 30 to Tk 50 per piece.

The price of tomatoes increased from Tk 140 to Tk 180 per kg, he added.

Mohammad Zafar, a retailer at Duaripara Bazar in the Rupnagar area, said the price of broiler chicken rose from Tk 160 to Tk 170 per kg within the same period.

Wholesale traders attributed the increase in broiler chicken prices to higher production costs.

AL observes August 15 in three districts

STAR REPORT

Awami League supporters and grassroots yesterday observed National Mourning Day, marking the 49th anniversary of the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in at least three districts.

In Gopalganj, AL men offered prayers in the morning at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu in Tungipara.

They placed floral wreaths at Bangabandhu's portrait, while several hundred partymen held a rally there.

They also vowed to bring Sheikh Hasina — who fled the country on August 5 — back home and demanded punishment for the perpetrators who torched the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi 32 in the capital.

In Narayanganj, city corporation Mayor Salina Hayat Ivy paid homage to Bangabandhu by placing wreaths at his portrait at the office of Narayanganj district unit AL in the city.

Ivy, senior vice president of the district unit AL, was accompanied by a few party leaders and activists.

In Shariatpur, Jazira upazila AL also observed the day.

The day was observed at a time when most of the AL men across the country have been on the run since the fall of Hasina on August 5.

We will resist all counter-revolution attempts: Sarjis

STAR CORRESPONDENT

Sarjis Alam, a key organiser of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, issued a stern warning yesterday against those attempting to launch a counter-revolution, saying their existence will be erased.

"Let us be clear: if anyone dares to do this [mount a counter-revolution] again or if we witness any such attempts, you will not live to see the consequences from the students and people," he declared.

Sarjis further warned, "If you wish to preserve your existence, do not dare to utter a single word against the students and people."

He made these remarks to reporters during a demonstration in front of the National Museum as part of "Resistance Week", which was called for thwarting any potential counter-revolution on August 15.

Sarjis said the government ruled and exploited the people for the last 16 years, and the student and people unitedly made this revolution.

"In these circumstances, if someone mistakenly tries to speak against the revolution, they are declaring themselves against the entire student body and the masses of Bangladesh. We want to make it clear that those who are doing this do not have honest intentions. Their motives are not aligned with the interests of the students and the people of the country, but rather with exploiting the country and its people..."

"Their goal is to hand over some of their interests to malevolent forces outside the country, potentially selling this country, either partially or wholly, to them. We understand that," he added.

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ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY Banani ramp opens, Mohakhali to open in a week

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The authority of Dhaka Elevated Expressway yesterday opened the entrance ramp at Banani, around a month after the tollbooth was torched amid violence centring the student movement.

"We opened one of the four tollbooths at the ramp at 5:00pm today and is collecting toll manually," Captain (ret'd) Hasib Hasan Khan, manager (operations and maintenance) of First Dhaka Elevated Expressway Company Ltd (FDEE), which operates the expressway, told The Daily Star.

He said they will open manual operation of three other booths there within a few days.

Hasib mentioned that they were optimistic

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DHAKA-MOSCOW TIES Bangladesh needs to follow a safe path Says foreign affairs adviser

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will have to take a safe path in its cooperation with Russia as it faces many sanctions, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain after meeting with Russian Ambassador to Bangladesh Alexander Mantyskiy yesterday.

UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis and Japanese Ambassador Iwama Kiminori also called on the foreign affairs adviser yesterday.

"Our position is that we will not fight any war. I said, as there are sanctions against Russia, we will do whatever interaction and cooperation we can have," said Touhid.

Mantyskiy sought the interim government's support so that the work on Rooppur nuclear

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Members of Gram Police Bahini (village police force) bring out a procession in front of the Supreme Court yesterday, demanding an end to wage disparity. They also sought a national pay scale for them.

PHOTO: STAR

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