

MY DHAKA



Botanical Garden.

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED



Mirpur Beribadh.

PHOTO: SHADAB SHAHROKH HAI

5 things that make MIRPUR SPECIAL

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Dhaka is basically divided into a few "general areas". These areas refer to a larger neighbourhood that are recognised by the same name. For example – the Mirpur area might refer to the whole of Mirpur-1 through 12. Like every other neighbourhood in the city, there are a few perks of living in Mirpur.

Here are 5 things that make Mirpur special.

The Stadium

The Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium is one of the most popular places in the city. Being a nation with fervent zeal for cricket, people are more than eager to be here. Whenever there's a match, the surrounding neighbourhoods light up with the buzz. Besides the main attraction of cricket, the stadium comes with the added benefit of a stadium market that draws people in search of furniture.

National Zoo

Located on one side of Mirpur, the National Zoo is the largest zoo in the country, boasting an array of animals

and species. Children or adults alike, the zoo is a point of interest for everyone. With two lakes within its huge premises, it's no wonder this is a popular place, not only to local residents, but to people all over the country. Whatever mood you



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Book market in Mirpur

are in, the zoological diversity and the open sky will surely make it a soothing experience.

Face of Nature

It's not just the zoo, there are more places around Mirpur that can offer you a respite from your metropolitan life. With the river Turag flowing right

beside Mirpur, there are plenty of places where one may get a glimpse of nature, something that has become quite rare in Dhaka. The Mirpur Beribadh is one such place that stands on the bank of the river with a spectacular view. If you



PHOTO: SHADAB SHAHROKH HAI

Love Road in Mirpur

just cross the road, you can find yourself in the Botanical Garden, a place not only soothing but also educational for those who are interested.

Lively Hangout Places

Perhaps one of the most important factors about any neighbourhood is how friendly and accommodating

it is. Mirpur offers both with the numerous hangout places it offers. The most popular hangout place in the neighbourhood under open sky has to be Love Road. Street food, music and youth – all these make it a lively experience. There's Mirpur-1 for those who are looking to window shop or catch a movie or just roam around and grab a cup of coffee.

Book Market

The second-hand book market in Mirpur is one of few such markets in Dhaka. Starting from the stadium gate, it expands towards Mirpur-10 roundabout and sometimes, stray shops are spotted even beyond that. With a large collection and affordable price, it's the place to be if you are interested in books. With effort and time, one can even find antique books here as well. And of course, academic books.

Of course, there are more interesting places in Mirpur, such as the Benaroshi Polli, Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium, Currency Museum etc. For locals to just sit back and take it easy for a day or for visitors to roam around, Mirpur is a great place.

Production shuts

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chain, he added. Mahbul Karim, executive director of Incepta Pharmaceuticals, said, "We did not open our factory to avoid an untoward incident amid the protests."

He added that several discussions between the management and the workers yielded no result because the workers want their demands met by 24 hours.

Zahangir Alam, chief financial officer at Square Pharmaceuticals, said production units of the company had been closed since Saturday as the "workers do not listen to requests".

He added that the demands that are logical would be met.

Square Pharmaceuticals employs 1,000 casual and 6,000 regular workers, he said.

A team of Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries led by its president Abdul Mukhtar met the advisers of home affairs, industries, and health and sought their cooperation to solve the crisis.

A top official of Popular Pharmaceuticals said his company had promised to regularise all of its 300 casual workers. He added that the sudden demand for raises and perks was an indication that a quarter had instigated the workers who seemed to be content before.

Workers of a shoe, a ceramic, and a several garment factories demonstrated in Savar and Gazipur, blocking highways yesterday.

The authorities closed at least 10 garment factories in Ashulia and Savar.

Workers of GAB Limited, Snowtex, Starling Group Apparel, NASA Apparels, and Acme Agrovet & Consumers Ltd blocked the Nabinagar-Chandra highway and began demonstrating around 9:00am, said Mohammad Sarwar Alam, superintendent of Ashulia Industrial Police.

Some of the protesters said they wanted bonuses, lunch allowance, and an end to termination of workers.

Several workers of GAB Limited said authorities closed the factory without saying whether the demands would be met.

"We will continue the protests unless they comply with the demands," said one of them, requesting anonymity.

In Gazipur, long tailbacks formed as workers blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at three places. The highway was blocked for two hours in the morning.

The workers of Bata shoes blocked the road in the Station Road area, People's Ceramics in Targachh, and Anant Casual Limited in Chandana.

The workers demanded regularisation, better pay, and medical allowance.

SC to hear Jamaat

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He told The Daily Star that the Appellate Division earlier dismissed Jamaat's appeal against the High Court verdict without holding a complete hearing.

"If the Appellate Division on October 21 restores the appeal, then a complete hearing will be held before it on the merit of the appeal. If this court allows the appeal after hearing on it, Jamaat-e-Islami will get back its registration with the Election Commission and will participate in the

elections."

On November 19 last year, a five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by the then Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan dismissed Jamaat's appeal for "default" as its counsels did not appear before the court on that day.

Jamaat had filed the appeal against the HC verdict that scrapped its registration with the EC on August 1, 2023.

Lawyers Mohammad Shishir Manir and Md Matiur Rahman Akanda appeared for Jamaat during the hearing yesterday.

Patients suffer as doctors strike

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guns and agreed to provide only emergency services if a law enforcer protected every doctor.

The trouble began Saturday night when Ahsanul Islam Dipto, a 24-year-old civil engineering student at the Bangladesh University of Business and Technology (BUBT), died from road crash injuries.

A doctor at DMCH was assaulted by some students who accused physicians of being negligent.

The same night, a group of people attacked an injured person inside DMCH after a clash between two groups in the Khilgaon-Sepahibagh area. In response, DMCH doctors issued a 24-hour ultimatum for identifying and punishing the attackers. They threatened a complete shutdown of the hospital if their demands were not met.

Emergency services at DMCH resumed around 7:30pm yesterday after Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum said the attackers would be arrested within two days and brought to justice. She also assured the doctors of taking measures for workplace safety.

After a meeting with the adviser, the doctors announced that they would resume emergency services only if armed law enforcers shadow every doctor at work.

They said they would continue their strike and that the "complete

shutdown" would be reinstated if their demands were not met by 8:00pm today.

The doctors demand immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the accused involved in the attacks; deployment of armed law enforcers to protect doctors in every hospital within 24 hours; appointment of health police under the DGHS within seven days; and implementation of the health protection laws.

SUFFERINGS

Medical services and treatment at DMCH were halted around 10:00am. The counters for getting tickets, required to see a doctor, were closed.

But ambulances carrying patients continued to arrive. They were turned away.

Patients who had travelled from various parts of the country were unaware of the strike. They rushed to the outpatient departments from the emergency department but did not get any treatment.

Among them was Rezaul Karim, 11, a class-IV student from Barishal, whose right leg was gangrenous.

Rezaul was seen lying on the floor of the outpatient department while his family desperately sought treatment.

"My son is in excruciating pain. I feel helpless seeing him suffer without treatment," said Shaheen Farazi, Rezaul's father and a rickshaw-puller.

Shaheen said he could not afford to take his son to a private hospital.

Khairun Nahar, 53, a critical neurosurgery patient with brain and spinal issues, was referred to the DMCH from Satkhira. After not getting any help at DMCH, her family took her to another hospital where she was turned away as well.

The family eventually returned to Satkhira.

"What happened between the doctors and the patient's friends could be resolved, but now we are suffering. If this patient dies, who will be held responsible?" said Mohammad Ali, Nahar's husband.

"I had to pay Tk 20,000 for the ambulance, and my wife is now returning home without receiving treatment," he said.

This correspondent visited the female ward of the neurosurgery department three times between 1:00pm and 5:00pm. There were several patients in critical condition there.

Some family members alleged that nurses were not administering injections or giving the patients pills.

"My wife has brain haemorrhage and needs emergency surgery, but the doctor has not come. The doctor prescribed some medication and injections for her, but no nurse came to the ward. I went to other wards and the nurses' offices, but they did not show up," said a patient's

husband around 5:00pm.

MEETING

Coordinators of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, Sarjis Alam and Hasnat Abdullah, went to the DMCH and had talks with doctors in presence of DMCH Director Brig Gen Asaduzzaman around 3:00pm.

Around 45 minutes later, the health adviser reached DMCH and had a separate meeting with a different group of doctors.

Before leaving, Hasnat told journalists, "We met the doctors to facilitate the immediate resumption of emergency services. However, the doctors remain firm on their demands ... We have requested the health adviser to resolve the issue."

After the meeting with the health adviser, the DMCH director said the hospital would resume medical activities, including treatment at the emergency, casualty, and neurosurgery departments.

He said members of the army, police, BGB, and Ansar would be deployed round-the-clock to ensure the security of the doctors.

Speaking to reporters, Abdul Ahad, resident surgeon of the Neurosurgery Department at the DMCH, said the shutdown would continue, but emergency services would be provided only if every doctor was assigned a law enforcer to protect them.

He said there would be no outpatient services

but ICU and HDU services would continue.

"If the criminals who attacked doctors are not arrested ... within the next 24 hours, the complete shutdown will resume at 8:00pm on Monday [today]," he said.

"The hospitals, medical centres, and routine services across the country will be suspended for the next seven days. During this time, our four-point demand, including the protection of doctors, must be met. We will only resume outpatient and routine services once our demands are met," Ahad said.

At a briefing at the Secretariat earlier, Adviser Nurjahan Begum assured doctors that stern action would be taken against those involved in assaulting doctors at the DMCH. She said two separate investigation committees had been formed.

She also urged the doctors to end their work abstention for the sake of the patients.

As of 2:00pm yesterday, a total of 2,941 people were undergoing treatment at the DMCH. Between 1,100 and 1,200 people typically visit the emergency department for critical care, while over 3,000 people visit the outpatient department for medical services.

There were army and BGB personnel at DMCH since yesterday evening.

said, "We are giving priority to recovering the looted guns ..."

As of yesterday, a total of 3,880 weapons of various types, looted from police stations and offices, during the recent unrest, have been recovered. In addition, law enforcers have recovered 2,86,353 bullets, 22,201 teargas canisters, and 2,139 stun grenades.

Beximco laundered

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The group first opened a letter of credit for exporting goods and then took a loan locally against 80 percent of the value, said Md Moniruzzaman, inspector of the CID financial crime unit.

As the group did not bring back the export proceeds, the loan remains unpaid.

"Beximco Group laundered money through this way," he added.

Another official at the CID financial crime unit said they have found primary information that Rahman laundered the money and invested in real estate in different countries including Dubai, Singapore and the UK.

Rahman's son, Ahmed Shayan Fazlur Rahman, has opened a large pharmaceutical company in Saudi Arabia, said a CID official involved with the

investigation. And most of the funds of that company in Saudi Arabia went from Bangladesh, he said.

Once the primary investigation is complete, a case would be filed under the Money Launder Act against Beximco Group, Dewan said.

During the primary investigation, the CID's financial crime unit found that Beximco Group has been accused of fraudulently taking loans from seven banks in the last 15 years.

Of the loans, Tk 5,218 crore was taken from IFIC Bank, whose chairman is Rahman himself.

The sprawling conglomerate took at least Tk 21,681 crore from the principal branch of the state-run Janata Bank, according to a CID official involved with the investigation.

Beximco also took Tk 295 crore from National

Bank; Tk 5,671 crore from Sonali, Agrani and Rupali; and Tk 605 crore from AB Bank, according to CID's primary data.

The CID's financial crime unit has sent teams to the seven banks to collect their database, said its special superintendent Mohammad Basir Uddin.

CID's primary investigation found that Rahman is accused of laundering the loans abroad in the name of various companies of Beximco Group.

There are also allegations that in the last three years around Tk 6,600 crore has been taken from the market visibly and Tk 20,000 crore embezzled through fraud and forgery, reads the CID primary investigation report.

Rahman has been in police custody since August 13 in a case filed over the killing of a shop employee.

Govt asks all its staffers to submit wealth statements

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Although this procedure is part of the conduct regulations to combat corruption and ensure accountability, compliance has often been lacking.

On August 25, Chief Adviser to the interim government, Prof Muhammad Yunus, in his address to the nation said, "Government employees should regularly submit their wealth statements."

"All our advisers will publish their asset details as soon as possible. Regular asset disclosure will be made mandatory for all government servants," he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mohidul Islam, additional secretary (rules wing) of the public administration ministry, said the government employees must submit an account of their assets, including their families and dependents, as per the existing rules.

He, however, said, "A process to amend the

existing rules is underway to make them stricter. But for now, the government employees will have to submit their wealth statement following the existing rules."

According to section 13 (1) of Government Servant Conduct Rules-1979, every government servant shall, on entering service, hand over to the government, through proper authority, info on all movable and immovable property, including shares, certificates, securities, insurance policies, and ornaments of a total value of Tk 50,000 or more owned by him or his family members.

They will have to mention the name of the district in which the property is located, disclose details on each type of ornament worth over Tk 50,000, and provide any other information if required by the government through general or special orders, said the section.

However, the existing rule does not apply to the subordinates of railways, metropolitan police, and lower ranks of police and border guards.

There are around 15 lakh civil servants currently working in the country.

Feroz Mia, a former additional secretary of the public administration ministry, told The Daily Star that an example must first be made by submitting the accounts of the secretaries of the government to the administration.

"Then others will be encouraged to follow suit," he said.

The 1979 rules initially mandated the submission of asset accounts every year. Since the rules were not followed, it was amended in 2002 with a provision of submitting wealth accounts every five years.

This too is not being implemented, said officials of the public administration ministry.

Drive begins to recover illegal arms on Sept 4

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licences of weapons issued to civilians over the last 15 years -- January 6, 2009, and August 5, 2024 -- during the Awami League rule.

Yesterday, the ministry asked the authorities to inform the licence bearers through text messages for submission of the firearms, and ammunition to their nearby police stations.

Md Kamrul Ahsan, additional deputy inspector general (confidential) of Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star yesterday, "The firearms with suspended licences will be considered illegal if these are not handed over to police stations by September 3 [tomorrow]."

He asked the owners of the weapons to submit

then within the timeframe to avoid legal action.

According to sources in the Special Branch of police, they have a database of 50,310 gun owners. However, the officials are yet to get the actual figure of how many licences were issued during the AL rule.

A top SB official, requesting anonymity, told this newspaper, "We

are working to update the database and are hopeful of completing the work within a day or two."

Yesterday in a directive, the PHQ announced that all firearms and ammunition looted from police stations during the recent violence must be returned by tomorrow.

Kamrul Ahsan, additional DIG of PHQ,