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## Take urgent steps to ensure security

Business leaders urge interim govt chief amid protests, unrest in industrial areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid workers' protests in Savar and Gazipur, top business leaders yesterday urged Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus to deploy more army personnel, if needed, to ensure that factories can run smoothly.

Production at factories has been suffering since the beginning of the week due to workers' unrest.

At least 50 garment factories, mostly in Ashulia, were closed yesterday amid demonstrations, industrial police said. On Monday, nearly 100 factories, mainly garment and pharmaceutical units, remained closed on the outskirts of the capital.

During the meeting with business

leaders at the state guesthouse Jamuna, Prof Yunus said the government would support the industries.

The chief adviser told the business delegation that the interim government is committed to protecting the factories from violence and attacks, according to a statement from the chief adviser's office.

"We want to take the industries to a new level," he said.

Mahbubur Rahman, president of The International Chamber of Commerce, Bangladesh, led the delegation.

"Law and order situation in the industrial areas is not good. Factories are coming under arson attacks," Mahbubur told The Daily Star.

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## EDITORS MEET PROF YUNUS Call for national unity, reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and editors of top media houses yesterday called for national unity to consolidate the reforms that will be made to strengthen institutions and put an end to the culture of vote rigging.

During a meeting with the editors, the chief adviser urged the media to publish news on the interim government's mistakes without hesitation.

The editors called for the cancellation of repressive laws like the Digital Security Act. If need be, the clauses of draconian laws, used to silence journalists, can be suspended immediately and the laws can be amended later, they said.

"At the very least, it should be announced that the clauses of these laws that are used to repress journalists will not be enforced and that the reforms will happen

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Former IGPs Shahidul, Mamun held



Shahidul Al-Mamun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested former IGPs AKM Shahidul Hoque and Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun at Uttara area last night.

Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police chief Rezaul Karim Mallick said, "We arrested the

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Bangladesh players celebrate their historic 2-0 Test series victory against Pakistan at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium yesterday. The Tigers beat the hosts by six wickets yesterday after having won the first Test at the same venue by 10 wickets.

PHOTO: AFP

## A surreal series VICTORY

AL-AMIN

It still feels surreal that Bangladesh have won their first ever Test series against Pakistan 2-0 and that too on Pakistan soil.

The Tigers scripted the epic with a six-wicket win in the second and final Test in Rawalpindi yesterday, a week after their 10-wicket triumph in the opening Test at the same venue.

The watershed moment came when Bangladesh, set 185 for a memorable series sweep, reached the target in the fifth afternoon, with Shakib Al Hasan (21 not out) hitting the winning runs -- a boundary down the covers off leg spinner Abrar Ahmed.

Mushfiqur Rahim, who struck a monumental 191 in the first Test, was at the other end unbeaten on 22.

If the first Test win was a statement of

perseverance from the Tigers, the second Test was a captivating story of coming back from a precipice to the pinnacle, something witnessed very rarely in the history of Test cricket.

Reduced to a hopeless 266 in their first innings on the third morning in reply to Pakistan's 274, Bangladesh appeared to be in a similar situation of throwing up a good initiative they had done many times before.

However, a record 165-run stand between Liton Das and Mehedi Hasan Miraz for the seventh wicket irrevocably turned the game on its head before the pace trio of Hasan Mahmud, Nahid Rana, and Taskin Ahmed put Bangladesh in pole position to win the game from the jaws of an embarrassing defeat.

In a rare demonstration of aggressive pace

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A triumph spurred by belief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh beating Pakistan by six wickets in the second and last Test and clean sweeping the two-match series is an accurate description of what happened yesterday at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, but it falls woefully short of capturing the magnitude of what the Najmul Hossain Shanto-led side accomplished.

Inside two weeks, Bangladesh dragged themselves out of seemingly unwinnable positions, not once but twice, in foreign conditions against an opponent whom

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Army personnel patrol the DEPZ road in Ashulia's Jamgora area yesterday to prevent any potential trouble stemming from demonstrations by factory workers. Nearly 100 factories in Ashulia and Gazipur had to suspend production on Monday amid workers' protests demanding salary hike and regularisation of contractual workers.

### BUSINESS

#### Default loans surpass Tk 200,000cr

Default loans in the banking system surpassed Tk 200,000 crore, underlining the fragile condition of the sector that fell prey to rampant scams and irregularities under the tenure of the Awami League government over the past 16 years.

At the end of June, bad loans climbed to Tk 211,391 crore, which accounts for 12.56 percent of the total loans, Bangladesh Bank data shows.

This is the highest ratio of non-performing loans to total loans in the past 16 years.

### FOREIGN LOANS

#### Committee on 'white paper' to look into deals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee tasked with formulating a white paper on Bangladesh's economy will review the energy sector's foreign loan agreements and other contracts, said its chair Debapriya Bhattacharya.

Bangladesh implemented some major power plants with foreign parties such as the Rooppur nuclear plant, Payra, Rampal, SS Power, Matarbari power plant and so on.

The power purchase from India's Adani Power is also under government scrutiny along with the new agreements to build two floating storage and regasification Units (FSRU) and for importing liquefied natural gas (LNG) without announcing any tender process.

"We will definitely evaluate the foreign loan contracts in the energy sectors," said Bhattacharya, also a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

He made the remarks yesterday while speaking to reporters following the committee's second meeting at the General Economics Division (GED) office in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

At the meeting, the committee identified all specific sectors that would be discussed in the white paper.

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2 US teams set to visit Bangladesh mid-Sept

Donald Lu to lead one of those seeking to boost bilateral ties

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Two US delegations will be visiting Bangladesh in the middle of this month to discuss ways to further bilateral relationships in a changed political scenario.

This will mark the first such engagement from the US since the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus took office on August 8 following the ouster of the Awami League regime.

The visit is expected to reset Bangladesh's relationship with the US, which became strained

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## Let Us Celebrate the Historic Release of Our 57 Bangladeshi Heroes in the UAE

We welcome them to a new Bangladesh, where their voices have contributed to the change.

We salute our Honorable Chief Adviser Professor Dr. Muhammad Yunus, whose efforts made their release possible.

