

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has reaffirmed Bangladesh's steadfast support for Palestine.

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, introduced by the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, was observed yesterday.

In his message, Prof Yunus called for an independent, sovereign Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

He highlighted the urgent need for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire to protect innocent lives in Gaza, particularly women and children.

Prof Yunus called for accountability for atrocities against Palestinians, as underscored by the ICJ's advisory opinion declaring Israel's occupation unlawful.

Bangladesh continues to stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people, supporting their rightful struggle for justice, freedom, and dignity.



Displaced Palestinians wait in line to receive food at a distribution centre in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday, amid the ongoing Israeli offensive in the Palestinian enclave.

PHOTO: AFP

2 Bangladeshi men shot by BSF along Brahmanbaria border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Two Bangladeshi men were injured when they were shot by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) at the border area in Brahmanbaria's Kasba upazila.

Confirming the incident, BGB 60 Battalion Commander Lt Col AM Jaber Bin Jabbar said the two injured persons were sent to Cumilla Medical College Hospital on Monday night.

Earlier in the afternoon, the incident took place at the Putia border of the upazila's Bayek union.

The injured were identified as Zakir Hossain, 30, son of Razzak Mia of Putia village in Kasba upazila, and Rukon Uddin, 35, son of Aziz Mia of Barhatta upazila in Netrokona district.

The on-duty doctors of Kasba Upazila Health Complex said that the injured sustained bullet wounds to different parts of their bodies.

The BGB held a flag meeting with the BSF yesterday noon, when the BGB strongly protested the incident and informed the BSF that such incidents should not happen again in the future.

BSF killings along the Bangladesh-India border marked a gradual rise over the last three years despite repeated state-level commitments to bring it down to zero.

Last year, 31 people were killed in BSF shootings, the highest since 2020, when 47 Bangladeshis were killed along the border, according to Ain O Shalish Kendra data compiled based on media reports.

Resolve issues through discussions, not protests

Says home adviser

UNB, Dhaka

Home Affairs Adviser Let Gen (retd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury has said there is no need for students to take to the streets as teachers are there to settle college-related problems.

"We have teachers to address college-related problems. Instead of blocking roads, they can present their demands at Suhrawardy Udyan or send representatives to discuss their concerns with us," he said while talking to the media during a visit to Matian Haor in Tahirpur upzila yesterday.

The adviser said the government does not want to take a harsh stance against the students.

"We are working to resolve issues peacefully through dialogue. Those protesting are like my brothers, I have no reason to be strict with them."

Regarding agriculture in the haor region, he said it is essential to ensure that farmers benefit from agricultural produce and prevent middlemen from taking undue advantages.

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Water Resources Secretary Nazmul Ahsan, Deputy Commissioner and Police Superintendent of Sunamganj were, among others, present.

Sri Lanka probes Adani projects after US charges

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka has opened an investigation into the local investments of India's Adani Group in the wake of US bribery charges against its tycoon founder, government spokesman Nalinda Jayatissa said yesterday.

Jayatissa, speaking at the first cabinet briefing of President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's new government, said both the finance and foreign ministries had been asked to review infrastructure projects awarded to the Indian conglomerate.

"We will take a decision about these projects based on the two reports we have commissioned," said Jayatissa, who is also the information and health minister.

Take strict action against mob justice

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have occurred in front of the offices of the Prothom Alo and The Daily Star, noted that the security of these institutions remains under threat.

The statement, signed by Editors' Council President Mahfuz Anam and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud, said it views positively the expressions of concern from the Newspaper Owners' Association of Bangladesh (NOAB), the press wing of the Chief Adviser's Office, and the Information and Broadcasting Adviser Nahid Islam.

It added that the Editors' Council believes that if someone has a difference of opinion about the news or editorial policy of any newspaper, they are free to express this view peacefully; however, attempts to create disorder, disrupting the practice of journalism, are never expected.

BNP unveils vision for 'rules-based' Bangladesh

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To create a balance of power between the president and the prime minister, the BNP proposed provisions to enhance the president's power.

Talking to The Daily Star, Salahuddin said that the BNP demanded annulling of Article 123 (2) and 123 (3).

The constitutional clauses call for an election for the post of president within 90 days of the post's vacancy as a result of death, resignation or removal.

A general election of the members of parliament will be held, in the case of a dissolution by reason of the expiration of its term, within the period of 90 days preceding such dissolution.

And such an election shall be held in the case of a dissolution otherwise than by reason of such expiration, within 90 days after such dissolution.

The BNP has called for revisiting the 15th Amendment to the constitution, he told The Daily Star.

It has also called for measures to establish a balance of power among fundamental state institutions, including the executive, judiciary and legislative branches, to ensure "harmonious cooperation" and uphold fundamental rights, according to Salahuddin.

The party has proposed to

reintroduce articles 48, 56, and 142 of the constitution that were removed by the Awami League government. The articles contained provisions for changes and referendums.

Referendums were part of Bangladesh's earlier democratic practices, he said.

Additionally, the party proposed the formation of a lower judicial council to be led by the chief justice of the Supreme Court to ensure proper oversight, Salahuddin added.

Earlier in the day, after handing in the constitutional reform proposals, Salahuddin told the gathered media that the recommendations range from the preamble of the constitution to the schedule.

"We hope the commission will consider our suggestions, which reflect the aspirations of the people, the spirit of the martyrs of the July-August revolution and the current realities of Bangladesh. The proposals aim to ensure that parliamentary autocracy or dictatorship cannot emerge in the future."

He further highlighted the need for reinstating the caretaker government system, calling it "the number one demand of the people".

The matter is pending in court.

"We hope the verdict will favour the public."

The proposals address all aspects of the republic, including the executive, judiciary, legislative, election commission, and the schedule to establish a democratic system within the constitution.

"The aim is to create a balance of power in all branches of the state."

Asked how the constitutional amendments would be carried out in the absence of parliament, Salahuddin said the proposals are now with the commission, which is tasked with reviewing them and making recommendations to the interim government.

The other political parties have also handed in their proposals for constitutional reforms.

"We believe there will be consensus on most points, although differences may arise in some areas."

Once consensus is reached on the reforms needed to the constitution, the commitments would be included in the electoral manifesto and all parties will pledge to implement the constitutional changes once they assume power after the next election.

"We are hopeful our recommendations will be incorporated -- it is not the job of the interim government to amend the provisions of the constitution," Salahuddin told The Daily Star.

Seven killed as train hits auto-rickshaw

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Locals and witnesses said the autorickshaw was heading towards Fakirbazar from Bakshimul village. It was hit by the train just as it got onto the rail tracks in Kalikapur, where the level crossing had no barriers or a guard.

After the collision, the train dragged the mangled autorickshaw for about 1.5km from Kalikapur towards Razapur railway station, said police.

ABM Kamruzzaman, divisional railway manager of Chattogram, confirmed that the rail crossing where the incident took place was unauthorised.

He said his department was not

responsible for appointing guards or setting up barriers at unauthorised level crossings.

When asked how there was an illegal level crossing at the spot, he said it could have been set up by another government agency.

When asked who is in charge of hiring a guard to protect such an unauthorised level crossing, the railway officer did not make a comment.

Burichang Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Shahida Akter could not be reached for a comment.

According to Bangladesh Railway data as of August 2022, there were 3,111 level crossings in the country. Of those, 1,225 were unauthorised.

Keep calm, refrain from violence

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He has also ordered law enforcement agencies to step up security in the port city, including in all the vulnerable neighbourhoods.

The interim government is committed to ensuring and upholding communal harmony in Bangladesh at any cost, it added.

Earlier in the day, Saiful Islam, a 32-year-old lawyer was killed during a clash between police and followers of former ISKCON leader Chandan Kumar Dhar, alias Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, in the Chattogram Court Building area.

DON'T BE FOOLED BY CONSPIRATORS: HASNAT

Hasnat Abdullah, convener of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, urged people across the country to remain calm.

"Please stay patient and calm. Do not take the law into your own hands or create any kind of unstable environment," Hasnat said this in his verified Facebook post yesterday.

"Our Bangladesh is a country of communal harmony. We will not allow anyone to disrupt this harmony under any circumstances.

"Since August 5, a certain group has been deliberately conspiring to

create chaos in our country. Please do not get involved in internal conflicts and inadvertently pave the way for these conspirators to realise their heinous plans."

In his Facebook post, Hasnat Abdullah demanded the immediate arrest and prosecution of Saiful's killers.

Calling on everyone to remain calm, vigilant, and patient, he also urged that if any specific organisation is found involved in this murder, action must be taken against that organisation as well.

Meanwhile, in a separate Facebook post, Sarjis Alam, general secretary of July Shaheed Smriti Foundation, said if any individual, terrorist group, or organisation attempts to incite communal riots using religion as a "tool", strict measures must be taken against them.

He said, "Whoever is involved, we demand the highest punishment for murder. No leniency for conspirators. Too much leniency will embolden them."

Sarjis also emphasised that extremism should be judged not by religion but by the act of extremism itself.

6 killed as PTI activists clash with Pak security forces

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In a post on X from jail, Khan, 72, said his message to his supporters was to fight till the end.

"We will not back down until our demands are met," he said, accusing security forces of firing on peaceful party workers. "All protesting Pakistanis stay peaceful, united and stand firm until our demands are met - this is the struggle for Pakistan's survival and true freedom", he said.

The violence erupted at the end of a march led by Khan's wife Bushra Bibi and his key aide Ali Amin Gandapur that arrived in Islamabad early yesterday.

Calling for the government's resignation among other demands, the marchers ransacked vehicles and set a police kiosk on fire. They also attacked and wounded journalists at two separate locations, people from two media houses told Reuters.

The interior ministry said the army had been deployed to protect diplomatic missions in the fortified red zone area where government buildings and embassies are located. Authorities have said a curfew could be imposed in the capital.

PTI rejected Sharif's accusation that the paramilitary troops had been rammed, and it reiterated that party supporters would hold a sit-in outside the parliament until their demands were met.

The protest march, which Khan has described as the "final call", is one of many his party has held to seek his release since he was jailed in August last year.

PTI supporters last marched on Islamabad in October, sparking days of clashes with police in which one officer was killed, but this week's protest is bigger in size and more violent, authorities said.

They said the protesters were now armed with steel rods, slingshots and sticks and were setting fire to trees and grass as they marched. Reuters witnesses heard firing around the protests, although it was not clear who was responsible.

PTI has also called for a rollback of constitutional amendments it says the government made to handcuff the judiciary, which has questioned the legitimacy of several cases against Khan.