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Try Hasina, Awami League

Families of martyred, forcibly disappeared, those injured during July uprising demand at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Families of the victims of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and those martyred and maimed in the July mass uprising yesterday demanded that ousted Sheikh Hasina and her party be brought to book.

Marking International Human Rights Day yesterday, Mayer Daak, a platform of the families of enforced disappearance victims, organised a rally at Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital.

Delegates from the United Nations, Jatiya Nagorik Committee, students against discrimination, rights defenders from home and abroad, leaders of the BNP, Jamaat, and Hefazat-e-Islam were on stage.

"We are able to hold an event in an open space on the 76th International Human Rights Day -- something that was not possible before. This is an achievement of 36th July," said noted rights activist Nur Khan, referring to Hasina's fall on August 5.

The killing of Hefazat activists in 2013, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killing of opposition activists under Awami League's 15-year rule bear the mark of genocide, he said.

Enforced disappearance victims who were released by the regime kept their ordeal a secret out of fear. Some of them are speaking up now, said Nur Khan.

People spent months and years in the tiny secret detention cells, said the member of the inquiry commission on enforced disappearances.

"They wrote many things on the walls. One of them wrote, 'I love my country'. We now have the opportunity to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice. We must not miss this."

Jatiya Nagorik Committee Convener Nasir Uddin Patwary said, "Murderers of the Awami League's regime must be brought to justice. Justice first, election later. Unless we ensure justice for the martyred and injured, be it politics, election or something else, there will be failure."

Adviser Nahid Islam said, "The Awami League is a party that stands against humanity. Sheikh Hasina has blood on her hands, just like her father had. Sheikh Mujib established Baksal and violated human rights. Whenever they came to power, they violated human rights. The Awami League's time is up."

Referring to reports that people were blackmailed over cases related to the killings during the uprising, he said, "Students and the public are united against the exploiters and those rehabilitating the Awami League."

Regarding killings at the Bangladesh-India border, he said, "We must speak on the basis of justice and equality. Killings at the border to put pressure on Bangladesh are



"We are able to hold an event in an open space on the 76th International Human Rights Day -- something that was not possible before. This is an achievement of July 36."

NUR KHAN, noted rights activist

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The brother and mother of martyred Sohel Rana, 37, weep as they demand that his body and grave be identified, at a rally organised by Mayer Daak in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan. Sohel left home on July 18 to join the students' movement and went missing. After relentless searches, the family in August learned from DMCH authorities that Sohel died after being injured in the protest and was buried in the Rayerbazar Intellectuals' Graveyard as an "unclaimed person".

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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Arakan Army claims control of border along Bangladesh

CNN ONLINE

One of the most powerful ethnic minority armed groups battling Myanmar's army has claimed the capture of the last army outpost in the strategic western town of Maungdaw, gaining full control of the 271-kilometer-long border with Bangladesh.

The capture by the Arakan Army makes the group's control of the northern part of Rakhine state complete, and marks another advance in its bid for self-rule there.

Rakhine has become a focal point for Myanmar's nationwide civil war, in which pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic minority armed forces seeking autonomy battle the country's military rulers, who took power in 2021 after the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Khaing Thukha, a spokesperson for the Arakan Army, told The Associated Press by text message from an undisclosed location late Monday that his group had seized the last remaining military outpost in Maungdaw on Sunday.

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BNP proposes disbanding Rab

Party gives recommendations to police reform commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has recommended the dissolution of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), which is currently under US sanctions for serious human rights violations.

The proposal was part of the recommendation the party voluntarily made to the Police Administration Reform Commission on December 5, BNP Standing Committee Member Hafizuddin Ahmed said at a press conference held at the party chairperson's office in Gulshan yesterday.

Established in April 2004 during the tenure of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, Rab has faced intense criticism both at home and abroad for its controversial actions. In 2014, BNP Chairperson Khaleda also called for the force to be disbanded.

"This is stated in medical science as well -- when gangrene sets in completely, there is no alternative but to amputate. Rab has become internationally condemned and has turned into a monstrous force within the country. Most of the killings, disappearances and extrajudicial killings were carried out by Rab. Therefore, we have recommended its dissolution," Hafizuddin said.

If Rab is disbanded, necessary steps must be taken to ensure that its responsibilities are transferred to the Armed Police Battalion and police stations.

"Rab has become internationally condemned and has turned into a monstrous force within the country."

Hafizuddin Ahmed
BNP Standing Committee Member

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A brutal murder, a wicked cover up

Factory employee, cohorts kill owner, bury him under floor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The owner of a fabric printing factory in the capital's Kamrangirchar was brutally killed, dismembered, and then buried inside his own factory early Friday.

Police recovered the body yesterday, four days after he went missing. Earlier, they arrested three people, including an employee of the factory.

Amirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kamrangirchar Police Station, said the deceased, identified as 57-year-old Nur-e-Alam, was murdered by his employee Miraj and three others.

The OC said Miraj was gambling with three outsiders inside the factory when Nur-e-Alam was sleeping in another room there. Alam woke up due to the noise the four were making and reprimanded them for gambling.

They then attacked Nur. One of them struck him with a hammer and another stabbed him in the chest, killing him on the spot.

They then dismembered the body and buried it about two feet beneath the ground inside the tinshed factory, OC Amirul said, quoting the arrestees.

The victim's son-in-law Ataulah Khan Sajib

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Nur-e-Alam

'Joy Bangla' no longer national slogan

SC stays HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday stayed a High Court verdict that declared "Joy Bangla" as the country's national slogan.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed passed the order following a leave to appeal petition filed by the interim government challenging the HC judgement.

"Joy Bangla" will not be considered as the national slogan following this Appellate Division order," said Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque, who appeared for the government during yesterday's hearing.

The apex court passed the order on the ground that the national slogan is a matter of the government's

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus posing with the female student protesters, who were injured during the July uprising, in an event marking World Human Rights Day yesterday and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25) at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: P10

764 retired civil servants pitched for promotion

BAHARAM KHAN

A designated committee drew up a list of 764 retired bureaucrats for retrospective promotions yesterday.

The committee led by former finance secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan looked into the applications from over 1,500 individuals who retired between 2009 and August 4, 2024, and believed that they had been deprived by the Awami League regime.

If the government endorses the recommendation, the retired officials will get the perks and retirement funds that they would have enjoyed had they received the promotion on time.

The government may even reinstate some of them in different posts.

The five-member committee looked into the applications of 1,540 individuals who retired between 2009 and August 4, 2024. Zakir submitted the recommendations to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

The committee recommended promoting 119 as secretaries; 41 officials to grade-1 (secretary status); 528 as additional secretary; 72 as joint secretary; and four as deputy secretary.

The committee looked into 1,540 applications including 19 from family members of deceased officials. It did not review 13 of those as they fell outside its jurisdiction and mentioned why 763 others should not get retrospective promotions.

A member of the committee said some applicants expressed interest in contractual appointments without realising that that was strictly the government's discretion.

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