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## Commute goes haywire in city of protests

July injured demonstrate in front of CA's residence; Titumir students to block road, railway today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demonstrations on some major streets brought Dhaka traffic to a grinding halt yesterday, forcing commuters, patients and children to walk for hours.

After daylong demonstrations blocking roads near Shyamoli, the injured victims of the July uprising, some with life-changing injuries, arrived on Minto Road around 7:45pm to go to the chief adviser's residence.

They kept the road blocked and after midnight broke the barricades placed by law enforcers near the InterContinental Hotel. They then tried to breach another barricade set up by the army near the state guest house Jamuna, the chief adviser's residence on Hare Road.

The injured demand proper treatment, rehabilitation, and formal recognition of their sacrifice.

Law enforcers were trying to calm the situation when Anti-discrimination Student Movement leader Hasnat Abdullah went to the scene around 12:30am and talked to the demonstrators.

The protesters calmed down a bit, but vowed not to leave the spot until the chief adviser or a representative

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PROTESTS, GRIDLOCKS: THE DAILY STRUGGLE OF DHAKA DWELLERS - PAGE 3



Protesters trying to breach the barricades set up by Special Security Force members outside the chief adviser's residence on Hare Road in the capital. Those injured in last year's July uprising had been demonstrating since evening in front of the InterContinental Dhaka, demanding better medical care, rehabilitation, and state recognition.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## LIBYA TRAGEDY 56 migrants were aboard capsized boat

23 bodies, believed to be of Bangladeshis, wash ashore, more feared missing, says envoy

ZYMA ISLAM

Twenty-three bodies, believed to be of Bangladeshis, have washed up on Libya's shores, with many more feared missing, Bangladeshi Ambassador to Libya Abul Hasnat Mohammad Khairul Bashar said in a live stream on Facebook yesterday.

"A group of 56 migrants left the shores of Libya on January 25. The boat ran aground trouble the same night," he said.

Seven bodies washed ashore on January 28; 11 bodies on January 29; two bodies were found on January 30; and three more on January 31, said the ambassador. All of them washed ashore at Brega in eastern Libya.

"The Red Crescent and local government representatives responsible for processing the bodies for burial said the bodies 'looked' to be of Bangladeshis. However, since they did not have any documentation on them, there is no way to confirm if they are indeed Bangladeshis," said the ambassador.

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TITUMIR COLLEGE

## No hasty decision on univ status

Says edn adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government would not make any hasty decision on Government Titumir College students' demand for the institution's university status, Education Adviser Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud said yesterday.

In the wake of days of public suffering due to a road blockade programme by the protesting students of the college, the adviser

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## Cash-strapped Padma Bank struggling to pay employees

Tk 5,000cr bailout package sought from BB

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Padma Bank, formerly Farmers Bank, has sunk into such a financial abyss that the lender is struggling to pay its employees' monthly salaries and has sought a Tk 5,000 crore bailout package from Bangladesh Bank to stay afloat.

Since August last year, the bank's 850-odd employees have been receiving their salaries in their accounts but they are not allowed to withdraw the full amount at once. They can take out the money in phases.

Additionally, incentives have been suspended for years and promotions have been halted since last year, The Daily Star has learnt from banks' officials who spoke on the condition of

anonymity for fear of reprisal.

The bank spends about Tk 5-6 crore every month on salaries while it recovers around Tk 14-15 crore from borrowers, according to internal data.

From the recovered amount, the bank repays small depositors and covers employee salaries, Kazi Md Talha, acting chief executive officer of the bank, told The Daily Star last week.

To address its fund crunch, Padma sought a Tk 5,000 crore bailout from the BB in January. However, the central bank has yet to respond to the request.

"If we receive the funds, we can repay both individual and institutional depositors," he said.

Padma Bank, which was granted

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Devotees in droves gather for Akheri Munajat at the first phase of Biswa Ijtima that began on the banks of the Turag on January 31 and ended yesterday. The photo was taken on Tongi flyover around 8:30am.



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