



## INJURED UPRISING VICTIMS

# Compensation caught up in red tape

Family members continue to crowd July Smrity Foundation office for funds

MASHFIQ MIZAN

Crippled and blinded, many July uprising protesters continue to suffer. The one-time assistance -- Tk 5 lakh for martyrs' families and Tk 1 lakh for the wounded -- that was promised to them soon after the incumbent took over remains entangled in an utterly bureaucratic procedure.

The series of approvals, seals and documents begins with obtaining a seal from a BCS doctor or hospital director on the application form. This form has to be accompanied by hospital tickets or discharge certificates bearing the seal of an MBBS doctor, ensuring the documents prove treatment was provided during the uprising period. Payment requires a bKash number linked with the patient's national identity card. In case that is unavailable, parents' bKash number will suffice, but needs to be verified by a doctor. The application must also have photographs of injuries or wounded areas.

Once all these documents are ready, they have to be entered into the Management Information System (MIS) of a government hospital, upazila health complex or the Directorate General of Health Services. Thereafter, the civil surgeon and the deputy commissioner's (DC) office will need to verify the patient's permanent address. These documents then have to be submitted to the July Shaheed Smrity Foundation in person or via post, email or WhatsApp.

Families often make multiple trips across cities, burning through their savings. For those living outside Dhaka, the hurdles are even greater. Many reported having to visit the foundation seven to eight times, rejected each time for missing documents or unavailability of officials.

Often, the documents remain unattended in the civil surgeon or DC office, adding to their sufferings.

Besides, the hotline number of the foundation remains unreachable most of the time.

### FOUNDATION OFFICE

This correspondent first visited the July foundation on a Saturday, January 25 only to find out that the office remains closed on weekends. So did 11 victims or family members who came for aid or information. They left empty-handed.

The next day at 3:00pm, there were dozens of people, including the injured and families of martyrs, waiting for aid.

In one corner was Aradhan Begum. She was sitting in a chair and crying. Aradhan's son Omar Faruk was shot in Paltan on July 28. It was her fourth visit.

Omar has already undergone one surgery and another is due in a few days. Aradhan's husband had passed away in 1997, leaving Omar as the sole bread winner.

This correspondent reviewed the verification status of Omar's documents, along with those of 11 others. All of them remain stuck at the civil surgeon's office in Noakhali.

Aradhan explains her quandary. Having come to Dhaka over 20 years

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Over two years after its construction, the bridge on Ati canal in Dhaka's Keraniganj remains useless due to the lack of approach roads. Locals use a nearby bamboo bridge to cross the canal. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# BFIU finds NI Mazumder's money laundering links

The Nassa Group chief took Tk16,000cr out of financial system; one-third of the amount withdrawn thru shell firms

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Nazrul Islam Mazumder, chairman of Nassa Group and a close associate of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, has been accused of trade-based money laundering amounting to Tk 16,000 crore by the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit.

Of the sum, Tk 4,717 crore was taken out from Exim Bank, where Mazumder was the chairman from 2007 to August 29 last year, through 18 shell companies, according to the BFIU, the government agency responsible for investigating money laundering, suspicious transactions and cash transaction reports.

The remaining Tk 11,283 crore was taken from 20 other banks and a non-bank financial institution.

The alleged money laundering activities and irregularities were conducted through import and export transactions involving Exim Bank, National Bank and state-owned Janata Bank using companies linked to Mazumder.

The BFIU report highlights trade irregularities linked to Madina Dates & Nuts, a company owned by Mojammil Hussain,

BFIU says Mazumder took Tk **4,717**cr from EXIM, Tk **11,283**cr from other banks, NBL, Janata

Allegations of money laundering, irregularities via EXIM, NBL, Janata

E&Y conducting forensic audit into EXIM

Nassa Group denies any wrongdoing

Mazumder's son-in-law.

The company, registered in July 2020, opened 253 import letters of credit (LCs) amounting to \$46.3 million from September 2020 to November 2024. Of the LCs, 23, worth \$5.63 million, were cancelled.

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## Consensus commission's first meeting in mid-Feb

6 commissions may submit full reports on February 8

BSS, Dhaka

The National Consensus Commission headed by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus will start discussions with the political parties and stakeholders of the 2024 uprising in mid-February.

The date of the first meeting would be fixed in consultation with the political parties and stakeholders of the uprising, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul said yesterday after Prof Yunus held a meeting with the chiefs of six reform commissions.

The six commissions are expected to submit their full reports on February

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## Rohingyas hit by US fund cuts

Health services, waste management at Cox's Bazar refugee camps hindered

PORIMOL PALMA

Trump administration's executive order to suspend US-funded projects and funding globally has started hitting the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, which is sheltering more than a million Rohingya and taking the brunt in its fullest form for decades.

Though the emergency food delivery by the World Food Programme, supported by the US, continues in the Rohingya camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf, the health sector, waste management and site management are already being impacted.

At least five hospitals run with US funding have suspended operations in the Rohingya camps, Mizanur Rahman, the Refugee, Relief and Repatriation commissioner, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Besides, waste management and landfill activities, managed by a large Bangladeshi non-governmental organisation, have also been suspended a day after the USAID letter was issued on January 24.

The USAID memo asked the implementing partners to stop work right away, saying that "no further assistance shall be disbursed in a manner that is not fully aligned with the foreign policy of the President of the United States".

The US also withdrew from the World Health

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## Size of Dhaka, Ctg divisions should be reduced

Admin Reform Commission to submit report today

BAHARAM KHAN

The Public Administrative Reform Commission is set to propose declaring Cumilla and Faridpur as divisions and reducing the sizes of Dhaka and Chattogram divisions.

The commission also recommends adding Dhaka division's Tangail and Kishoreganj districts to Mymensingh Division.

The country currently has eight operational divisions: Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, Sylhet, and Mymensingh.

The commission will hand the recommendations to Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus today. The commission held its final meeting at the secretariat yesterday.

The government formed the reform commission led by former secretary Abdul Muid Chowdhury in October last year.

The proposed Cumilla division will include Cumilla, Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Lakshmipur, Feni, and Noakhali -- all currently in the Chattogram Division.

If implemented, Chattogram Division will be left with Chattogram, Bandarban, Khagrachhari, Rangamati, and Cox's Bazar.

The proposed Faridpur Division would consist of Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Shariatpur, and Gopalganj, all of which are currently in Dhaka Division.

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**AMAR EKUSHEY-5**

This year marks the 73rd anniversary of the 1952 Language Movement. Drawing on research based on various published books, this 21-part series tells the story of the historic struggle for our mother tongue.

### Language Movement in Tangail

AHMAD ISTIAK

The upsurge of the Language Movement reached Tangail in 1948, with the people and students launching a protest on February 23 over the Pakistan government's

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Battery-run rickshaws ply Mirpur Road, ignoring a sign that says such vehicles are not allowed there. The photo was taken near Dhaka City College around 12 noon yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN