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JULY UPRISING

AL govt, oppositions used children as pawns

Says UN fact finding report

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Both the previous government (Awami League) and opposition groups recruited, paid, and used children in violence during the July uprising, a United Nations Fact-Finding Mission has reported.

The UN report highlights how high school and madrasa students, young workers, and even street children were drawn into the protests, often with tragic consequences.

Children accounted for 12 to 13 percent of total fatalities, with at least 118 killed. Beyond deaths, security forces allegedly engaged in deliberate maiming, arbitrary arrests, torture, and inhumane detention of minors, breaching both national and international laws.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Security forces reportedly used indiscriminate gunfire, including lethal ammunition, on child protesters in Dhaka's Azampur, Badda, Dhanmondi, Farmgate, Jatrabari, Mirpur, Mohammadpur, and Rampura areas, as well



as in Gazipur, Narayanganj, Rangpur, and Sylhet.

The report cites several specific cases.

A 17-year-old student was shot in the head by police in Mohammadpur on July 19 while standing in a mixed crowd of demonstrators. The previous day, police in Dhanmondi killed another 17-year-old and fatally injured a 12-year-old with nearly 200 metal shot pellets.

Some victims were permanently disabled. A 16-year-old boy lost his leg after being struck by bullets and metal shots allegedly fired by the then ruling party supporters. A 17-year-

old was left blind after police fired metal shots at demonstrators.

Even young children were not spared. In Narayanganj, a six-year-old girl was shot in the head while watching the clashes from her rooftop.

The UN report states that in multiple cases, security forces deliberately killed or maimed children, sometimes shooting at point-blank range. Protesters who were already injured and incapacitated were among those executed.

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Children were not only victims of gunfire but they also faced mass arrests, unlawful detentions, and torture. Many were held in police stations, the Detective Branch headquarters, and prisons alongside adults.

UN REPORT

Work for a better Bangladesh

Fakhrul urges democratic forces

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul



Islam Alamgir yesterday urged the democratic forces to be more sincere in building a liveable and better Bangladesh for the future generation.

"A ray of hope has emerged among us. We all must be more sincere to rebuild Bangladesh. We need to work together to create a sustainable country..." he said.

The BNP leader was addressing a discussion at Jatiya Press Club, marking the posthumous Ekushey Award given to journalist Mahfuz Ullah.

Fakhrul said political parties had struggled against fascism and endured repression and suppression for a long time.

"Today, we are all filled with hope for the country."

Fakhrul expressed his satisfaction that a talented journalist like Mahfuz Ullah has been honoured by the state with the Ekushey Padak after his passing.

Govt failing to ensure women's safety: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is failing to ensure women's safety since August 5 and resist religious extremists instead of prosecuting perpetrators of gender-based violence, alleged speakers at a protest rally yesterday.

The rally, organised by Biplobi Chhatra Maitri in front of the National Museum in Shahbagh, condemned child rape, ongoing violence against women, and the state's inaction.

The Dhaka Metropolitan unit of the platform led the demonstration.

Protesters said hopes for a just Bangladesh after SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Reduce energy use to curb load shedding: adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reducing energy consumption is key to minimising load shedding, said Power and Energy Adviser Faozul Kabir Khan yesterday.

Speaking at a workshop at the BGMEA auditorium in Dhaka, he criticised excessive energy use, pointing out that the event's room temperature was unnecessarily set at 22°C.

"It should be 25°C. No matter what we do, we must change our behaviour. Why wear suits in summer? Will we become 'unsmart' if we don't?" he remarked.

The event, titled "Installation of Industrial SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

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