

Take stern action against abusers of women  
Fakhrul urges govt

UNB, Dhaka

Voiceing "profound concern" over the growing incidents of harassment and abuse towards women, the BNP yesterday urged the government to take stern action against the perpetrators.

In a statement, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir strongly condemned and protested the violence against women, including various forms of harassment.

"I urge the government to establish justice and peace in the country by decisively addressing all anarchic situations, including violence against women," he said.

The BNP leader said women are playing a leading role alongside men

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PHOTO: TITU DAS

**Selina Begum uses a jute sack to apply water and soybean oil to this roller, which is applying bitumen on the Barishal-Dhaka highway. After working from the morning till the evening, Selina earns only Tk 500-600 per day. The photo was taken from the Gouranadi area yesterday.**

Recognise women participants in July uprising  
Demand 55 women's rights organisations

## KEY DEMANDS

- 1 Urgent action against violence against women
- 2 Curb fundamentalist, extremist cultures
- 3 Ensure women's participation in government, politics
- 4 Revise laws on rape, dowry, harassment, violence
- 5 Establish victim support centres, rehabilitation facilities
- 6 Promote gender-sensitive education

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women activists staged a silent demonstration yesterday in front of the National Parliament Building on Manik Mia Avenue, protesting against recent attacks, intimidation, and violence against women.

The protesters held banners and placards, demanding safety and expressing dissatisfaction with the current situation. Messages included "Stop violence against women," "No mob justice," and a call for the home adviser's resignation.

Besides, a group of female protesters staged a flash mob



**"Women are not safe in Bangladesh. Recent months have seen alarming incidents of harassment, abuse, rape, cyberbullying, ... across all sections of society. These are not isolated cases but part of a wider pattern of intimidation and violence against women."**

against rape, while several male protesters also joined the rally. The demonstration later moved towards Asad Gate, where protesters released a statement outlining their demands.

"Women are not safe in Bangladesh. Recent months

have seen alarming incidents of harassment, abuse, rape, cyberbullying, ... across all sections of society. These are not isolated cases but part of a wider pattern of intimidation and violence against women," the press release said.

The statement criticised the interim government for failing to honour its promises of justice, freedom, and anti-discrimination.

"They have taken no meaningful action to address these crimes, effectively emboldening perpetrators," it read.

## FIVE-POINT DEMAND

The protesters put forward five key demands, including the removal of the home adviser. They urged the interim government to fulfil its responsibilities and take immediate

action to ensure citizens' safety.

They also demanded accountability from the government and law enforcement for their failure to prevent mob attacks, targeted assaults, and rape.

The media was urged to stop spreading misinformation and take responsibility for shaping public perception. Additionally, they called for effective measures to combat and punish cyberbullying.

"We will not be silent. We will continue our protests until we can live freely, safely, and with dignity," the statement read.

Dhaka University Professor and UGC member Dr Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, Associate Professor Dr Samina Luthfa, and women's rights activist Shireen Haque were among those present.

**GAZIPUR DISTRICT JAIL**  
**The inhumane reality for female inmates**

## MONJURUL HAQUE

The last time Shanto and Suman saw their mother, she was shivering in the cold, wrapped in a tattered blanket that barely covered her frail frame.

Sitting on the pavement outside Gazipur District Jail, the two brothers clutched a small bundle of warm clothes they hoped to hand over to her.

"She says the blanket they gave her is so thin that it barely shields her from the cold," Shanto told this correspondent recently.

"She is suffering in there."

Gazipur District Jail has long been a place of misery for inmates. But for the women confined within its crumbling walls, the conditions verge on the unbearable. With an official capacity of just 10, the women's ward held 71 inmates as of January 21, according to prison sources.

This overpopulation has turned the jail into a suffocating maze of desperation, where food is scarce, medical care is inadequate, and basic hygiene is an afterthought.

## A DAILY STRUGGLE FOR DIGNITY

Meals are often nothing more than rice and lentils, sometimes even less.

A young man from Bagerhat, whose sister is incarcerated in Gazipur, shared, "She told me she can't eat most of the food because it's either spoiled or cooked

## Official capacity: 10

## Female inmates till January: 71

**FF** If any inmate is deprived of basic needs like proper food, hygiene, and warm clothes, it is a direct violation of their human rights. The government must intervene.

## RIPAN ANSARI

GS of National Human Rights Council

in an unhygienic way. Many times, they serve only rice and pulse -- no vegetables, no protein. She is getting sick."

For these women, nights are spent on coarse jute sacks in cramped rooms.

The husband of a 35-year-old woman who was released on bail after a year in confinement, said, "My wife told me they don't even get proper bedding. They just hand out sacks and expect them to sleep on the cold floor."

Toilets are limited, often clogged, and emit a stench that lingers through the overcrowded cells. Clean water is a luxury, forcing many inmates to ration what little they have for drinking, let alone personal hygiene.

## HEALTH IN DECLINE

The lack of adequate medical care means minor illnesses quickly escalate into chronic problems.

Son of one inmate shared, "My mother's health has deteriorated since she was jailed. She had no pre-existing health issues, but now she constantly suffers from stomach problems and body aches. The authorities don't provide proper treatment."

Prison authorities, however, insist that these claims are exaggerated.

"We provide improved food, sufficient blankets, and medical care to all inmates," said Mosfiqur Rahman, the jailer of Gazipur District Jail. Each inmate receives at least three to four blankets, he added.

Legal experts and human rights advocates stressed that the conditions in Gazipur jail are a violation of fundamental rights.

"Inmates in Gazipur jail are deprived of facilities because the number of prisoners is multiple times higher than its capacity," said Asadullah Badal, a senior lawyer in Gazipur. The authorities must take immediate action, he added.

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RMG worker found dead in N'ganj lake

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Narayanganj

Police have recovered the body of a young garment worker from a lake in Narayanganj's Siddhinganj yesterday morning, two days after he went missing.

Confirming the incident, Shahinur Alom, officer-in-charge of Siddhinganj Police Station, said that after recovering the body from Siddhinganj Lake, it was sent to Narayanganj General Hospital for autopsy.

The deceased was identified as Md Nayan, 20, son of Abdul Halim from Jamalpur. He was living in a rented house in the Dhankunda area of Siddhinganj, and worked at a local garment factory, said police.

Family members said Nayan had left his rented house on Wednesday evening and been missing since.

Locals spotted a body floating in Siddhinganj Lake around 8:00am

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**Nahid aims to finish what July uprising began**

AFP, Dhaka



Bangladeshi students who overthrew autocratic ex-premier Sheikh Hasina last year have formed a new political party to finish the work that began with her ouster, the group's leader told AFP.

Nahid Islam, 27, was one of the most visible faces of the youth-led protest campaign Students Against Discrimination, which brought down the curtain on Hasina's iron-fisted rule after 15 years.

The sociology graduate resigned last week from the interim administration that replaced her to lead the new National Citizens Party (NCP), arguing that Bangladesh's political establishment lacked the will for far-reaching reforms.

"They were not even interested in the reforms for which young people sacrificed their lives," Nahid told AFP.

"Because we have an obligation to implement what we pledged during the mass uprising and its aftermath, we decided to form a political party," he said.

More than 800 people were killed in last year's uprising, and Nahid was briefly detained alongside other student leaders in an unsuccessful effort to force them to call off the protests.

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**Vendors set up numerous stalls outside Abahani Field in Dhanmondi, selling a vibrant array of flowers and plants. With the arrival of spring, blossoms are in full bloom, showcasing a stunning collection of local and exotic flowers in a spectrum of colours. The photo was taken yesterday.**

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED