

Hastily buried in unmarked graves



SOHEL RANA
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 18**
FROM **JATRABARI**
BURIED ON **JULY 24**



FAISAL SARKER
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 19**
FROM **UTTARA**
BURIED ON **JULY 24**




MD ASSADULLAH
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 19**
FROM **UTTARA**
BURIED ON **JULY 24**



RAFIQUL ISLAM
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 19**
FROM **GOPIBAG**
BURIED ON **JULY 24**



MAHIN MIA
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 19**
FROM **MOHAMMADPUR**
BURIED ON **JULY 24**



AHMED JILANI
WENT MISSING ON **JULY 20**
FROM **DEMRA**
BURIED ON **AUGUST 31**

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At least 12 of these 19 people went missing on August 4 and 5 from Dhaka, Savar, Gazipur, Sirajganj, Panchagarh and Bogura amid clashes and police firing.

The fact-finding report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) cited senior security officials' testimony, saying deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina herself ordered security forces to "arrest the ringleaders of the protests, the troublemakers, kill them and hide their bodies."

However, there is no official account yet of how many bodies were actually hidden by the state apparatus.

The Daily Star investigated 31 cases of unclaimed or missing bodies, but evidence suggests that the actual number is higher.

Over the last two months, we have

pieced together hospital records and police inquest reports as well as records from Anjuman Mufidul Islam, a charity for burial service, and Rayerbazar graveyard, and found evidence of deliberate attempts by state forces to kill protesters and hide their bodies.

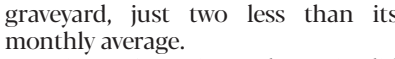
THE UNMARKED GRAVES

Anjuman Mufidul Islam is the only burial service in the country that handles unclaimed bodies. We reviewed its register and found that the charity buried 515 bodies from January to November 2024, an average of 47 bodies per month.

However, the body count jumped after the middle of July. Only in the last 10 days of that month, when police, Rab, BGB, Ansar and armed forces members were called in to tackle the protesters, Anjuman sent 45 bodies for burial in the Rayerbazar

“The night he disappeared, we kept our front door open, thinking he would come home at any moment. My son never came home. Now I cannot even find his grave.”

RASHEDA BEGUM
Sohel Rana's mother.





Sohel Rana's mother Rasheda Begum weeps as she touches the photo of her son at an exhibition.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

In addition to Sohel, Faisal and Assadullah, at least three more protesters – Rafiqul Islam, Mahin Mia, and Ahmed Jilani – now lie in Rayerbazar as unidentified bodies, The Daily Star can confirm.

Photos of their bodies are still on display on a wall of Anjuman among the 114 buried in July-August.

Of the 114, at least 40 died between July 17 and August 5 and the rest 74 before and after that period. Based on the dates of death of the 40, it is likely that many of them were victims of the July massacre.

All the six July uprising victims that we have been able to identify went missing between July 18 and 20 in and around the protest hotspots – Jatrabari, Shonir Akhra, Uttara, and Mohammadpur, witnesses and family members said.

Except Jilani, who was killed on August 3 and laid to rest on August 31, the rest were buried in July, within days of their deaths. Apart from Mahin, who went missing from Mohammadpur and taken to Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, the other five were brought to DMCH.

When we met Sohel Rana's mother Rasheda Begum at her Jatrabari house in January, she clutched a picture of her son to her chest and wept.

“We last heard of him when he said he was crossing Uttara to board a bus. There were sounds of gunfire. Since then, his phone has been switched off.”

ABDUR RAHIM
Brother-in-law of Faisal Sarker.





Burial of eight unidentified bodies related to the July massacre is underway at Rayerbazar graveyard on July 24, 2024.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Four children

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around a year ago and filmed the incident. Since then, he had been blackmailing her and had raped her multiple times.

On January 29, he forcibly entered the victim's home and raped her again. She filed the case on March 10, said Mehedi Hasan, officer-in-charge of Terokhada Police Station.

Police arrested Mofiz on Monday night. He was sent to jail by a court yesterday. Mofiz stands accused in six criminal cases, including a murder case, the OC added.

In Chattogram, a court yesterday sent a man to jail on charge of raping a 10-year-old girl.

Citing the case statement, police said Md Yousuf, 71, of Sitakunda upazila, raped the girl on Monday evening. Locals later caught the accused.

On information, police arrested Yusuf. The victim's mother lodged the case with Sitakunda Police Station, said Sohel Rana, in-charge of Fojdarhat police outpost.

Yesterday, Yusuf was sent to jail after he was produced before a local court, said the police officer.

In Jamalpur's Madarganj upazila, a teenage boy was sued on Monday night over raping a four-year-old girl.

Police said the 16-year-old boy raped the girl on Monday evening luring her with chocolates.

The victim's mother lodged a case that night. The accused went into hiding since the incident, said Hasan Al Mamun, OC of Madarganj Model Police Station.

In another incident, a case was filed against a 55-year-old man on Monday night over attempting to rape his five-old-year granddaughter in the district's Melandah upazila. The accused is on the run, said Shafiqul Islam, OC of Melandah Police Station.

In another incident, police held Jamal Hossain, 32, a construction worker, on Monday on charge of raping a mentally challenged girl in Bandarban's Rowangchhari upazila.

Quoting locals, police said Jamal took the 16-year-old girl to a nearby bush and raped her. Hearing her screams, locals rescued the girl and caught Jamal.

In Dhaka's Savar, a youth was sued yesterday over raping an eight-year-old girl in Ashulia area.

According to the case statement, Md Russel, 19, a resident of Bhola's Lalmohan upazila, is a relative of the victim's family. Russel went to the victim's home around two weeks ago in search of a job.

The victim's parents work in garment factories. When the couple went to work around 6:00am on Monday, Russel raped the girl. Hearing her screams, neighbours rescued the girl. But Russel managed to flee.

The victim's father lodged a case with Ashulia Police Station yesterday. Police are trying to arrest the accused, said Kamal Hossain, inspector (investigation) of the police station.

[Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to this report.]

Court orders to freeze Tk 600cr

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The three storey building and the land is valued at Tk 3.3 crore, according to the property registration documents.

The court has also ordered the confiscation of a flat in Gulshan owned by Rehana's daughter and former British minister Tulip. This flat, purchased in 2002, is valued at Tk 43.24 lakh.

Additionally, two plots of land in Kaliakoir registered to Rehana – one measuring 8.5 decimals and another 1.55 decimals – will be seized. These are valued at Tk 8.75 lakh and Tk 3 lakh, respectively. Her flat in the capital's Segunbagicha, valued at Tk 18.15 lakh, will also be seized.

Two flats owned by Radwan in Niketan, valued at Tk 1.73 crore and Tk 3.08 crore, will be seized.

THE BANK ACCOUNTS

In various bank accounts, around Tk 1.29 crore of Hasina and over Tk 81 lakh

of Rehana and over Tk 2.72 crore in joint accounts of the two sisters have been frozen.

As per ACC records, Joy's Tk 1.17 lakh, Putul's Tk 2.76 crore, and Radwan's Tk 1.27 crore have been frozen.

The list contains Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Trust's Tk 478.81 crore, Centre for Research and Information's Tk 55.74 crore, Awami League's Tk 37.82 crore, and Suchona Foundation's Tk 31.60 crore.

Additionally, the court has ordered the freezing of multiple accounts of Rehana's husband Shafiq Ahmed Siddiq, their family members Bushra Siddiq and Shaheen Siddiq, Abu Siddiq Memorial Trust, and Thames Industry.

The court has also ordered the freezing of Tk 5 in mobile banking service Nagad accounts of Hasina and Rehana.

APPOINTMENT OF RECEIVER

The court ordered appointing administrators to look after the properties of Joy, Putul, Rehana, Radwan and Tulip.

On December 17, last year, the ACC launched a probe into allegations of embezzlement of Tk 80,000 crore against Hasina and her family members from nine projects, including the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant.

On December 22, 2024, the commission also launched an investigation into allegations that Hasina and Joy laundered \$300 million to the United States.

On Monday, the ACC approved the charges against the deposed prime minister and her family members in six cases filed against them over the alleged misuse of power to obtain plots under the Purbachal New Town Project.

Ukraine, US start partial truce talks in Jeddah

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are to meet in the French capital tomorrow. EU and NATO representatives and the Ukrainian defence minister will also take part.

Kyiv officials said the "largest drone attack in history", in which hundreds of drones slammed into Moscow and other areas overnight, was intended to push Russian President Vladimir Putin to agree to the aerial and naval ceasefire.

"This is an additional signal to Putin that he should also be interested in a ceasefire in the air," said Andriy Kovalenko, a national security council official responsible for countering disinformation.

Three people were killed in the attack, which both sides said was the biggest so far on Moscow. Russia's army said it intercepted 337 drones around the country.

Zelensky, who met Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler in Jeddah on Monday, left the White House late last month without signing an agreement pushed by Trump that would give the United States control over Ukrainian mineral resources.

Zelensky has said he is still willing to sign, although Rubio said it would not be the focus of yesterday's meeting.

Rubio, who is accompanied by national security advisor Mike Waltz, said the aid suspension was "something I hope we can resolve" in the talks.

Rubio said the United States had not cut off intelligence for defensive operations.

Asked whether the overnight drone attack could derail peace talks, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitri Peskov said: "There are no (peace) negotiations yet, so there is nothing to disrupt here."

For its part, Russia has escalated strikes on Ukrainian infrastructure and said it had retaken 12 settlements in its Kursk region that Ukraine had captured in a bid for bargaining leverage.

In the infamous White House meeting last month, Zelensky refused to bite his tongue in the face of criticism from Vice President JD Vance, with the Ukrainian leader questioning why his country should trust promises from Russia.

He has since written a repentant letter to Trump.

Faced with Washington's pressure, Ukraine will lay out its support for

a limited ceasefire in the sky and at sea, a Ukrainian official told AFP on Monday.

Rubio signalled that the Trump administration would likely be pleased by such a proposal.

Rubio said he would bring ideas back to Russia.

Rubio and Waltz met last month with counterparts from Russia, also in Saudi Arabia, ending a freeze in high-level contacts imposed by former president Joe Biden after Russia defied Western warnings and launched its invasion.

Trump last week also threatened further sanctions against Russia to force it to the table as it carried out strikes on Ukraine.

But Trump's abrupt shift in US policy – including suggesting Ukraine was to blame for the war, and recently siding with Russia in recent votes at the UN – has stunned many allies.

Rubio said Monday that the United States would also object to "antagonistic" language on Russia at an upcoming gathering of Group of Seven foreign ministers.

Protest march foiled by police

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"The women were kicked after they fell to the ground. They have left us with no choice but to create a mass movement for the home adviser's removal," she said.

Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police, said at least eight police personnel were assaulted by the protesters.

The protester, mostly students, demand exemplary punishment for rapists, amendment of relevant laws, and formation of a special tribunal to handle rape cases.

Amid a spate of incidents of violence against women, students began protests earlier this week.

Yesterday morning, students from 30 colleges demonstrated at Shahbagh with similar demands.

Around midday, they kept the Shahbagh intersection blocked for half an hour and then demonstrated in front of the National Museum for several hours.

There were also a rally and a torch procession on DU campus last night.