



Painters add fresh coats of colour beneath the Mayor Hanif Flyover during the Eid holidays, bringing life to the otherwise drab concrete. The initiative is part of Dhaka South City Corporation's ongoing effort to beautify the city. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

271 arrested in joint drives from June 5-12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army, in coordination with other law-enforcement agencies, arrested 271 individuals during weeklong joint operations carried out across the country between June 5 and June 12.

The arrestees include known terrorists, illegal arms holders, smugglers, juvenile gang members, extortionists, drug dealers, and addicts, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a press statement yesterday.

During the drives, the law enforcers recovered 15 illegal firearms, 91 rounds of assorted ammunition, 18 shotgun cartridges, 21 empty cartridges, 38 hand-made bombs, various narcotics, locally made weapons, motorcycles, mobile phones, and cash.

All arrestees were handed over to local police stations after preliminary interrogation and legal procedures, the ISPR said.

The statement added that the army continues to carry out regular patrols and security operations across the country to ensure public safety.

In industrial zones, army patrol teams have been facilitating discussions between factory owners and workers, ensuring timely payment of wages and bonuses ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

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Justice eludes families of July uprising victims

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL and SHARIFUL ISLAM

Shilpi Begum's life changed forever when her only son, Mehedi Hasan, was shot dead during a protest last July.

Since then, the grieving mother from Sonargaon, Narayanganj, has suffered two strokes. Now her only remaining wish is to see justice for her son.

"I just want those responsible for my son's death to be punished," Shilpi told The Daily Star recently.

But that hope is fading, as there has been no progress in the investigation over the past nine months.

Mehedi, 21, a student at Gazaria Institute of Science and Technology, was fatally shot in the head on July 20 during clashes between police, Awami League activists, and protesters in Siddhirganj.

On August 15, his father Sana Ullah filed a complaint with the ICT investigation agency accusing Sheikh Hasina, former ministers Obaidul Quader, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, and Zunaid Ahmed Palak, as well as ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun. Two of them -- Palak and Abdullah Al-Mamun -- are currently in jail on charges related to crimes against humanity committed during the uprising.

"The investigator visited us once. That's all," Sana Ullah said outside the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), hoping for answers.

Sana Ullah also named activists of AL affiliated organisations -- Jubo League and Chhatra League -- as being involved. In a later

complaint, he added more names, including several police officers and a local councillor.

Investigation Officer Zahirol Islam did not respond to phone calls despite repeated attempts.

Contacted, Investigation Agency Co-coordinator Muhammed Shahidullah Chowdhury said, "I cannot say outright what is the progress of the investigation as many complaints have been lodged. If the victim's father visits

No progress has been made in the investigation into my son's death. Due to the delays, the witnesses of the incident are losing confidence and are now afraid of giving statements.

ZARTAJ PARVEEN  
Mother of Shafiq Uddin

us, instead of the ICT, we can look into the progress."

The grieving father met ICT Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam on Monday, who said they are currently busy dealing with Sheikh Hasina's command responsibility case. After the investigation of that case is completed, they will look into Mehedi's killing.

The family is not alone. So far, over 300 complaints have been filed with the chief prosecutor's office. A total of 23 cases have

been lodged with the tribunal, according to the chief prosecutor's office.

In March, around 70 family members of the July victims held a sit-in outside the ICT, demanding swift justice.

The mother of another July uprising victim, Shafiq Uddin Ahmed Ahnaf, is also frustrated due to the delay in ensuring justice for her son's killing.

"No progress has been made in the investigation into my son's death. Due to the delays, the witnesses of the incident are losing confidence and are now afraid of giving statements," said Zartaj Parveen, mother of Shafiq Uddin, 17, who was shot dead in the Mirpur-10 area during the uprising.

She lodged a complaint with the ICT prosecution on October 19 last year.

Another July uprising victim, journalist Mehedi Hasan's father Mosharraf Hossain, demanded justice within the tenure of the interim government.

After the uprising, the tribunal's investigation agency was restructured, and there are now 25 investigation officers, according to the agency's website.

Tajul Islam recently said the people demand swift justice, but trials for crimes against humanity are not ordinary; they cannot proceed under street pressure.

"This is a matter of law and professional investigation," he said, cautioning that rushing may jeopardise the case and undermine justice.

Barguna sees sharp spike in dengue

Locals, experts blame poor drainage, indiscriminate garbage dumping

HELEMUL ALAM and SOHRAB HOSSAIN

On the day of Eid-ul-Azha (June 7), Omar Al Arabi, a third grader at Barguna Collectorate School and College, was diagnosed with dengue.

He was first admitted to Barguna General Hospital, then moved to Rahat Anwar Clinic in Barishal. As his condition worsened, he was shifted to the ICU of Anwar Khan Modern Hospital in Dhaka, where he is currently receiving treatment.

Arabi is among many dengue patients in Barguna, which has become a major dengue hotspot this year.

The death toll includes 75-year-old Chan Mia from Charpara village in M Baliaatal union, who was admitted on June 9, and 70-year-old Gosai Das from Thanapara in Barguna town.

On June 6, Azmeri Monalisa Zerín,

27, daughter of former lawmaker Zafarul Hasan Farhad, also died while undergoing treatment. Zerín was an LLB student at a private university and the founder of a cake-making business.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), 108 dengue patients were hospitalised in the past 24 hours, with 79 admitted to Barguna General Hospital alone.

Out of 5,411 total dengue cases recorded this year across the country till yesterday, 1,485 are from Barguna. Among 23 reported deaths in the same period, two occurred in Barguna, as per DGHS data.

Currently, 184 patients are receiving treatment at Barguna General Hospital, the data also says.

Residents, entomologists, doctors, and municipal authorities blame the



Patients at the dengue ward at the Barguna General Hospital.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

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614 died in road crashes in May

Says Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 614 people died and 1,196 were injured in 597 road accidents across the country in May, Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity said yesterday.

Motorcycles were involved in 233 crashes alone, resulting in 256 deaths and 201 injuries. This accounts for 39.02 percent of all accidents, 41.69 percent of the fatalities, and 16.80 percent of the injuries, it said.

Dhaka division recorded the highest 139 road crashes last month, with 148 people dead and 271 injured. On the other hand, Barishal division saw the lowest 30 road accidents, resulting in 30 deaths and 44 injuries.

Additionally, 35 people died and 14 were injured in 48 rail-related accidents, and nine people died and 10 went missing in seven reported waterway-related incidents during the same period.

The organisation prepared the information based on media reports.

Among the victims, 92 were students, 154 were drivers, 103 were pedestrians, and 67 were transport workers, it added.

JCD forms new committees at 19 private univs

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of the BNP, has announced new committees in 19 private universities such as BRAC University and Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology.

The announcement came yesterday through a press statement issued by the office secretary of JCD's private university unit.

The announcement follows the first phase, in which JCD formed committees in nine private universities on March 24 this year.

"With the same continuity, we have announced committees in 19 more private universities to strengthen our organisational activities by involving current students," Abu Horayra,

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Twenty-three Hajj pilgrims died in KSA this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 23 Bangladeshi pilgrims died while performing Hajj in Saudi Arabia this year, according to the latest update from the Hajj Management Portal of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Among the deceased, 21 were men and two were women, according to the report released yesterday.

A breakdown of the deaths by location shows that 15 occurred in Makkah, seven in Madinah, and one in Arafat. No deaths have been reported in Jeddah, Mina, or Muzdalifah.

A total of 87,100 Bangladeshi pilgrims travelled to Saudi Arabia this year -- 5,200 under government management and 81,900 via private agencies -- to perform Hajj held on June 5.

According to official records, 65 Bangladeshi Hajj pilgrims died in 2024 and 121 in 2023.

NAT'L INSTITUTE OF OPHTHALMOLOGY Outdoor services resume amid security concerns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outdoor services at the National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital (NIOH) resumed yesterday after more than two weeks, bringing relief to patients seeking eye treatment.

At 11:20am, over 100 patients were seen waiting on the hospital's ground floor. A total of 577 patients received treatment at the outdoor department throughout the day.

However, many patients were unable to receive treatment, as the service was limited to four hours -- about 2.5 hours less than usual.

The 250-bed hospital, the country's largest government eye care facility, had suspended all services on May 28 following a clash between hospital staff and a group of patients injured in the July uprising, along with other patients and their attendants.

Emergency services resumed on a limited scale from June 4, but all other operations remained closed until yesterday.

Six doctors were on duty when the outdoor services resumed at 8:00am, and a large number of patients gathered.

Mid Babul, 50, a driver by profession, came to the hospital on Wednesday but didn't get treatment. "I came again today

[yesterday] with my eye problems," he said while standing in the queue.

Arif Ahmed, a private employee from Munshiganj, said, "I came to the hospital at 9:30am and I'm still waiting," while speaking at around 12:00pm.

**HOSPITAL STAFF RAISE SECURITY CONCERNS**

Zane Alam, acting director of the hospital, said all services are expected to fully resume from Saturday as per the health ministry's instructions.

However, hospital staff, including doctors and nurses, have expressed concerns over security. They submitted a memorandum to the health adviser through the acting director seeking protection.

In the memorandum, the staffers said they have been providing treatment to all patients injured in the July Movement with high priority and standard. Still, the hospital is currently facing a serious security crisis and an increasingly untenable situation.

"Some patients who no longer require treatment have been occupying hospital beds unnecessarily for nearly ten months. They have been violating hospital discipline by engaging in unruly behaviour, verbally abusing and physically attacking doctors and staff, and even threatening the

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A man rides a bicycle with a child seated behind him in a makeshift passenger seat fashioned from a box. Though they appear cheerful, the precarious setup poses a serious risk, as it could detach at any moment and cause an accident. The photo was taken opposite the FDC building in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN