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Cops foil ex-BDR members' march

Use water cannons, sound grenades to disperse them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday used water cannons and fired sound grenades to disperse dismissed members of Bangladesh Rifles, now Border Guard Bangladesh, and their family members after they blocked the road in front of Kakrail Mosque.

The protesters were marching towards the chief adviser's residence, Jamuna, pressing a three point demand that includes reinstatement of their jobs and renaming the force back to BDR.

Traffic movement in the area came to a halt due to the blockade.

Witnesses said the dismissed BDR personnel and their families have been demonstrating in front of the National Museum in Shahbagh for over two weeks. Several hundred

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A man ducks and pushes his bicycle underneath the lowered rail gate as a train approaches in the distance. The few minutes he might save pale in comparison to the danger he puts himself in. The photo was taken at Tejgaon rail crossing yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Veteran journo Shamim Ahmad passes away

UNB, Dhaka

Shamim Ahmad, former chief of correspondents of UNB, passed away at a hospital in the capital yesterday morning.

He was 68.

He was admitted to a private hospital on Sunday as his health condition deteriorated, said his brother and journalist Rashed Ahmed Mitul.

Shamim is survived by his mother, four brothers, three sisters and a host of relatives and well-wishers.

Mitul said he was buried

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Father held for 'killing son' in Dhaka

UNB, Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Sunday night arrested a man in Gazipur's Konabari flyover area for allegedly killing his son in Dhaka's Hazaribagh on June 14.

The arrestee is Mustafizur Rahman Jewel, 44.

Rab-10 Assistant Director (Media) ASP Shamim Hasan Sardar said Mustafizur allegedly hacked his son Rahabul Islam Russell with a sharp weapon over a family dispute.

Following the murder, Russell was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

His brother Rabiu Islam Rabbi filed a case with Hazaribagh Police Station.

Tipped off, a team of Rab-10 arrested Mustafizur and handed him over to the police station, he added.

Tk 2 for a day's work

Prisons chief pushes to raise pay for inmate labour

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Prisoners in Bangladesh legally earn only Tk 2 per day for their labour, a figure so low that it demoralises inmates and undermines their rehabilitation efforts through meaningful work.

The outdated wage provision, part of the existing jail code, is now at the centre of growing calls for reform in the country's prison employment system.

Brig Gen Syed Muhammad Motahar Hussain, inspector general of prisons, yesterday raised the issue at a seminar titled "Right to Employment in Prison: Employment as a Basic Human Need", organised by De-Cage Initiatives at the Professor Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium, Faculty of Social Sciences Building of Dhaka University.

He said the jail code permits paying inmates just Tk 2 per day, regardless of their work – be it furniture making, tailoring, or garment production.

"You can imagine how frustrating it is for someone who works eight hours a day and receives

such a negligible amount," he said. He explained that prison-made products are sold at lower prices not because of production efficiency, but due to the outdated wage structure.

"If a wardrobe costs Tk 15,000 in the market, we might sell it for Tk 7,000 or less, simply because our

• Inmates work 8 hours a day and earn Tk 2

• Authorities plan to set up industrial zones inside prisons

• Aims to engage 10,000 inmates in first phase

• A draft Correction Services Act-2025 is in final stage to replace existing jail code

workers get token pay," he said. "It's not sustainable, and the inmates lose motivation."

According to prison data, over 70,000 inmates are currently held in jails across the country. Around five percent are elderly, while 65,000 inmates are aged between 18 and 50.

Among them, 15,000 are between 18 and 21, 20,000 between 22 and 30, and another 18,000 between 31 and 40 years.

Officials believe this demographic represents a largely untapped workforce.

"Most of our inmates are young and able. Many were factory workers, mechanics, electricians, or tailors before incarceration," said the IG prisons.

"We also have educated professionals – engineers and even doctors. They can contribute if given a chance."

However, only a small portion of inmates participate in productive work, largely due to the lack of incentive, he said.

"Why would someone work for Tk 2 a day when they know their effort hardly makes a difference? Many simply choose not to work," he said.

To address this, the Department of Prisons has proposed establishing open industrial zones within prisons, where private companies can set up manufacturing units. Talks are ongoing with BEZA and other stakeholders.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7



Present true history of Liberation War: Yunus

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday stressed the need to present the true history of the Liberation War impartially through the activities of the Ministry of Liberation War.

He made the remarks at a meeting held at the state guest house Jamuna in the capital.

Liberation War Affairs Adviser Faruk E Azam, Principal Secretary to

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Political stability, democracy key to nat'l security
Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National security is not solely about military capability; it is closely linked to political stability, democratic development, and economic prosperity, said speakers at an event on Sunday.

They said the country must move forward through a democratic process based on national unity to ensure national security.

The event, titled "National unity is imperative for the interest of national security", was organised by the Foundation for Strategic and Development Studies at a hotel in the capital.

Leaders from various political parties, civil society organisations, former military officials, university teachers, journalists, and other professionals attended the programme.

Speakers said national unity could serve as the strongest security shield for Bangladesh, which is currently facing critical challenges, including border instability with India and Myanmar, the Rohingya crisis, and incidents in the CHT.

They recommended enhancing military capabilities, offering short-term military training for youth, forming a national security council involving all stakeholders, and strengthening democratic institutions.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Release detained journalists, end harassment Demand 51 journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty-one journalists across the country yesterday demanded the release of detained journalists and condemned harassment.

In a joint statement, the signatories, including current and former leaders of various journalist associations, expressed deep concern over the "alarming political instability", saying it has "given rise to violent crackdowns and coordinated intimidation campaigns".

"These developments have placed press freedom and journalist safety under threat," the statement read.

The media has, in effect, been taken hostage by a systematic policy of repression involving ongoing violence and orchestrated

mob attacks, it added.

Over the past 11 months, a disturbing pattern of events – including journalist killings, death threats, job terminations, fabricated murder charges, arbitrary arrests and prolonged detentions, asset freezes, travel bans, accreditation revocations, membership suspensions, and attacks on media offices – has plunged the journalistic profession into a climate of fear and extreme insecurity, it said.

According to statistics from local and international media and human rights organisations, the past 11 months have seen at least 10 journalists killed, 412 journalists detained in "politically motivated or baseless cases" and 39

Threats, cases undermine spirit of July uprising

Say Jatiya Press Club leaders in statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday said incidents of threats to the media and the trend of filing cases against media workers on charges of attempted murder go against the spirit of the July uprising.

In a statement, its President Hasan Hafiz and General Secretary Ayub Bhuiyan expressed concern over a "threat to the media by a July movement leader".

They said one of the reasons behind the student-led uprising was to ensure freedom of expression and the press.

"Threatening the media is an obstacle and interference in achieving that goal."

They also said if anyone is aggrieved by the role of the media, the Bangladesh Press Council is there to provide redress.

One can also go to court according to the existing rules of law, they added.

"But, we believe, such threat is an obstacle to the establishment, practice, and development of democratic culture in the country," the statement said.



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