

## Yunus assures probe into

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is praying for the injured from a

distance. "I have no words. I don't even know how to begin. Like me, people across the country are stunned and in shock today. None of us could have imagined such a tragedy. It was beyond anyone's thoughts. And yet, we were suddenly forced to accept this unthinkable reality," the chief adviser said, starting his speech in an emotional, choked voice.

"What answer will we give to their parents? What will we say to them? We can't even answer ourselves. The innocent faces of children we never knew keep flashing before our eyes."

He said the entire nation is stunned and speechless. "Even the word 'sorrow' seems too little to describe what we are feeling. The shock of this tragedy hasn't worn off yet. Bodies are still arriving at hospitals. Children are still dying in hospitals. Parents are still desperately searching, asking where their sons or daughters are. Some may never recognise them again."

"The bodies we're seeing -- how can anyone tell which one is their own child? There's no way to trace them. These children were ours -- all of ours. Suddenly, they are gone forever," the chief adviser added.

He extended his deepest sympathy to the parents, families, and loved ones of all those killed and injured in the crash incident.

"Every child in Bangladesh is your child too. We will try to find some comfort in our hearts, and we are all sharing this grief with you. The entire nation stands with you in this moment of sorrow," Prof Yunus said.

He mentioned that the government has already announced a state mourning today to pay tribute to the victims.

"We will remember them together. We will pray for peace for their souls. From today, we ask everyone to pray for them, for their forgiveness and eternal peace. May Allah grant you peace. May Allah bring peace to everyone in our nation who has been devastated by this tragedy. We are all praying for them," he added.

## Dhaka on 'right'

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Meanwhile, local garment exporters, who face one of the steepest tariffs in the US market, are closely watching the developments.

Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said the impact of the current US tariff varies widely across factories.

Of 1,322 member factories, 146 export 81-100 percent of their products to the US, and 91 factories export 61-80 percent. Another 87 factories export 41-60 percent, according to BGMEA data.

"We will face a lot of challenges if the tariff is not lowered," Khan told The Daily Star.

Shovon Islam, managing director of Sparrow Group, which exports \$150 million worth of goods to the US annually -- half of his company's total exports -- said some American buyers have already asked him to share half of the 35 percent tariff burden.

Others are frustrated with the high duty, he said.

Islam added that he, along with some of the buyers, are still hopeful the negotiations will yield results.

A businessman said a private sector group, particularly from the garment industry, is now lobbying to involve American buyers in seeking a reduced tariff for Bangladesh.

## PR system

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of martyrs, we would surely have finalised it by now," he said, calling to finalise the list in a year a "collective shame."

"Please, do not betray the blood of the martyrs," he added.

He said fascism cannot be prevented only by the formulation and enactment of laws.

"It is often the disregard for the rule of law that turns individuals into fascists or autocrats. To prevent such tendencies within the state, the people must be empowered, both politically and economically, as I have repeatedly said," Tarique added.

He said if people remain empowered and retain the ability to exercise their political rights, then their unity is sufficient to resist fascism or authoritarianism.

That's why BNP is demanding the formation of a government directly elected by the people, to ensure that the will and power of the people are effectively upheld in the governance of the state, Tarique added.

Drawing the attention of the interim government, Tarique said the government set priorities straight to run the administration smoothly.

## Curfewed calm, burning rage

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

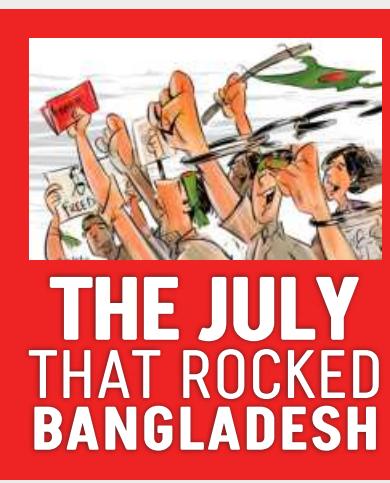
On July 22, 2024, the nation witnessed a fragile calm after nearly a week of violent unrest. While capital Dhaka saw no fresh clashes on the third day of a strict nationwide curfew, the country continued to grapple with the aftermath. The death toll climbed further as six more injured individuals succumbed to their wounds, and tensions remained high amid mass arrests, political accusations, and heightened security presence.

Four of the victims succumbed to their injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), with hospital authorities confirming that they had suffered either bullet or shotgun pellet wounds.

In addition, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Ahad Ali said police recovered two more bodies from the National Institute of Neuroscience and Hospital. These were later sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College morgue for autopsies. The victims had reportedly sustained injuries during clashes in Uttara and Gulshan over the preceding days.

With these latest fatalities, the nationwide death toll since July 15 rose to at least 146. The unrest began that day when six people were killed in violent clashes related to the ongoing quota reform movement.

In a separate development, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan stated that three police personnel had been killed and 1,117 others injured across the country during confrontations



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would not be spared this time as they had been in the past. She accused them of attempting to carry out terrorist activities during the ongoing curfew.

On the same day, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman expressed optimism that stability would soon return, crediting the military's presence for the improving situation.

The University Teachers Network (UTN) issued a statement urging the government to withdraw the nationwide curfew and restore internet services to ease public suffering. The disruption, they said, was severely affecting access to essential services.

According to police, 1,427 people were arrested across the country in connection with the recent violence over the last three days. Of them, 692 were detained in the capital, while the rest were arrested in 16 other districts.



**"Don't take Baba away!" — Little Tayeba ran after the prison van carrying her father to jail, while her mother, Mona, tried to hold her back. Mizan, a CNG driver, had been arrested from their home in the capital's Jatrabari the previous night in connection with a case over. He was produced before the CMM court, which sent him to jail on the afternoon of July 22, 2024.**

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## July Charter must be made in 10 days

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"Some parties may still have minor suggestions or feedback. We have requested that you organise and submit those suggestions to us by today [yesterday], so that we can present them tomorrow and try to reach a decision or we must make decisions ourselves."

He reminded attendees that the commission has only 10 days left, including yesterday, to finalise the process. "We've already discussed many issues; the rest will be addressed as well."

Highlighting the significance of the political dialogue, he said, "In the preliminary stage, you agreed or disagreed on many matters. We consider crucial areas like state structure, system of governance, and principles of good governance."

"We have presented them again for further discussion. On eight such issues, consensus has been built, although in some cases, notes of dissent have been recorded."

Prof Riaz said, "We must decide within the next 10 days. Where consensus is possible, we shall have it. Where disagreement remains, it will remain. If the majority supports a decision, we cannot dismiss it simply because of disagreement. There is no

position from us that says it should be abandoned."

He added that they have presented these issues because they consider these essential for state structure reform. "If we evaluate them properly, we can reach a unified position within 10 days and formulate the National Charter. If our cooperation continues, we can come to that unified point."

Chief adviser's Special Assistant Monir Hayder presided over the session.

Commission members -- Safar Raj Hossain, Badiul Alam Majumdar, Iftekharuzzaman, and Ayub Mia -- were also present.

During yesterday's talks, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed reiterated his party's position, saying that the prime minister should also serve as the leader of parliament to ensure the legislature functions effectively.

He added, "There should be flexibility to allow a party chief to become the prime minister. The ruling party should decide which of their lawmakers is going to be the prime minister."

Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant General Secretary Hamidur Rahman Azad said his party opposed the PM's dual

roles as a party chief.

Tipu Biswas, chief coordinator of the Jatiya Gano Front, said a person becomes an autocrat while working as the premier and a party chief.

Mushtuq Hossain, president member of Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, said the prime minister could be the leader of the parliament but must not hold the post of a party chief.

Amar Bangladesh Party, Gano Forum, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, Khelafat Majlis, Nizam-e-Islami Party, Rashtra Sangskar Andolan, among others, supported that the proposal that the prime minister and the leader of the parliament could be the same person.

But representatives of the parties strongly recommended that the prime minister must not hold the position of a party chief.

National Citizen Party Joint Convener Javed Rasin said a party chief must resign from the post before taking oath as the prime minister.

Representatives of the Communist Party of Bangladesh and Socialist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist) supported that a party chief must not be the PM, but they suggested not including this provision in the constitution.

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