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Nation mourns lost children

Death of a 9-year-old early today pushes toll to 32

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY and DIPAN NANDY

The death toll from the jet crash at Milestone School and College rose to 32 yesterday, as the nation reeled from shock and grief following the country's deadliest aviation tragedy in years.

At hospitals, scenes of anguish unfolded as families -- many with children in ICUs -- waited for updates, clinging to hope. Others, less fortunate, moved from one morgue to another in search of their children's bodies.

Meanwhile, grief turned to fury on the Milestone school's Diabari campus, where students demanded to know the true death toll and accountability for the tragedy.

Around 2:00pm yesterday, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the death toll from the crash rose to 31. It added that at least 165 people were injured in the crash.

The toll rose to 32 after a nine-year-old victim, Arian Nashraf Nafi, with 95 percent burns, died at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic

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“When I saw him [in the ICU], he said, ‘Abbu, take me away from here.’ That’s all. I just want to take my son home, healthy.”

MOHAMMAD MOHSIN father of Makin, a seventh-grader with severe burns



A student of Milestone School and College holds her teacher as she cries while recounting the horrors of the previous day when a fighter jet crashed into one of the school buildings.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Govt failing on law and order

Say four parties at meeting with CA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has major administrative failures and is struggling to maintain law and order, said four political parties, including BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, and Islami Andolan Bangladesh.

Leaders of BNP, Jamaat, National Citizen Party, and Islami Andolan Bangladesh conveyed the message during the meeting last night at state guesthouse Jamuna.

There was no disagreement among the parties about confronting fascism, a source present at the meeting said.

After the meeting, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul told reporters that the four parties urged the government to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Rohan's run for survival
The 14-year-old burn victim who bore pain with quiet strength



MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The image of him running across the Milestone School and College field, his body scorched, in a desperate attempt to survive, shook the nation when the video went viral on social media after the incident on Monday.

For a full day, no one knew who he was -- only that he was a child, burnt and running to find help all by himself.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CALL FOR EDN ADVISER'S RESIGNATION HSC examinees storm Secretariat, stage protest

75 hurt as cops, army men charge truncheons

STAR REPORT

At least 75 people were injured as clashes broke out at the Secretariat between law enforcers and HSC examinees, who were demonstrating for various demands, including the resignation of Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar and the education secretary.

Police and army personnel charged truncheons and fired tear gas canisters as students stormed the Secretariate complex yesterday, triggering a chase and counter-chase that lasted for over an hour.

Protests also erupted in different parts of the country, with demonstrators blocking key roads for hours. Their demands also included the publication of a full and accurate list of the deceased and injured in the Milestone jet crash.

The students were protesting the government's delayed response in postponing yesterday's HSC exam, despite the tragic jet crash at Milestone School and College in Diabari the day before.

The government announced the postponement around 3:00am, just hours before the test was to begin. The students said they were angered by the late decision.

Amid the protest, the government postponed tomorrow's HSC and equivalent exams and removed Siddiq Zubair from his post of senior secretary of the education ministry.

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Mahfuz Alam, the information and broadcasting adviser and member secretary of the Public Administration Affairs Committee, confirmed the information in a Facebook post. No official reason was given.

In Dhaka, several hundred students, mostly HSC examinees, from various colleges in Dhamondi and nearby areas brought out a procession and first gathered in front of the Board of Secondary and Higher Education.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

From chirps to silence

WASIM BIN HABIB

The acrid stench of charred wood and melted plastic still clung to the air as onlookers gathered around the Milestone School and College building in Uttara's Diabari.

The two-storey building, where laughter once echoed through classrooms and children ran along the long corridors, was now a scorched and silent shell.

The fighter jet that fell from the sky, crashed into a class 3 classroom, just next to the staircase. Flames devoured everything -- walls, grills, furniture -- leaving behind twisted metal and blackened concrete.

Several rooms east of the point of impact on the ground floor were gutted, but the third graders' classroom in the middle of the building was reduced to a gaping hole.

Just outside, a few coconut trees that once adorned the entrance now stood slanted and singed.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

Grief gives way to rage at Milestone

Advisers confined for 9 hours as protesters demand answers

STAR REPORT

Grief, sorrow, and collective rage gripped the capital yesterday as people tried to come to terms with the one of the worst aviation disasters in the country's history.

Protests erupted in front of Milestone School and College in Uttara's Diabari in phases and were dealt with heavy-handedness by the law enforcers.

Grieving students protesting at the Diabari circle were flanked by riot police carrying tear gas and truncheons.

The government's attempt to quell the emotional outpouring backfired, and two advisers and a section of the chief adviser's press wing were confined by students inside the college for over nine hours.

The morning began with protests by the students, demanding justice for victims of Monday's fatal aircraft crash, and asserting that mere condolences or expressions of sorrow are insufficient.

Their six-point demand includes an accurate list of the names of deceased and a verified list of the injured. They also demanded that the families of the deceased receive compensation from the air force.

They also urged the retirement of unsafe aircraft, the use of safer planes, and a humane overhaul of training procedures and zones.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

Important to have strong air base at Kurmitola' Says chief of air staff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Air Chief Marshal Hassan Mahmood Khan yesterday urged all to shun rumours and remain united during these trying times, stressing that it was essential for national sovereignty to have a strong air base in Dhaka's Kurmitola.

He also extended his condolences to the families of all those who were killed and injured in the crash of a fighter jet on the Milestone School and College campus in Dhaka's Uttara.

"Accidents like this are very difficult to control, especially in a densely populated country like ours. When I first flew from this base in 1985, there was nothing around here.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6



Police officers charging batons at protesters who broke into the Secretariat yesterday to demand the resignation of Education Adviser CR Abrar.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**CONSENSUS TALKS
Same person can't be party chief, PM
Most parties, except BNP and allies, agree**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The majority of political parties, excluding the BNP and its allies, yesterday agreed that a party chief should not be eligible to serve as prime minister.

The parties opposing the decision can submit a "Note of Dissent" to be included in the upcoming National Charter, widely referred to as the July Charter, said Ali Riaz, vice-president of the national consensus commission, after the conclusion of the 17th day of discussions for the second round of dialogue.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

**NOTICE
A life for Bangladesh
TAJUDDIN AHMAD AT 100**

On the birth centenary of Bangladesh's first Prime Minister, Tajuddin Ahmad, The Daily Star is proud to present a special 12-page supplement, out today. From rare photographs and untold stories to reflections on his visionary leadership during the Liberation War — this issue offers a deep dive into the life and legacy of a man who shaped our nation's destiny.

DON'T FORGET TO COLLECT YOUR COPY.



PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS, PALASH KHAN, AMRAN HOSSAIN

THE DAY AFTER... *Bottom left:* Relatives of Raisa Moni were showing her picture to those at the crash site as she had remained missing since the incident. She was later found dead at CMH yesterday. *Top left:* Students of West End High School in Dhaka's Azimpur praying for the victims of the Milestone school jet crash. *Centre top left:* Two volunteer bikers stationed themselves in front of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery offering free rides to victims of the crash and their families. *Centre top right:* Students protesting in front of the main gate of the Secretariat, demanding the resignation of Education Adviser CR Abrar. *Top right:* Aminul Islam Jony holding the NID card of his wife Lamia Akter Sonia, who had gone to pick up their daughter Zaira from Milestone school. Zaira was found unharmed but Lamia had been missing since the crash on Monday. *Bottom right:* Milestone students protesting in front of the wreckage at the school campus to press home their six-point demand.

Same person can't be party chief, PM

FROM PAGE 1

Yesterday's discussions focused on three key issues: restrictions on a single person holding multiple top posts, the formation of a caretaker government and appointment mechanisms for constitutional and statutory bodies.

About three-fourths of the political parties supported separating the roles of the prime minister and party chief, although they were open to the same person serving as the leader of the house and the PM, according to Riaz.

There was also broad support for establishing a constitutional bar to prevent excessive concentration of power, he said, adding that the dissenting parties were encouraged to reconsider.

The BNP, LDP, Labour Party, NDM and the 12 party alliance opposed the separation of posts.

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed argued that in a democratic system, MPs have the right to choose their leader, even if that person is the party chief.

Citing the cases of the US and the UK, he said there is no reason to bar party leaders from becoming PM.

Jamaat-e-Islami's Nayeb-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Muhammad Taher supported separating the roles.

"We want the prime minister and the leader of the house to be the same person, but not the party chief. This will encourage intra-party democracy," he said.

National Citizens Party (NCP) member secretary Akhtar Hossen echoed the same, saying that the concentration of power in one person threatens democracy.

"We support having different people in these three roles. However, consensus has emerged around the idea that the PM and the leader of the House may be the same, but not the party chief," he said.

While most parties agreed on the need for a neutral interim government to oversee elections, no final consensus

has emerged on how to form it, Riaz said.

The commission also proposed changes to the appointment processes for key institutions: the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and the Ombudsman.

A seven-member search committee was proposed, led by the speaker and including the PM, the opposition leader, deputy speaker, a representative of the third-largest party and one nominee each from the president and chief justice.

Interested individuals would submit applications that would be vetted through a transparent review process. Recommended names would be forwarded to the president for final appointment.

For the Election Commission in particular, an appointment committee could include three elected representatives, one Appellate Division judge nominated by the chief justice and one representative of the president, Riaz said.

While some parties responded positively, discussions will continue today.

Akhtar questioned the lack of a single independent appointment body, warning against reverting to party-based systems.

Appointments must be party-free, independent, coordinated and constitutionally defined, he said.

The BNP did not participate in the session on appointments.

Salahuddin said his party would comment in the next session.

Jamaat also said the issue wasn't extensively discussed.

Earlier in the day, the Consensus Commission adopted a resolution expressing condolences over the tragic crash of a Bangladesh Air Force fighter jet at Milestone School and College.

Representatives of all participating political parties signed the resolution in solidarity.

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Nation mourns lost children

FROM PAGE 1

Surgery around 12:15am today, said Resident Surgeon Shawon Bin Rahman.

Nafiz's elder sister, Nazia Tabassum, 13, died on Tuesday night, he added.

There was no immediate statement from the health ministry on Nafiz's death.

Earlier, the ministry put the death toll at 28, citing double count at certain hospitals. It said 68 patients were undergoing treatment at five hospitals.

The ministry has formed a multidisciplinary committee to oversee treatment efforts. To assist the efforts, Chong Si Jack, a senior consultant and member of a medical team from Singapore General Hospital, arrived last night, said a health ministry official.

The Indian Ministry of External Affairs yesterday said it was sending a team of burn specialist doctors and nurses to Dhaka to treat the injured.

The incident shook the nation to its core, as most of the victims of Monday's crash were schoolchildren who had just been let out of class.

An ordinary school day turned into a colossal tragedy when a Bangladesh Air Force F-7 BGJ jet suffered a mid-air mechanical fault and ploughed into the school, engulfing the ground floor of a two-story building on the campus in flames and smoke. The building housed classrooms for third and fourth grade students on the ground floor, and the room struck by the plane was used for class three.

Yesterday, the national flag was flown at half-mast at all government, semi-government, autonomous, and educational institutions across the country to mourn the victims.

The bodies of 20 victims, including the jet's pilot, have been handed over to their families. Many of them took their loved ones' bodies back to their home districts.

Meanwhile, students of Milestone School and College staged daylong protests on their Diabari campus, demanding an accurate list of the dead and injured, and a public apology for the alleged assault on teachers after the crash.

The agitating students also prevented two advisers and officials from the Chief Adviser's Press Wing from leaving the campus for nine hours after they went there to convey their sympathies to the students and

teachers. They were finally escorted out around 7:30pm.

NUMBER MISMATCH

Before the late-night update, the ISPR had put the death toll at 31 – nine more than the previous day.

According to ISPR data, 16 people died at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), 10 at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, two at Lubana General Hospital, and one each at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Uttara Adhunik Medical College Hospital, and United Hospital. It also said 165 others were injured in the incident.

However, during a press briefing at the burn institute around 3:30pm, Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum stated that the official death toll stood at 29.

Asked about the discrepancy, Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for the health ministry, said the ISPR had reported 16 deaths at CMH, but the ministry had confirmed 15.

He also mentioned confusion regarding a reported death at Uttara Adhunik Medical College Hospital.

"We are in talks with the ISPR and hope to resolve the confusion soon," he added.

Later, the health ministry released a revised list based on updates until 5:00pm, putting the official death toll at 28.

According to the ministry's latest update around 10:30pm, the death toll remained unchanged.

As per the list, 15 died at CMH, 10 at the National Burn Institute, and one each at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Lubana General Hospital and Cardiac Centre, and United Hospital.

Clarifying the change, a ministry official said earlier reports had mentioned two deaths at Lubana Hospital. "However, one of them, Omaia Nur Ashiq, was actually brought to United Hospital. As a result, the death toll at Lubana decreased by one," he said, requesting anonymity.

Among the 28 deceased, the identities of seven have yet to be confirmed, and efforts are underway to identify them. Sixty-eight victims were receiving treatment at five hospitals, including 42 at the National Burn Institute and 23 at CMH, he said.

Prof Sayedur said the condition of 10 patients at the burn institute was critical. Of the 28 confirmed dead, 25

were children, two were teachers of the school, and one was the pilot, he added.

CRY, WAIT AT BURN INSTITUTE

Unlike Monday, when hundreds of people disrupted services at the 500-bed hospital, authorities allowed only patients, their relatives, and hospital staff inside the hospital yesterday.

Army men were seen guarding the entrance to the hospital.

One of our correspondents, allowed into the hospital, witnessed harrowing scenes as distraught families waited outside the ICU for news of their loved ones.

"Any news of Makin?" Saleha Naznin repeatedly asked her husband, Mohammad Mohsin, each time someone emerged from the ICU.

Her son, Abdur Musabbir Makin, a class 7 student, suffered severe burns.

"Please, bring my Makin to me," she kept repeating, as her son fought for his life inside.

Mohsin said his youngest son stayed back for an extra class after official school hours ended at 1:00pm.

"He's not well. He's on ventilation," he said, fighting back tears.

Asked if he spoke to Makin, Mohsin said, "When I saw him, he said, 'Abbu, take me away from here.' That's all. I just want to take my son home, healthy."

Outside the ICU, Abdur Rahim, a fish trader from Abdullahpur, waited for updates on his only daughter, Samia Akter, a fourth grader at Milestone.

He said Samia was on the second floor of the school building when the plane hit it. Panicked, as the students were trying to escape the building, Samia fell on the floor and was trampled.

While Saleha and Rahim knew their loved ones were in the ICU, others were still searching in anguish.

Outside the morgue of the institute, Aminul Islam Jony was desperately looking for his wife, Lamia Akter Sonia. She had gone to the school to pick up their daughter Zaira, a third grader.

"I found my daughter crying at the site with the help of a stranger," Jony said. "But I haven't found my wife. Please, help me find her."

He said he had searched hospitals across Uttara and even the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), but in vain.

"No one has seen her," he said. "All we've found is a burnt copy of her NID card circulating on social media."

Rohan's run for survival

FROM PAGE 1

While people across the country cried, praying for his survival, an elderly man quietly wept in coach 3 of a Metro train headed for Motijheel from Uttara around 3:10pm.

Asked why he was crying, the man, Zakir Hossain, said, "My nephew was burnt in the jet crash. I've come from Sandwip to see him. I'm going to the National Burn Institute."

Pointing to a video on his phone, his voice trembled as he said, "That boy running through the school field with a burning body, trying to survive -- that's my nephew."

And thus, the child gained a name, a family, a voice. He was 14-year-old Robul Hasan Nabil – Rohan to his family.

A seventh grader of the English version of Milestone School and College, Rohan's body caught fire when a fighter jet crashed into the school on Monday afternoon.

As he ran out of the school, trying to reach a hospital by himself, some people helped him and took him to Uttara Adhunik Hospital, where he gave staffers his parents' phone numbers. The teenage boy then waited patiently, his body shivering in pain.

Inside the Metro coach, as Zakir's

sobs grew louder, the weight of his grief gripped everyone nearby. Next to him was Rohan's father, Nizam Uddin.

"Please pray for my son," he said, his voice cracking.

Remembering the horror, Nizam told The Daily Star, "Rohan was running with his body all burnt. He had no clothes on."

"At some point, some people boarded him onto a rickshaw in that condition and took him to Uttara Adhunik Hospital. We had no idea what had happened even then."

Trying to stay composed, he added, "My little boy is brave. Even though people panicked after seeing the video, his heart was strong. At the hospital, he gave someone his mother's mobile number himself. That's how we found out where he was."

After the family was contacted and Rohan was moved to the burn institute, his mother Nasima Begum has remained by his side.

Another uncle of Rohan's, Motachher Hossain, also rushed to Dhaka from their home in Chattogram's Sandwip.

The father and uncles were heading to the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery from Rohan's residence.

Like Rohan, several other children were seen in viral videos -- burned and running alone to safety -- since the incident.

They identified that in various parts of the country, banned parties and fascist collaborators are occasionally trying to resurface. They have advised that we take strict administrative measures," Asif Narul said.

He said, "The BNP specifically emphasised that we [government] should move forward in an orderly manner regarding the electoral process."

Asif Narul said the chief adviser invited the four parties to discuss the current state of the country. Several advisers were also present at the meeting.

Asif Narul said the discussion took place in a very cordial atmosphere, and parties affirmed that there is no disagreement among them regarding unity against fascism.

However, some noted that criticism is part of the process and it does not mean they are adversaries; they remain allies.

They identified that in various parts of the country, banned parties and fascist collaborators are occasionally trying to resurface. They have advised that we take strict administrative measures," Asif Narul said.

He urged the chief adviser to take stern action against those responsible and to identify the perpetrators of recent violent incidents.

National Citizens Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam expressed dissatisfaction over the government's response to the recent Gopalganj incident.

"There should be visible, stern action against those involved in the Gopalganj incident," he told the chief adviser.

Islami Andolon's Joint Secretary General Gazi Ataur Rahman told the reporters that the chief adviser called for strong national unity to resist "fascist conspiracies".

Gazi Ataur cited repeated security lapses at key institutions like the Secretariat



A promising life cut short in the skies

Flight Lt Towkir buried with due honour in Rajshahi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Flight Lieutenant Towkir Islam Sagar, who tragically lost his life after a Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) training aircraft crashed in Dhaka's Uttara on Monday, was laid to rest in his hometown Rajshahi yesterday.

The young officer's first namaz-e-janaza was held with full military honours at the Kurmitola Parade Ground around noon.

His body arrived in Rajshahi at around 3:20pm and was first taken to his family home in the Upashohor area, where relatives, neighbours, and well-wishers gathered to bid him farewell.

A second janaza took place at Rajshahi District Stadium at 4:30pm, followed by his burial at Sapura Graveyard.

Towkir, a member of the 35 Squadron, 76 BAFA course, was on his first solo flight when the accident occurred.

To avoid a major disaster, Towkir attempted to steer the FT-7 BGI aircraft away from densely populated areas and towards a sparsely inhabited zone, said Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

However, despite his efforts, the aircraft smashed into a two-storey building of Milestone School and College in the Diabari area of Uttara.

He was rescued and taken to the Combined Military Hospital, where he passed away while undergoing treatment in the ICU, said ISPR.

Born and raised in Rajshahi, Towkir joined Pabna Cadet College in 2010 and later enrolled in the Bangladesh Air Force in 2016.

His family described him as driven and compassionate. "He got married just a few days ago. They had just begun a new life together," said his grandfather, retired teacher Azizur Rahman. "This was his first solo flight. We were so happy. But suddenly, everything is gone."

"The pain of losing someone like him [Towkir] will haunt us forever," said his uncle Sadikul Islam.

Monirul Islam, vice principal of Pabna Cadet College, recalled Towkir's deep connection to the institution. "Even after graduation, he would return to guide students, especially during cultural events. He had a thoughtful presence, alongside brilliance and vision," he said.

Rubina Afrose, a neighbour from the Upashohor area, expressed the community's grief. "Towkir was so humble, and brilliant in his studies. He was a talented pilot, too."

"Why do mothers have to keep losing their sons? Towkir is gone today, and maybe things will quiet down tomorrow, but the family will carry this pain forever," she said.

Towkir is survived by his wife, Nijhum, a university teacher in Dhaka; his parents, Tohurul Islam and Saleha Khutun; and his only sister, Tasnia Islam Srishti, a medical student.



ABU SAYED MURDER
Hearing of charge framing on July 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday set July 28 for the hearing on charge framing in the Abu Sayed murder case against 30 individuals.

Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, was killed in police firing on July 16 last year during the anti-discrimination protest.

Former BRUR vice-chancellor Md Hasibur Rashid, former Rangpur Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Moniruzzaman, several university officials, police personnel, and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations are among the accused.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, passed the order after six accused

Rest well little angels

Near and dear ones grieve the young lives lost in Uttara fighter jet crash



STAR REPORT

On a seemingly ordinary Monday morning in Dhaka, dozens of children headed to school with lunchboxes in hand and dreams in their eyes.

But by afternoon, the nation was shaken by a horrifying tragedy -- a Bangladesh Air Force training jet had crashed into a building of Milestone School and College in Uttara's Diabari area.

The crash has claimed at least 32 lives, including those of little ones -- each with a story, a future, and a family now shattered beyond repair.

TATA BYE-BYE, MOM!

"Mom, I'm going to school, tata bye-bye!"

Those were the last words nine-year-old Saima Akhter said to her mother before leaving for school on the day of the tragedy. Little did her mother know, it

would be the last time she'd see her daughter.

Hours later, Rina Begum learned through social media that Saima had died in the crash.

"My daughter will never sleep hugging me again," said an inconsolable Rina, after Saima was laid to rest in Bipravardha village of Gazipur.

Saima, a third-grade student, lived with her family in Uttara.

Her father, Mohammad Shah Alam, was also devastated.

"Last night, she hugged me so many times before going to sleep," he said. "Now she won't hug me ever again."

Saima's elder brother, Sabbir Hossain -- who had just passed his SSC exams from the same school -- broke down in tears.

"You were my heart. Who will I take to school now?" he cried.

Saima was buried at the family graveyard after her funeral prayers at the local mosque.

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Humaira



Samiul



Shamim



Ukyra Ching



Tanvir



Saima

Farewell to a heroic teacher

Maherin Chowdhury, who died trying to save her students, laid to rest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Maherin Chowdhury, 46, who suffered fatal burns while trying to escort students to safety during Monday's tragic jet crash at Milestone School and College, was laid to eternal rest yesterday at her village home in Nilphamari.

An ambulance brought her body to Bogulagari village under Jaldhaka municipality, where her namaz-e-janaza was held around 4:00pm. She was buried beside her parents' graves.

Maherin, a coordinator at Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara, died around 10:00pm on Monday at Dhaka Medical College Hospital's ICU, hours after she was placed on life support with 80 percent burns.

Before being placed on life support, she briefly spoke with her husband, Monsur Helal. "She told me school had just ended and she was helping the children leave when the plane crashed right outside the gate," he said. "Even after being burned herself, she tried to save them."

Maherin was responsible for escorting students to the gate to ensure they safely reached their parents. According to news reports, she managed to lead around 20 children out of the premises even after sustaining severe injuries herself.

Her act of bravery has left an enduring mark.

"She didn't think about herself. She only thought of the children," said speakers before her janaza took place. "She has glorified the teacher's community with her sacrifice."

Maherin was the eldest daughter of Muhit Chowdhury and Saderia Chowdhury of the village. Despite living and working in Dhaka, she remained closely connected to her roots.

In fact, she had recently been elected president of the management committee of the local Bogulagari School and College. Her husband said she dreamt of transforming the institution into one as reputed as Milestone, where she had worked until her final day.



Global support pours in as Dhaka seeks medical aid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka is seeking medical experts and equipment to treat burn victims of Monday's military aircraft crash in Uttara, as several countries have offered to extend their support.

"We are preferring experts, nurses, and related equipment for burn treatment, not money, as one of the countries offered," a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star.

"A medical team from Singapore is on the way to Dhaka, while the governments of China, Japan, and India have offered to assist in the treatment of burn patients," he also said.

The crash, which occurred at Milestone School and College in Uttara, has left at least 32 people dead, most of them children, and injured 165 others.

As of yesterday, 68 patients remained hospitalised, according to the health ministry.

During a press briefing at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery yesterday,

Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to chief adviser for health ministry, said a team from Singapore General Hospital, which includes a senior consultant, was en route to Dhaka.

The team would evaluate current treatment protocols for the burn patients, he said.

Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum said the Singapore team will assess the patients' conditions and determine if anyone needs to be sent abroad for further treatment.

Chong Si Jack, a senior consultant who's part of the medical team from Singapore General Hospital, had already arrived last night, while the rest of the members of the team are set to arrive today, said a health ministry official.

Meanwhile, India said it will send a team of burn specialist doctors and nurses with necessary medical support.

They are scheduled to visit Dhaka soon to treat the victims of the jet crash in Uttara, said a statement of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

LAND WANTED

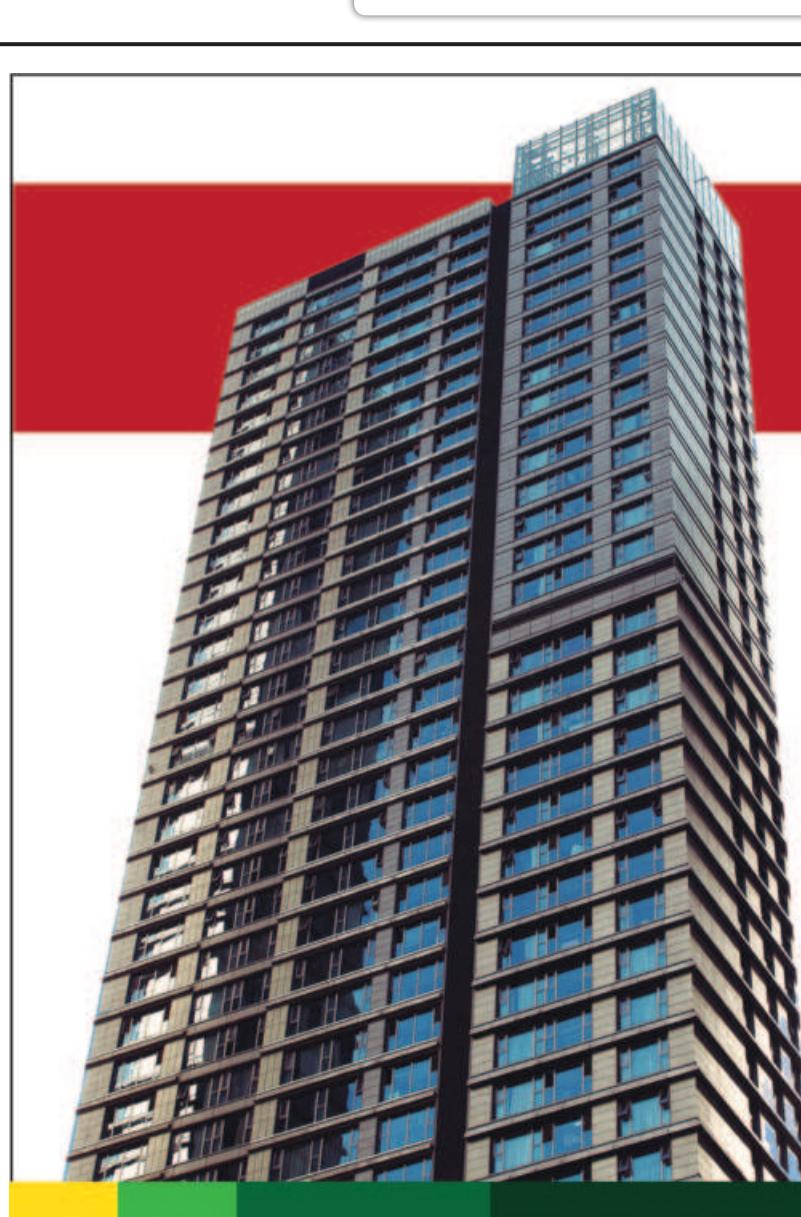
A commercial unhindered plot of **more or less 03 (three) Bigha** is necessary in the **Prime Location of Tejgaon** Commercial Area /Industrial area for construction of corporate office Complex/Head Office building of Pubali Bank PLC.

Actual owner/owners who are interested to sell are requested to collect the proforma from under mentioned Division/office and submit/drop all the photocopies of deeds & documents relating to the ownership of the plot alongwith a forwarding letter in the tender Box of Purchase Committee kept at 12th floor, Head office, Dhaka by **11.00 AM on 10 August 2025** or before positively. Offers will be opened on **10 August 2025** at 11.30 AM in presence of available participants.

Pubali Bank PLC. reserves the right to accept partly or fully of any offer or reject any or all offers without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Md. Kamruzzaman
General Manager & Division Head
Establishment & General Services Division
Pubali Bank PLC.
Head Office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka 1000
Mobile No. 01324412802

পুবালি বাণক পিপলস
PUBALI BANK PLC.



ABU SAYED MURDER
Hearing of charge framing on July 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday set July 28 for the hearing on charge framing in the Abu Sayed murder case against 30 individuals.

Abu Sayed, a student of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, was killed in police firing on July 16 last year during the anti-discrimination protest.

Former BRUR vice-chancellor Md Hasibur Rashid, former Rangpur Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Moniruzzaman, several university officials, police personnel, and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations are among the accused.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, passed the order after six accused

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

PABNA MUNICIPALITY Locals take it upon themselves to fix road

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Due to the negligence of the authorities concerned, residents of Ataikula Road (Terminal Road) in Pabna municipality have taken it upon themselves to repair a one-kilometre stretch of the road to prevent continuous accidents.

Raising funds and collecting materials locally, the residents began filling potholes by pouring brick chips and sand on the concrete surface.

"At least one kilometre of Ataikula Road, from Muzahid Club area to Chapa Mosque, has become dangerous to travel due to dozens of large potholes. The stagnant rainwater in the potholes has made movement even more difficult," said Akhinur Islam Remon, a social worker in the area.

Several accidents have recently occurred on the damaged road. While many vehicles avoid the route, residents are forced to use it to reach their homes.



Once a lifeline for trade and travel, the Subarnakhal River now lies choked with waste and silence -- a forgotten waterway sacrificed to neglect, encroachment, and pollution. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

SUBARNAKHALLI IN JAMALPUR Once a lifeline, now a dying river

SAHIDUL ISLAM NIRAB, Jamalpur

There was a time when the Subarnakhal River flowed all year round. Boats carrying raw jute moved up and down the waterway, connecting distant char areas with the jute mills of Sarishabari. Locals even held a floating jute market on boats twice a week.

The river, a branch of the Jamuna, played a vital role in the region's economy.

But those days are gone.

After the jute mills shut down, the river slowly lost its importance. Local influential groups began occupying its banks, building embankments at the river's mouth that cut off its natural flow. Over time, the river became narrower, shallower, and filled with silt.



In 2021, a second embankment was built at Shimla Bazar. That was the final blow. Now the river is dry, lifeless, and almost forgotten.

Today, Subarnakhal resembles a polluted canal. Its water has turned dark due to waste from nearby clinics, diagnostic centres, and businesses. Garbage is regularly dumped into it, worsening the situation.

"The river was once full of sailboats. People used it for trade and travel," said Anwar Hossain, a local resident. "Now it's just a dead channel filled with dirt and plastic."

He said locals had filed complaints with various government offices, including the UNO and the then upazila chairman, but nothing changed.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

'71 WAR CRIMES SC verdict on Mobarak's appeal on July 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fixed July 30 for delivering verdict on the appeal filed by Mobarak Hossain challenging the International Crimes Tribunal verdict that sentenced him to death penalty for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed set the date after concluding hearing on the matter.

Advocate SM Shahjahan and Barrister Imran A Siddiqi placed arguments on behalf of Mobarak Hossain, while prosecutor Gazi MH Tamim represented the state during the hearing.

On November 24, 2014, the International Crimes Tribunal I sentenced Mobarak, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader from Brahmanbaria who later joined the Awami League after 1971, to death for abducting and killing 33 people of Tanmandal village in

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Dengue cases reach 18,000 this year Experts warn situation may worsen in August

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With 444 new dengue cases reported in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning, the total number of cases this year rose to 18,000. Meanwhile, three more deaths were recorded, bringing the total number of dengue-related deaths to 65.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), all three of the latest deaths occurred in areas under Dhaka South City Corporation.

Currently, 1,332 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at hospitals across the country, with 952 of them outside Dhaka.

Experts have warned that the situation may worsen in August due to recent rainfall patterns, which create ideal conditions for Aedes mosquitoes, the carriers of the dengue virus.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

'Why was training jet flying over a crowded city?'

Says BNP's Gayeshwar Roy

STAR REPORT

BNP standing committee member Gayeshwar Chandra Roy yesterday asked why a training aircraft exercise was carried out over a crowded city area.

He said, "My question is -- how can a fighter jet training exercise be carried out over such a densely populated city? We all know these types of trainings are usually done in remote areas where people don't live. But why did this training take place right over one of Dhaka's most crowded areas?"

He said this while speaking at a gathering organised for special prayers on the ground floor of the party's central office in Dhaka's Nayapaltan.

"Naturally, people have questions. The Air Force should have prior experience regarding this. But who will answer for it?"

Will you give the answer? Even if we don't have wars every year in our country, we do know that military drills take place and those are held in remote areas, not in densely populated ones."

The BNP leader further said, "There's something important to note, every combat aircraft

must go through a technical check by an aeronautical or flight engineer. It has to be examined to ensure the aircraft is fit to fly and can be operated properly. Naturally, questions now arise about whether those conducting or overseeing the training ensured that the aircraft was in proper mechanical condition. Was that check actually done? These are the questions that people are now asking."

"That's why, on behalf of the people, I am urging the relevant authorities to find answers to these questions and make them known. I am not blaming anyone. But the nation deserves to know, so that such a tragic incident does not happen

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Nat'l Univ postpones July 23, 24 exams

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gazipur

The National University yesterday postponed all exams scheduled to be held on July 23 and 24.

According to an NU press release, the decision was made in light of the aircraft crash at the Milestone School and College in Uttara on Monday, causing extensive loss.

The revised schedule of the postponed exams will be announced later, while the dates and times of other exams will remain unchanged.

Mostafizur Rahman, acting director of the NU Public Relations Department, confirmed the information to The Daily Star last night.

Global support pours in

FROM PAGE 3
Affairs yesterday.

They will assess the condition of patients and recommend further treatment and specialised care in India as necessary, it said.

Additional medical teams may also follow depending on their preliminary assessment and treatment, the statement said.

Earlier, the Indian High Commission in Dhaka yesterday formally wrote to the Bangladesh government, requesting details on any critical medical support needed.

The Indian High Commission will extend all necessary facilitation, it said in a statement.

On Monday, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep condolences for the lives lost and sympathy for the injured and the bereaved families. He also conveyed

Japanese Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi wrote a similar letter to the foreign adviser, expressing deep shock and heartfelt condolences.

UK Minister for the Indo-Pacific Catherine West said she was "deeply saddened" by the crash and expressed sympathy for the victims and their families.

The embassy of Kuwait in Dhaka also expressed its sympathy to the people of Bangladesh following the jet crash.

The government of the State of Kuwait and the people of Kuwait extend their sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to the friendly Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh and the families of the victims, wishing a speedy recovery," the embassy said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Pope Leo also expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the jet

crash.

In a telegram signed by Holy See Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin and sent yesterday, Pope Leo said he "entrusts the deceased to the merciful love of the Almighty," according to the Vatican Embassy in Dhaka.

The message said the Pope is praying that their families and friends may be consoled in their grief and for the healing and comfort of the injured.

He also invoked blessings of peace and strength upon the school community and all affected by the tragedy.

The Vatican Ambassador to Bangladesh, Archbishop Kevin Randall, also sent a condolence letter to the chief adviser, expressing solidarity with the people of Bangladesh during this time of national mourning.

**PRAYER
TIMING**
JULY 23
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Furnished office TO-LET

House-12/A, Rood-8, Gulshan-1, Two apartment is available for Rent. Each 2500 sft 4 bedroom Apt. Other floors are occupied by local & foreign offices. # 01911-360 990

Space To-Let

Office space measuring 8000sft, at Jabbar Tower, Road-135, 42, Gulshan Avenue, Circle-1 is available for Rent. Please Contact:

**01611-853603
01711-262788
01711-868475**

Reference No.: 1113139

Name of Scheme: Supply and Installation of 07 (Seven) Air Coolers for Agrani Bank PLC., Wasa Corporate Branch, Dhaka & Sylhet West Zone Office.

Last Tender Selling (Date & Time): 06-Aug-2025 07-Aug-2025 16:00

Tender Closing & Opening (Date & Time): 07-Aug-2025 15:00

Tender Opening (Date & Time): 07-Aug-2025 15:00

Sl. No. 01

Tender/ Proposal ID: E&ED/Engg./Mecha-2/204/2025

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Date: 21/07/2025

Memo no: E&ED/Engg./Mecha-2/204/2025

Tendering Method -OTM

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following work's details are given below.

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INTERNATIONAL

Israeli military intercepts missile fired from Yemen

Iran-backed Houthis target Ben Gurion Int'l Airport

AFP, Jerusalem

Yemen's Houthi rebels launched two attacks targeting Israel's main airport, the latest yesterday, with the Israeli army intercepting both, a day after striking the rebel-held Yemeni port of Hodeida.

Israel has repeatedly struck Houthi-held parts of Yemen after the Iran-backed rebels began targeting the country with missile and drone attacks, claiming solidarity with Palestinians over the Gaza war.

The Houthis targeted Ben Gurion International Airport "using a Palestine 2' hypersonic ballistic missile", according to military spokesman Yariv Saree, who had hours earlier claimed a similar attack on the airport.

On Monday, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said "Yemen's fate will be the same as Tehran's" after hitting Houthi targets in Hodeida port in an attack aimed to prevent any attempt to restore infrastructure previously hit.

A Houthi security official, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters, told AFP that "the bombing destroyed the port's dock, which had been rebuilt following previous strikes."

The Houthis recently resumed deadly attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, targeting ships they accuse of having links to Israel, to put pressure on Israel to end the Gaza war.

EPSTEIN STORY White House restricts WSJ access to Trump

AFP, Washington

The White House on Monday barred The Wall Street Journal from traveling with US President Donald Trump during his upcoming visit to Scotland, after the newspaper reported that he wrote a bawdy birthday message to his former friend, alleged sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein.

The move comes after Trump on Friday sued the WSJ and its media magnate owner Rupert Murdoch for at least \$10 billion over the allegation in the article, which Trump denies.

The Trump administration's handling of the Epstein case has threatened to split the Republican's far right Make America Great Again (MAGA) base, with some of his supporters calling for a full release of the so-called "Epstein Files".

The punishment of the Wall Street Journal marks at least the second time the Trump administration has moved to exclude a major news outlet from the press pool over its reporting, having barred Associated Press journalists from multiple key events since February.

"As the appeals court confirmed, The Wall Street Journal or any other news outlet are not guaranteed special access to cover President Trump in the Oval Office, aboard Air Force One, and in his private workspaces," said Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt.

"Due to The Wall Street Journal's fake and defamatory conduct, they will not be one of the thirteen outlets on board (Air Force One)."

Trump departs this weekend for Scotland, where he owns two golf resorts and will meet with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer.



Mourners react next to the body of a Palestinian child killed in an Israeli strike, according to medics, at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City yesterday. The UN reports that more than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces while attempting to access food in Gaza since the launch of the US- and Israel-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

PHOTO: REUTERS

TRUMP-PAKISTAN SHIFT India recalibrates its relations with China

REUTERS, New Delhi

US President Donald Trump's lunch meeting with Pakistan's military chief prompted a private diplomatic protest from India in a warning to Washington about risks to their bilateral ties while New Delhi is recalibrating relations with China as a hedge, officials and analysts said.

The meeting and other tensions in the US-India relationship, after decades of flourishing ties, have cast a shadow in trade negotiations, they said, as Trump's administration weighs tariffs against one of its major partners in the Indo Pacific.

India blames Pakistan, especially its military establishment, for supporting what it calls cross-border terrorism and has told the US it is sending the wrong signals by wooing Field Marshal Asim Munir, three senior Indian government officials directly aware of the matter told Reuters.

It has created a sore spot that will hamper relations going forward, they said. Pakistan denies accusations that it supports militants who attack Indian targets and that New Delhi has provided no evidence that it is involved.

US-India ties have strengthened in the past two decades despite minor hiccups, at least partly because both countries seek to counter China. The current problems are different, said Michael Kugelman, a Washington-based senior fellow at the Asia Pacific Foundation think tank.

"The frequency and intensity with which the US is engaging with Pakistan, and seemingly not taking Indian concerns into account,

especially after India's recent conflict with Pakistan, has contributed to a bit of a bilateral malaise."

"The concern this time around is that one of the triggers for broader tensions, that being

Trump's unpredictability, is extending into the trade realm with his approach to tariffs," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office and India's foreign ministry did not respond to a request for comment. The foreign ministry has previously said that it had "taken note" of the Trump-Munir meeting.

India, like other nations, is trying to figure out a way to deal with Trump and is recalibrating ties with China as a hedge, said Harsh Pant, foreign policy head at India's Observer Research Foundation think tank.



"Certainly there is an outreach to China," he said. "And I think it is mutual...China is also reaching out". Last week, India's Jaishankar made his first visit to Beijing since a deadly 2020 border clash between Indian and Chinese troops.

India is also making moves to ease restrictions on investments from China that were imposed following the 2020 clash.

The thaw comes despite India's prickly relations with China and Beijing's close ties and military support to Pakistan.

Independent experts and representatives of the school and education adviser.

"We must know why this crash occurred and ensure this never happens again. The government should also establish long term emergency response and medical rescue teams."

"They must disclose how many students, teachers, and staff were present at the college during the crash, how many were killed or injured, and provide regular updates. If there is no attempt to hide bodies, be transparent about it."

Calling for an impartial probe into the incident, Nahid stressed that the investigation should include

BOEING 787, 737 AIRCRAFT No issues found in fuel control switches: Air India

REUTERS

Air India said yesterday it has completed precautionary inspections of the fuel control switch locking mechanism on all its Boeing 787 and 737 aircraft, with no issues detected.

The probe into the Air India crash that killed 241 of the 242 people on board and 19 on the ground is focused on the fuel control switches of the Boeing 787 jetliner, with a final report from India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) expected within a year of the incident.

The switches control fuel flow to aircraft engines, allowing pilots to start or shut them down on the ground, or manually

Trump pulls US out of Unesco for second time

AFP, Washington

The US yesterday announced it has left Unesco, saying the UN cultural and education agency, best known for establishing world heritage sites, is biased against Israel and promotes "divisive" causes.

"Continued involvement in Unesco is not in the national interest of the United States," the State Department spokeswoman said.

The US exit was expected under President Donald Trump, who also ordered withdrawal from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2017 during his first term. President Joe Biden then reestablished US membership.

State Department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce described Unesco as working "to advance divisive social and cultural causes".

HSC examinees storm Secretariat, stage protest

FROM PAGE 1

They later marched towards the Secretariat, defying police barriers at several points.

They started demonstrating around 2:15pm when several hundred took position at the Secretariat, prompting the authorities to close all entry points to the administrative complex as a security measure.

Students from many other colleges joined the protesters, witnesses said.

Additional police members and army personnel were deployed there.

The situation escalated around 4:15pm when a group of protesters, mostly HSC examinees, stormed into the secretariat and vandalised several cars and motorcycles inside the compound.

Law enforcers and army personnel responded by charging batons and firing tear gas canisters to disperse the crowd. Both sides hurled brick chunks at each other, and the clash continued for over an hour before law enforcers finally drove the protesters out of the secretariat and adjacent areas.

The clashes triggered panic among government staffers and commuters in the surrounding areas.

COUNTRYWIDE PROTEST

Apart from Dhaka, students with similar demands also staged protests in front of at least five education boards: Barishal, Chattogram, Sylhet, Jashore, Dinajpur, and Cumilla. At each location, students locked the gates and held sit-ins for several hours.

In Barishal, students blocked the Barishal-Dhaka highway for around one and a half hours and locked the main gate of the Barishal Education Board.

The demonstration began around 11:30am and involved students from both secondary and higher secondary institutions.

Due to the blockade, not only did traffic come to a standstill, leading to long tailbacks on both sides of the highway, causing suffering to commuters, but also road communication between the southern region and the rest of Bangladesh was severely impeded.

At the same time, the protesters locked the main gate of the Barishal Education Board at the city's Natullahbad area. The protesters cleared the road around 1:00pm.

Later in the evening, students took the street again at around 7:00pm in front of the education board. The demonstration

continued till filing the report at around 8:00pm. However, the highway was not blocked in the evening.

In Chattogram, students also blocked a major road. The protest began around 2:00pm in front of the Chattogram Education Board office in the city's Sholoshohor area and continued till 5:30pm.

In Sylhet, hundreds of students marched from Chowhatta point to the education board office in the Alampur area around 4:00pm. They blocked the Sylhet Zakiganj regional highway for around two hours from around 5:00pm.

The blockade caused a long tailback, forcing commuters to walk to their destinations. Vehicles were seen taking alternative routes or turning back.

In Cumilla, students locked the gate of the main building of Cumilla Education Board for around one and half hours.

The protesters took out a procession from the city's Pubali Square area at around 11:30am and marched to the education board. Then, they locked the gate of the main building.

In Mymensingh, students blocked the Ganginagar intersection for around one hour in the morning.

In Narayanganj, the

Student Federation of Bangladesh formed a human chain demanding a proper investigation into the aircraft crash and fair compensation for the victims.

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

'We must stop mob culture'

FROM PAGE 12

"These groups should refrain from taking advantage of a tragic moment in Bangladesh's history for their own gain," he said.

Tarique emphasised that this is a time for collective empathy and national unity, not political opportunism.

He urged all to focus on supporting the victims and their families, helping identify the missing, and ensuring the injured receive the best possible medical care.

The BNP leader also stressed the need for a thorough and impartial investigation into the cause of the crash.

"As our hearts go out to the innocent lives lost and the families shattered, Bangladesh must remain united and face every crisis with solidarity."

Govt could've acted more responsibly

FROM PAGE 12

response pushed the situation beyond their control."

"We must know why this

crash occurred and ensure

this never happens again.

The government should also establish long term

emergency response and

medical rescue teams."

Expressing deep

condolences over the

deaths, Nahid announced

the NCP's solidarity with the

six point demands raised

by protesting students of

Milestone College.

"These are reasonable

demands, and the government

should implement them

without delay," he added.

Nahid criticised several

government advisers for

what he termed "reckless

behaviour", pointing at the

education adviser.

"We heard around

3:00am that the HSC exams

would be postponed. Other

advisers could not reach

him over the phone. In an

emergency, this kind of

disarray at the top only fuels

public anxiety."

Finally, Nahid urged

students and citizens to

remain calm and vigilant,

and called on all political

and social groups to support

the victims and ensure that

no one exploits the situation

for political gain.

The press conference was

moderated by NCP Member

Secretary Akther Hossen,

while Senior Joint Member

Secretary Tasnim Jara also

spoke.

independent experts and

representatives of the school

and education adviser.

"We heard around

3:00am that the HSC exams

would be postponed. Other

advisers could not reach

him over the phone. In an

emergency, this kind of

disarray at the top only fuels

public anxiety."

Uttara air crash exposes deadly gaps

It should serve as a wake-up call for aviation safety and emergency response

The death toll from Monday's tragic aircraft crash at Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara has risen to 31 as of the latest count. At least 165 others also remain injured, as per the ISPR press release issued around 2:15 pm on Tuesday. As we have noted in our initial response, this is not the first tragedy involving air force training missions. While none has been as deadly, it is deeply alarming that few—if any—precautionary measures have been taken over the years to protect either military pilots or civilians from the risks posed by such exercises over a densely populated area like Dhaka.

In the aftermath of the crash, aviation experts as well as military and civilian pilots have rightly questioned the logic of allowing training flights over the capital. One expert pointed out that, given Dhaka's extreme population density, conducting such exercises here is far riskier than doing so in less populated regions where the air force also operates. Despite these dangers, air force aircraft continue to use the only runway at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Experts have long advocated for relocating the adjacent air force base, not only due to safety concerns but also because its operations often disrupt commercial aviation.

According to one air force pilot, flying in such a congested urban environment presents additional challenges. Flight paths should ideally be clear of buildings taller than one or two storeys, yet numerous high-rises now lie directly in their way. Unplanned urbanisation around the Dhaka airport—including the construction of schools, colleges, and shopping malls near approach paths—further complicates the situation. Pilots are forced to ascend rapidly and maintain higher altitudes, placing extra strain on their aircraft. Given the limitations of these machines, even a few seconds lost can prove critical.

Experts have questioned why such high-risk operations are still being carried out from Dhaka when alternative air force bases are available in Jashore and Chattogram. They have also criticised the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) for failing to safeguard civilian passengers, whose safety is compromised by the continued presence of military flights at the capital's airport.

Another disturbing issue is the chaos prevailing at hospitals where injured victims were taken. Political leaders, journalists, and others were seen crowding these facilities, despite the fact that burn patients are acutely vulnerable to complications such as infections. How were so many unauthorised individuals allowed near the victims? What does this reveal about our emergency response protocols and disaster preparedness? Do the authorities have a comprehensive plan in place for such crises—or are we merely reacting in the face of a disaster?

These are questions that demand clear answers and prompt responses from the authorities. Most importantly, it is critical that this does not become yet another tragedy from which we learn nothing and allow history to repeat itself.

Restore peace in Gopalganj

Govt must address fears of arbitrary arrests, harassment

It is distressing to learn that fear still grips many in Gopalganj due to ongoing police drives, with 322 people arrested so far and over 8,400 accused in eight cases filed over the deadly violence that occurred during clashes on Wednesday. On Monday, our correspondent visited Tungipara, Gopalganj. While the last few days have seen things return to some semblance of normalcy, locals still expressed scepticism amid continuous patrols and raids. Some reported experiencing blackouts during night-time raids. Many, accused or not, especially men with suspected Awami League ties, remain at large fearing arrests. Some families have taken shelter in the houses of relatives or local leaders. This situation has obviously created security risks for vacated houses or families unattended by male adults, as well as threats of legal harassment.

These fears are real even though the authorities have dismissed allegations of mass arrests and exploitative litigation. Already, the number of inmates in Gopalganj District Jail has surged. Although the prison has a capacity of 360, it is currently holding 865 inmates, not to mention the dozens transferred to the neighbouring Pirojpur jail due to space constraints. The protracted security fallout is but an indication of the government's poor handling of a known flashpoint like Gopalganj from the start, which reached an extent that even the families of victims refused to file cases, fearing they would not get justice. Another indication, no less significant, is its failure or inability to perform autopsies on time, which can help determine who or what was responsible for the killings. It was only on Monday, five days after burial, that the bodies of three of the five killed were exhumed for post-mortem examinations, that too following a court order.

The background and details of this saga are well known by now. There is no denying that prolonged tension in Gopalganj will only negatively affect other parts of the country. State officials, try as they may, cannot abdicate themselves from the responsibility for the so-called "arrest trade" or "litigation trade", a natural outcome when the rule of law is compromised. More importantly, they must understand that the image they created of themselves by initially allowing four victims to be laid to rest without any inquest or post-mortem examination raises unsettling questions about their capability and sincerity. These questions must be answered and addressed through an impartial investigation.

Going forward, any arbitrary arrest and intimidation—rights violations more easily associated with the fallen regime—must be ceased. The government should instead focus on fully restoring peace in Gopalganj and holding to account not just the perpetrators of July 16 violence but also those who failed to prevent it or acted irresponsibly in its aftermath.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Egyptian monarchy falls

On this day in 1952, the Free Officers, a nationalistic military group led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, engineered a coup that overthrew King Farouk I of Egypt, ending the monarchy and bringing Nasser to power.



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ZAKIR KIBRIA

The scent of burning jet fuel has a terrifying permanence. It sears itself into memory, a chemical ghost haunting the places where metal meets earth in catastrophic fury. On the July afternoon in 2025, as a Bangladesh Air Force F-7 BGJ fighter jet screamed out of control over Uttara, that acrid stench descended upon the Milestone College campus. It mingled with the chalk dust of interrupted lessons, the ink of unfinished exams, and the horrifying, metallic tang of blood. At least 31 lives (and still counting)—students, teachers, everyday citizens—were extinguished not by war, not by natural disaster, but by a cascade of seemingly mundane, utterly preventable decisions made years, even decades, before. The wreckage cooled, the funerals were held, a day of mourning declared. Yet, the fundamental questions that tragedy screamed into Dhaka's smog-choked sky remain, hanging heavy and unanswered: why must Dhaka's children learn beneath the shadow of aging war machines?

Let's be blunt. The image of a military training jet, older than most of Dhaka's wheezing carbon monoxide gushing public buses, plunging into a schoolyard is not just a tragedy; it's an indictment. That FT 7 BGJ is a variant of Chinese manufactured J-7 jets, which were developed using the Soviet-era MiG-21 design and first entered service globally in the late 1960s. Bangladesh acquired its F-7s, primarily from China, decades later, reportedly in 2013. Years of wear on these airframes stressed by the violent physics of supersonic flight isn't antiquarian charm; it's rolling the dice with lives—the pilots' and everyone beneath their flight path.

Which brings us to the first, glaring question: why is a densely packed metropolis, groaning under the weight of over 2.4 crore souls, the designated playground for training military pilots? Kurmitola Air Base, nestled beside Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, is literally surrounded by residential areas, schools, and markets. Uttara isn't some distant outpost; it's a pulsing heart of the city. Every takeoff and landing, every simulated engine failure practised over these rooftops, is an exercise conducted over a human powder keg. The calculus is horrifyingly simple: mechanical failure

plus urban density equals to potential catastrophe. The afternoon of July 21, 2025, proved it wasn't just theoretical. It was a formula written in fire and grief. The pilot ejected—a testament to the training and reflexes—but the aircraft, a multi-ton meteor of failing technology, was left to find its own deadly trajectory, which it did, with devastating precision, onto a place of learning.

This isn't merely about one aging jet. It's about a system. It's about why the state persists in using a civilian international airport complex,

etched into Dhaka's frantic landscape. Originally a major airport, its role has significantly diminished since Shahjalal International took over commercial traffic. Yet, it persists. Helicopters, smaller fixed-wing aircraft, and VIP movements still utilise its runways. Its existence, a vast, underused 300-acre tract of incredibly valuable land locked behind fences in the heart of a suffocating city, defies logic. Why does this operational airport, a relic of a different era, still dominate prime real estate when Dhaka gasps for green lungs and public space? The roar of engines here isn't training jets, but it is a constant reminder of priorities seemingly frozen in amber. The persistent rumours, occasionally acknowledged in official corridors, about its potential relocation or repurposing have yielded little but dust.

The questions compound, each demanding an answer louder than the last:



The roar of an ancient jet engine over a school is the sound of rusted policy paralysis.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

embedded deep within the urban sprawl, as a primary hub for military flight operations and training. The risks are not unknown. Experts and urban planners have repeatedly flagged the dangers of operating high-performance military aircraft over such environments. The argument often cites convenience, infrastructure, and cost. But what cost? The cost of dozens of lives? The cost of living under a constant, low-frequency dread? The cost of knowing that the roar overhead might not always be routine? Convenience becomes a grotesque euphemism when weighed against the incalculable value of human life extinguished in an instant.

And then there's Tejgaon. Sitting closer to the city's core, Tejgaon Airport is another anachronism

Why is the modernisation of the Bangladesh Air Force's (BAF) training fleet, particularly the phasing out of geriatric F-7s, not treated with the urgency a ticking time bomb demands? While some newer platforms exist, the continued reliance on aircraft designed in the mid-20th century for missions over a 21st-century megacity is unconscionable. Every extra flight hour squeezed from these machines is a gamble. The pilots strap themselves into coffins with wings, trusting systems decades past their intended lifespan, while the city below remains an unwitting participant in this deadly game of chance.

Why are dedicated training facilities, purpose built away from population centres, not the absolute, non-negotiable priority? Bangladesh isn't devoid of space. Establishing

modern airbases in less densely populated regions for initial flight training and high-risk manoeuvres, simulated engine failures, isn't a luxury; it's fundamental aviation safety and responsible urban planning rolled into one. It protects the trainees, it protects the public, and it allows for more realistic training without the sword of Damocles hanging over a schoolyard.

Where is the comprehensive, independent investigation into the systemic failures that led to the Uttara disaster, with findings made public and acted upon? While the BAF conducted its inquiry, with lightning-fast accuracy, citing "engine failure," the broader context—the age of the fleet, the location of the base—demands scrutiny that goes beyond the immediate mechanical cause. The public deserves transparency and assurance that the root causes are being addressed, not just the symptoms of one catastrophic failure.

The victims of Uttara weren't statistics. They were our children. They were my children. They were students with textbooks open, teachers guiding futures, people going about their lives. Their deaths are a permanent stain. But their legacy must be changed. We cannot accept the shrug of bureaucratic inertia or the whispered excuses of budget constraints. The cost of inaction is measured in blood, in terror, in burned flesh, and in the erosion of the most basic social contract: the state's duty to protect its citizens from foreseeable harm.

Dhaka is bursting. Its air is thick, its streets choked, its people pressed together. To layer the inherent risks of military aviation, conducted with outdated equipment, onto this pressure cooker is not just poor planning; it is a form of societal negligence. The roar of an ancient jet engine over a school isn't the sound of national security; it is the sound of rusted policy paralysis.

The arithmetic of loss from Uttara is clear. The question now is whether we, as a society, and those entrusted with power, dare to finally learn the brutal lesson. It's time to ground the flying relics before they claim more futures. It's time to reclaim Tejgaon for the people gasping for space and air. It's time to move training far from the nurseries and the markets. The next roaring shadow over Dhaka's rooftops should not be a prelude to another unspeakable headline. It should be the sound of progress, finally taking flight. Let the memorial for those dozens of souls be a city that chooses life, safety, and breathable space over deadly inertia. We owe them, and ourselves, nothing less. We plant saplings in memory; let's uproot the policies that made their deaths possible.

Supercharging the clean energy era



Antonio Guterres
is the secretary general of the United Nations.

ANTONIO GUTERRES

Energy has shaped humanity's path—from mastering fire, to harnessing steam, to splitting the atom. Today, we're at the dawn of a new era. The sun is rising on the age of clean energy.

Last year, nearly all new power capacity came from renewables. Investment in clean energy soared to \$2 trillion. Solar and wind are now the cheapest sources of power on Earth, and clean energy sectors are creating jobs, boosting growth and powering progress, despite fossil fuels still receiving far greater subsidies.

Countries that cling to fossil fuels are not protecting their economies, they are sabotaging them, undermining competitiveness, and missing the greatest economic opportunity of the 21st century.

Clean energy also delivers energy sovereignty and security. Fossil fuel markets are at the mercy of price shocks, supply disruptions, and geopolitical turmoil, as we saw when Russia invaded Ukraine. But there are no price spikes for sunlight, no embargoes on wind, and almost every nation has enough renewable resources to be energy self-sufficient. Finally, clean energy spurs development. It can reach the hundreds of millions of people still living without electricity

quickly, affordably, and sustainably, particularly through off-grid and small-scale solar technologies.

All these make the clean energy era unstoppable. But the transition is not yet fast or fair enough. Developing countries are being left behind. Fossil fuels still dominate energy systems, and emissions are still rising when they must plummet to avoid the worst of the climate crisis. To fix this, we need action on six fronts.

First, governments must fully commit to the clean energy future. In the coming months, every country has pledged to submit new national

Second, we must build 21st-century energy systems. Without modern grids and storage, renewable power can't fulfil its potential. But for every dollar invested in renewable power, just 60 cents go to grids and storage. That ratio needs to be one-to-one.

Third, governments must aim to meet the world's surging energy demand with renewables. Major tech companies must also play their part. By 2030, data centres could consume as much electricity as the entire country, Japan does today. Companies should commit to powering them with renewables.

Fourth, we must embed justice



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Clean energy delivers energy sovereignty and security.

in the energy transition. This means supporting communities still dependent on fossil fuels to prepare for the clean energy future. And it means reforming critical minerals supply chains. Today, they're riddled with rights abuses and environmental destruction, and developing countries are trapped at the bottom of value chains. This must end.

Fifth, we must make trade a tool for energy transformation. Clean energy supply chains are highly concentrated, and global trade is fragmenting. Countries committed to the new energy era must work to diversify supplies, cut tariffs on clean energy goods, and modernise investment treaties so they support the transition.

Sixth and finally, we must drive finance to developing countries. Africa received just two percent of investment for renewable energy last year, despite having 60 percent of the world's best solar resources. We need international action to prevent debt repayments sucking developing country budgets dry, and to enable multilateral development banks to substantially increase their lending capacity, and leverage far more private finance. We also need credit rating agencies and investors to modernise risk assessments and account for the promise of clean energy, cost of climate chaos, and the danger of stranded fossil fuel assets.

A new energy era is within reach, where cheap, clean, abundant energy powers a world rich in economic opportunity, where nations have the security of energy autonomy, and the gift of electricity is a gift for all.

This is our moment of opportunity to supercharge the global shift. Let's seize it.

BANGLADESH IN TRANSITION: A FORESIGHT OUTLOOK

Political alignment is key to a desirable future

This is the final instalment in a three-part series based on a foresight analysis centred on Bangladesh's transition, elaborating on the possible future scenarios and outlining the related risks, opportunities, and strategic options for key actors as the national elections draw closer.

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**DEBAPRIYA BHATTACHARYA,
TOWFIQUL ISLAM KHAN and
NAJEEBA MOHAMMED ALTAF**

"The best way to predict the future is to create it."

The four scenarios developed through our foresight analysis and subsequent validation meetings paint a vivid picture of how different combinations of political alignments and economic conditions might unfold in the coming years. Each scenario highlights the subtle, often overlooked signals that can serve as early indicators for proactive measures, as well as the diverse challenges that accompany these possible futures. Through these narratives, we could gain insight into the complex interplay between governance and financial landscapes, revealing the nuances that shape our responses and strategies moving forward. The four scenarios explored were voted on to identify the most plausible, desirable, and undesirable future for the nation.

The most plausible and the most undesirable scenarios are almost at par: Out of the four scenarios, the prospect characterised by improved or improving economic conditions but low political alignment (Scenario 2) emerged as the most plausible future scenario in the near term (in the period leading up to the national elections). This was attributed to the signs of improving economic conditions in recent

The economic outlook in the near term was the more contested driver of change. At the time of conducting this foresight workshop, the progress of specific external economic indicators had been encouraging (e.g., inflation, remittances and foreign exchange reserves). However, other indicators, such as private investment and the employment situation, were far more precarious.

Nevertheless, there was a broad consensus among experts that low political alignment would be the most likely future outcome,

transition from exploring possible futures to identifying strategic pathways, a critical question arises: *who truly is in the driving seat to steer the economic and socio political scenarios in Bangladesh today?* Hence, we go beyond institutions and examine the informal, shifting networks of influence—the "wheel within the wheel"—to understand what it will take to transition from a plausible to a desirable future.

"Every time I think that I have thought of all possible scenarios, something else happens."

The strategic objective is now quite clear: to navigate Bangladesh from the most plausible scenario (Scenario 2), characterised by improving economic conditions and low political alignment, to the desirable scenario (Scenario 4), where both economic conditions and political alignment are improving.

Among the leading political parties, the overarching reactions will be a mixed bag. Major parties may have little to no incentives or motivation to mobilise and take to the streets. Political parties that are "pro-substantive

restoration of law and order, transparency in its consensus-building process, and a clear election roadmap. Whatever, the interim government needs to be perceived as politically neutral as it moves forward.

The major political parties need to articulate their respective "minimum" regarding the scope, sequencing, speed of reforms, and timeline of national elections. Non-state actors, including rights-based NGOs, the private sector, and the media, would need to amplify citizens' voices in shaping the consensus-building process and protect marginalised communities during this process.

If political misalignment continues, the path ahead is expected to be fraught with the risk of breakdown of the ongoing processes. The risk of escalated agitation of different forms is a potential reality. Political parties seeking national elections at the earliest may resort to mass mobilisation on the streets to pressure the interim government. However, this does not necessarily mean that the political parties will withdraw their support for the interim government; rather, it may create a volatile political climate.

Our foresight analysis highlighted that at the same time, the possibility of a potential regression of democratic processes is not excluded. Due to a continued lack of political consensus on reforms and the increased influence of mob violence, the public trust built since August 5 is currently in decay, creating further pitfalls on the road to national elections. There is also growing concern about the capability of the interim government to ensure free and fair national elections.

An additional set of risks is arising from the emerging fault lines in the fragmented geo-economic and geostrategic landscapes. This may undermine the role of international development partners (IDPs) as a balancing factor, as their credibility may falter, and they may become hesitant to engage.

There is also the possibility of a structural change in the interim government, as continued instability may increase the likelihood of a more direct military influence, among others.

Experts pointed out that, although not desirable, a changed interim government including the current head is also a possibility.

Finally, the risk of continued political instability may also be spurred by the activities of the supporters of the ousted government. While restrictions have been put on the leaders and the party of the ousted regime, their total exclusion from the electoral processes may put new pressure on the political space.

Bangladesh is at a critical juncture in its nation-building process, which requires more than mere optimism. Our foresight analysis highlights that while the plausible scenario gives some breathing room, there is a looming risk that if political misalignment (along with governance weaknesses) continues, the country may regress into a potentially uncharted future. Safeguarding against this regression will require bold and principled steps. There has to be a clear roadmap for national elections at the earliest, with a minimum working consensus among political parties on reforms, trials, and national elections. Meanwhile, international development partners (IDPs), in the absence of an explicit collective position, may hold their concerns to themselves and instead try to anticipate their approaches to the post-election government.

In summary, the plausible scenario (Scenario 2) presents a future where economic conditions may extend a breathing space for the country, but its political foundation remains fragile. This raises the concern that while the system does not collapse, it also does not renew. Deep political misalignments and a lack of consensus regarding the articulation of reform may further aggravate economic instability. Moreover, political fragmentation underpinned by national elections and trials of the ousted regime may put further pressure on this delicate balance between economic circumstances and political alignment.

As such, shifting from the plausible to the desired future will require more than nominal and incremental change. A credible participatory process will need to emerge to foster common ground on the scope, sequencing, and speed of reforms, as well as the timing of national elections and the inclusivity of the process. To create an environment that fosters improved political alignment, the interim government may need to ensure the

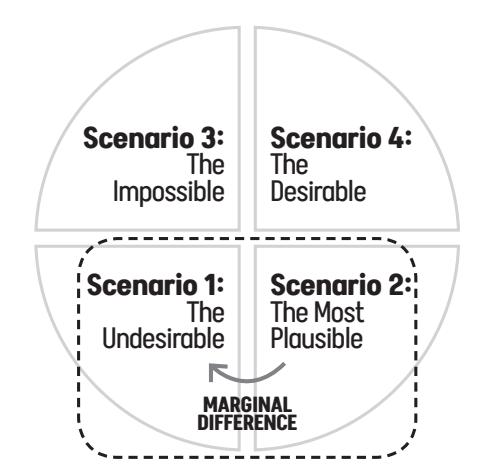
It should be noted that this foresight exercise is not a one-off act. The wheels of power will continue to turn, and alliances will continue to shift. As such, this foresight exercise will be repeated and updated, hopefully with the release of the National Charter. By then, it is expected that there will be a clearer indication of the country's future direction towards a meaningful democratic transition.

The views expressed in this article are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the views of CPD or any other organisation with which the authors are associated.



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

FIGURE 1: SNAPSHOT OF THE NEAR-TERM FUTURES



regardless of economic conditions. Low political alignment may lead to delaying an agreement on and implementation of key reforms (including those on economic issues), which may exacerbate uncertainty in the policy space, serving to shrink investor confidence due to perceived instability, slowing down of economic activity, negatively impacting job creation, increasing the cost of living and thus, aggravating economic discontent.

Ultimately, there is a risk of regressing from our most plausible future (Scenario 2) to our most undesired future (Scenario 1) if political misalignment continues or escalates, as identified by the experts.

The four scenarios outlined in our foresight analysis offer more than just alternative future trajectories for Bangladesh—they are grounded in the country's current realities and weak signals already visible on the horizon. While one scenario appears more plausible than others, it is not far enough from

This sentiment neatly captures the fluid socio-political and economic circumstances, as well as the underlying changing power structures in Bangladesh. While power is conventionally understood to be exercised through formal institutions, real influence is perceived to be residing in informal networks and alliances that are shaped by the issue at hand and the players involved. These opportunistic alliances are what was referred to as "variable geometry": the same actors do not always align on every issue.

Power, then, can be said to be held by a cross-cutting group of actors—what may be loosely referred to as a "regime," though the experts in this exercise preferred the term "clique" of powerbrokers. These powerbrokers are perceived to be dispersed across five key groups, rather than confined to a single institutional corner. The real power brokers and their influence may be revealed through strategic appointments and access to decision-

reforms prior to elections" may largely align with the interim government. Beyond the political realm, numerous other forces may shape this trajectory.

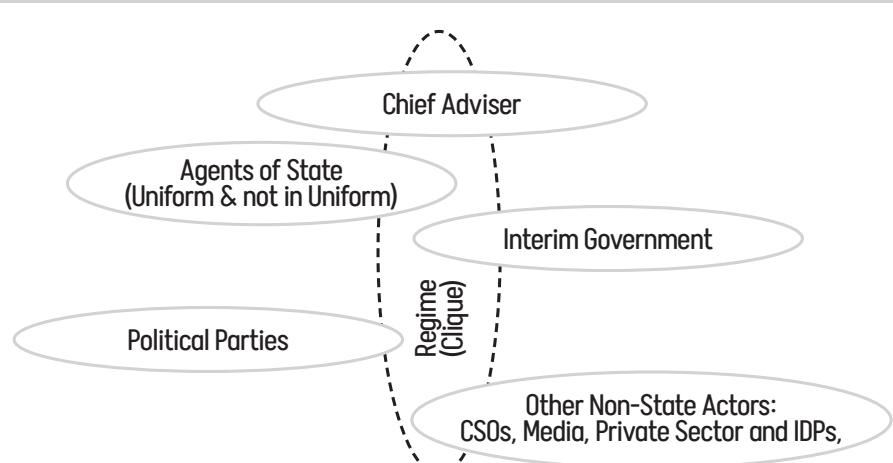
Rights-based civil society organisations (CSOs) may seek to protect and promote universal human rights, but the lack of resources and capacity, as well as constrained civic space, may hold them back. The media, struggling to rebuild credibility (given their ownership structure) and defend freedom of expression and the voice, has to navigate a delicate balance between responsible scrutiny and consolidating trust amid low social capital. The private sector, seeking to overcome a legitimacy deficit in the public eye due to its past political courtship, may emphasise the need for an enabling investment climate. They will remain cautiously focused on restoring and/or protecting their access to financial and fiscal resources as well as ensuring institutional patronage. Meanwhile,

international development partners (IDPs), in the absence of an explicit collective position, may hold their concerns to themselves and instead try to anticipate their approaches to the post-election government.

In summary, the plausible scenario (Scenario 2) presents a future where economic conditions may extend a breathing space for the country, but its political foundation remains fragile. This raises the concern that while the system does not collapse, it also does not renew. Deep political misalignments and a lack of consensus regarding the articulation of reform may further aggravate economic instability. Moreover, political fragmentation underpinned by national elections and trials of the ousted regime may put further pressure on this delicate balance between economic circumstances and political alignment.

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FIGURE 2: WHEEL WITHIN THE WHEEL



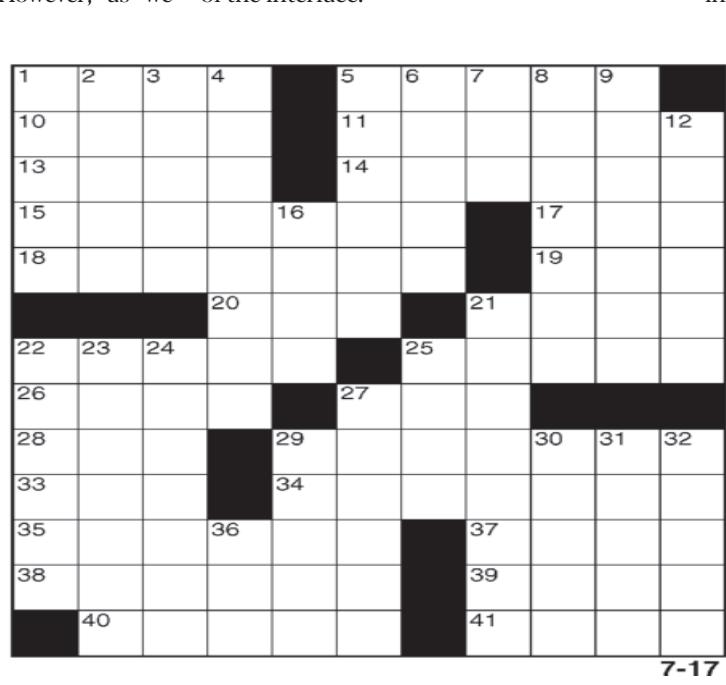
the most undesired future scenario. Whether we regress into the undesired scenario or upgrade to the desired future will depend on how various key actors perceive the landscape and react in the coming months leading up to the national elections. However, as we

making spaces rather than formal titles.

The current reading of the prevailing power structure is depicted in Figure 2; however, it is essential to note that the picture does not represent the quantitative dimensions (scale) of the interface.

Political alignment is the defining driver:

ACROSS
1 Brits' bars
5 Indy entrant
10 Aid illegally
11 Makes blank
13 Director
Ephron
14 Doorway
15 Dawdles
17 Gold, to
Coronado
18 Take by
surprise
19 Quick taste
20 " a deal!"
21 Trig function
22 Chum
25 Antlered
animals
26 Put up on
the wall
27 Place to relax
28 One day -
time
29 New
company
33 Free (of)
34 "Moon River"
composer Henry
35 Fight
37 Robust
38 Whole
39 Rocker
Clapton
40 Looks for
41 Fill fully
DOWN
1 Skirt
alternative
2 German sub
3 Hall of Fame
catcher Yogi
4 Filling the
lead role
5 Pushes away
in



Tajuddin Ahmad

FROM PAGE 12

In 1971, while Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was imprisoned in Pakistan, Tajuddin Ahmad was entrusted with the responsibility of leading the liberation effort. He formed the provisional government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and, as prime minister, led the country through the armed struggle against Pakistan.

Following independence, he served as prime minister until Sheikh Mujib's return to the country. He later took on the role of finance and planning minister in Sheikh Mujib's cabinet. On October 26, 1974, he resigned as per Sheikh Mujib's directive.

After Sheikh Mujib was assassinated on August 15, 1975, Tajuddin Ahmad was placed under house arrest.

On the night of November 3, 1975, while imprisoned in Dhaka Central Jail, he was brutally murdered along with three other national leaders -- AHM Qamaruzzaman, M Mansur Ali, and Syed Nazrul Islam.

Judicial panel

FROM PAGE 12

"On July 16, several unexpected incidents occurred centring around a rally organised by a new political party. Lives were lost. Nothing is more valuable than human life," the adviser said.

On that day, daylong running battles involving Awami League followers and law enforcers over a National Citizen Party (NCP) rally in the southern district town killed at least five people and injured more than 50.

"The chief adviser sent us here to convey his message that the government is deeply concerned about the incident and wants to ensure such occurrences never happen again. The administration has been instructed to take all necessary measures in this regard," he said.

Fouzul Kabir said his visit is an initial fact-finding mission.

"The commission will investigate the events thoroughly. I urge journalists to assist the commission by providing information and evidence. Through the commission's report, we will learn what actually happened, why it happened, and what could have been done to prevent it," he said.

He said that the scale of violence on July 16 took everyone by surprise, and the government wants to draw lessons from it.

"Despite limited resources, law enforcement agencies and the army put great effort into handling the situation. Many of them, along with journalists, were injured while performing their duties. We are here to appreciate their commitment," he said, adding that those responsible for attacking police or torching vehicles would be brought to justice.

"We will make every effort to ensure that normal life, business activities, and peace are not disrupted further," he said.

Meanwhile, three more people were arrested in raids in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of arrests to 325 in connection with the violence, said police.

Bangladesh writes

FROM PAGE 12

USTR fixes a date for the talks, he said.

Upon the return from the second round of negotiations, Bangladesh has prepared its formal proposal to the US as the negotiations will have to be completed by the end of this month.

The Trump administration is scheduled to impose new reciprocal tariff rates for the countries concerned from August 1 unless the pause on reciprocal tariff schedule is extended further.

The position paper outlines Bangladesh's commitments to increase imports of US goods and reduce duties on certain items, along with non-trade commitments that the government has deemed non-harmful.

Bangladesh has agreed to reduce tariffs on several US goods and increase imports from that country as part of the broader negotiation process.

For example, the government signed an agreement on Sunday to import 0.7 million tonnes of wheat from American suppliers annually. Talks are also at an advanced stage to procure 14 Boeing aircraft.

Some 1,322 factories, which are members of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and mainly export products to the US, will face a difficult time if the tariff rate is not reduced at the end of the negotiations.

Of the factories, 100 export 91-100 percent of their goods to America, according to data from the BGMEA.

Forty-six companies export 81-90 percent of their goods to the United States; 91 export 61-80 percent; 87 export 41-60 percent; 176 export 21-40 percent; and 822 export up to 20 percent, the BGMEA data said.

Bangladesh seeks zero duty or a tariff rate lower than Vietnam's.

Due to the new 35 percent tariff imposed by the Trump administration, the local exporters fear losing the competitiveness in the US market, where Bangladesh last year exported garment items worth over \$8.2 billion.

BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan, who is hopeful for a reduced tariff in America, said the extension of the pause is up to the Trump administration as the time is running fast towards August 1.

However, the US retailers and brands expect that the tariff rate will be borne by the local garment and fabrics suppliers to reduce the burden of the 35 percent tariff, he added.

Mass arrests and crackdown continue



THE JULY THAT ROCKED BANGLADESH

JULY 23, 2024

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

On July 23, 2024, the government issued a circular radically overhauling the quota system in public service recruitment. According to the new directive, 93 percent of civil service positions would now be filled through merit-based recruitment, up from the previous 44 percent, while the remaining 7 percent would be reserved under various quotas.

The circular, which came in line with the Supreme Court's order, was to take immediate effect and apply across all grades of government, semi-government, autonomous, semi-autonomous, statutory bodies, and corporations in the case of direct recruitment via examinations.

Student leaders rejected the circular outright, saying it lacked proper consultation. At a press briefing held at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, Nahid Islam, one of the key coordinators of the quota reform protests, stated, "Before issuing the circular, the authorities should have held a dialogue with students and other stakeholders. We'll not accept the circular as the final resolution."

He strongly criticised the government for the bloodshed and loss of life. "We demand a policy-making dialogue involving the stakeholders in a conducive environment. Besides, we urge the government to form an independent commission to avoid such controversies in the future," he said. He reaffirmed that the movement would continue until justice was delivered for those killed and injured.

Meanwhile, the state's crackdown on

protesters and perceived agitators continued unabated. Over 1,100 individuals were arrested across Dhaka and various districts in the 36 hours leading up to 6:00pm on July 23. At least 133 cases related to recent violence had been filed at different police stations in the capital. Authorities also announced the continuation of the nationwide curfew until further notice.

In response to the increasing arrests and detentions, 22 current and former faculty members from the Department of International Relations at Dhaka University issued a statement, expressing grave concern and demanding the immediate release of detained students.

Tragically, the death toll continued to climb. Three more people, including a student of Chittagong University, died from injuries sustained during the clashes. Hridoy Chandra Tarua, a third-year student of the Department of History, succumbed to his

Dhaka's hospitals, especially Dhaka Medical College Hospital, remained overwhelmed with patients suffering from bullet and shotgun pellet wounds. Many victims claimed they had no involvement in the protests and were merely bystanders or commuters caught in the line of fire during police and BGB action.

Internet connectivity, which had been completely shut down for five consecutive days, was partially restored in select areas across the country, bringing some relief to citizens amid the ongoing turmoil.

The Dhaka University administration attempted to assure students of their safety, declaring that no student would be harassed in future for holding legitimate programmes to realise their logical demands. The administration also pledged to reopen the university as soon as possible.

The international community reacted strongly to the continued violence. The



A prison van carrying over 40 individuals, who had been arrested the previous day in connection with violence, arrived at the CMM Court. Around 500 detainees were produced before the court, which sent most of them to jail on the afternoon of July 23, 2024.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the morning. An unidentified youth, aged around 22, died at the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital. Another youth, Shuvo Shil, 24, passed away at a hospital in Savar. These fatalities brought the total number of deaths since July 16 to at least 150.

United Nations, the United States, and the United Kingdom all condemned the bloodshed during the student protests. Expressing alarm over the situation, they raised concerns about its potential impacts on the economy and the broader well-being of the Bangladeshi people.

the students away and vacated the area, which enraged the students further.

After assurances from the college authorities about their demands being met, the students left the area but stayed outside the college gate

Following the meeting, Prof Nazrul addressed the students and said, "Your demands are reasonable. On behalf of the government, I assure you that they will be fulfilled. We are here as guardians to express our sympathy.

"Steps are underway for compensation, rehabilitation, and trauma management support for the affected families."

He also assured students that directives would be issued to the air force to avoid flying aircraft over densely populated areas.

Addressing allegations that students were assaulted by army personnel after the crash, the adviser said, "On behalf of the government, we apologise for the misconduct by the force members who behaved inappropriately with you. We will take appropriate action regarding this."

However, the words did not assure the protesting students. After his remarks, students began chanting slogans calling the adviser a "fraud". The situation became chaotic as shoving and scuffles broke out, forcing the advisers to retreat into Building 5 again, where they

Tensions escalated around 2:13pm when hundreds of students chanted "Bhau, Bhau" ("fake, fake") and clashed with police guarding the building where the meeting was taking place.

Protesters threw brick chunks and blocked journalists, accusing the media of misreporting the number of casualties, said witnesses.

The police then momentarily drove

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Protesters threw brick chunks and blocked journalists, accusing the media of misreporting the number of casualties, said witnesses.

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Silence

FROM PAGE 3

"I was walking back to the classroom after eating tiffin. I had only taken a few steps when I saw the plane crash right into it. Eleven students were inside. Usually, there are 40. It was a coaching class, so fewer were present. Two of my friends survived," he said.

His mother, Nargis Parvin, said her son was saved only by chance.

"Every day, coaching classes are held after regular lessons. He had just come out to eat. After washing his hands, we both saw the plane -- on fire. I told him, 'Look, the plane is burning.' Within a minute, it crashed into their classroom."

"He lived because he had stepped out. Many didn't. It's heartbreaking," she added.

By late morning, more than a thousand people had gathered on campus, including students, guardians, teachers, and local residents. Milestone students chanted slogans, demanding accountability, as additional police forces were deployed to control the swelling crowd and ensure order around the crash site.

At 10:30am, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar arrived at the school to inspect the site.

As they approached, groups of students surrounded them, chanting, "Fraud! Fraud!", "Why did my brother die?" and "We want answers from the administration!"

The protest chants rang out three times before the advisers were escorted to the conference room on the ground floor of College Building 5, where they met 5-7 student representatives for a closed door discussion.

Outside, hundreds continued their demonstration.

On the school field, HSC examinee Md Ratul Chowdhury, who lives in the hostel, described what he witnessed.

"We heard a loud noise and ran to see what happened. There was a huge fire. Students were being pulled out by breaking window grills," he said.

"Then the army came and cleared the area. Even in my nightmares, I never imagined a plane would crash into our college," said Ratul, who was scheduled to sit for his chemistry second paper exam yesterday, which was postponed.

Meanwhile, Milestone College Director Russell Talukder told The Daily Star that a help desk had been set up below building 1 to provide and collect information regarding the deceased and the injured.

"Teachers are stationed there to update and assist guardians. We are grieving and devastated. Many of our teachers and students have died. Many others are still in hospital receiving treatment," he added.

SC verdict

FROM PAGE 4

his district during the Liberation War.

The tribunal also sentenced Mobarak to life imprisonment for another war crime and acquitted him of three other charges.

On December 18, 2014, Mobarak filed an appeal through his lawyers with the apex court, challenging the ICT-1 verdict.

In an 82-page appeal, Mobarak sought acquittal of the two charges, in which he was found guilty and convicted. He also annexed documents of 780 pages along with the appeal.

The former AI leader also mentioned 77 grounds, for which, according to him, the court should consider acquitting him.



Boys play a game of football on a muddy field in Pakundia upazila of Kishoreganj. Despite the field's poor condition following days of rain, the joy on their faces remains undiminished. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: TAFSILUL AZIZ

Rest well little angels

FROM PAGE 3

Lipi Begum, devastated, remembered her son's achievements: "He came first in all classes, got GPA 5 in every subject. Teachers loved him."

Tanvir was buried after the namaz-e-janaza at Andipara Government Primary School. The bright boy with ambitions far beyond his village now rests in the soil where his dreams once took root.

'SHE WAS WAITING FOR ME IN HER CLASSROOM'

Sumi Akter, the mother of Mehnaz Akter Humaira, 9, said, "She was just waiting in her classroom for me to pick her up."

Her daughter, a third-grade student, died on the spot as the aircraft crashed into her classroom at Milestone School.

Humaira's father, Delwar Hossain Rana, a lecturer in the Bengali department at the same institution, was seen kissing his daughter's coffin during the funeral in Sakhipur's Hataya Keranipara in Tangail.

"Everything happened before my wife's eyes," Delwar said. "She's now

unable to speak. How can I console her?"

Humaira, their only child, was buried at the family graveyard following a tearful janaza at Gabal Bazar.

Her grandfather, Abdul Bashed, wept inconsolably. "Grandpa used to be with me all the time. She'll never call me Grandpa again!"

'MOM, WILL YOU STAY WITH ME TONIGHT?'

Abdullah Shamim, a sixth-grade student at Milestone, was buried beside his father, Abdul Kalam Azad, in Shariatpur's Bhedarganj upazila.

His father had recently died in Saudi Arabia, where he had worked for years. The family returned to Bangladesh three years ago and had hoped to rebuild their lives.

At the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College, Abdullah Shamim asked his mother, Zulekha Begum, question: "Mom, will you stay with me at night?" Hours later, he passed away.

"My son used to press my feet and say, 'Paradise is under your feet, Mother,'"

Zulekha wept. "Now my son has gone to paradise himself."

Shamim's maternal uncle Saiful Islam condemned the authorities for allowing flight training over residential areas. "No government representative even came to visit us," he said. "We buried a child, and the silence was deafening."

'HE DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL THAT DAY'

In Barishal's Mehendiganj, a heartbreaking janaza was held for 12-year-old Samiul Karim, a seventh-grade student whose life was cut short in Monday's tragedy.

The funeral took place at the Bir Muktijoddha Mustafa Kamal School ground -- the same school where his mother, Reshma Begum, is a teacher.

Samiul's family had moved to Uttara after losing their ancestral home in Rukundi village to river erosion.

Just a day before the incident, Samiul had returned to Dhaka from a visit to his family home in Mehendiganj and Barishal.

"He didn't even want to go to school that day," said his uncle, Humayun Kabir.

"But the school authorities had asked him to submit his marksheets, so he went."

His father, Rezaul Karim Shamim, went to the school to pick him up. As they were walking just a short distance away, a burning fragment of the jet fell on Samiul.

"In front of his father's eyes, he caught fire and was fatally burned," said Humayun.

Relatives described Samiul as a bright and respectful child. "We should not lose anyone else like we lost Samiul," said family member Abu Jaher.

Overcome with grief, Samiul's father broke down during the funeral prayers, struggling to pray for his son's departed soul.

Samiul was buried in Deshkhagata village, beside his maternal grandfather's home, surrounded by heartbroken classmates and neighbours.

'I CALLED HIM EINSTEIN'

In Lakshmipur, grief has gripped Bashikpur village as 14-year-old Shayan

Yusuf, a seventh-grade student of Milestone School and College, died early yesterday from burns.

Shayan, son of AFM Yusuf, an assistant professor in Milestone's Chemistry Department, passed away at 3:30am while undergoing treatment at the burn

institute.

His body arrived in the village that afternoon. His grandmother Kamrun Nahar, upon hearing the ambulance, collapsed in grief, repeatedly crying, "Where is my precious one?"

At the funeral, Shayan's father broke down, telling mourners, "We won't live in this country anymore. Politicians have destroyed it. My son was brilliant. I called him Einstein. Why did this happen to us?"

Shayan's uncle recalled seeing a video of the boy, burnt but walking with his schoolbag before collapsing. His janaza was held after the Asif prayers; he was buried beside his grandfather Dr Maqsoodur Rahman.

Another victim, Afan Fayaz, also a seventh grader from Sonapur village in

Lakshmipur, was buried in Dhaka.

QUIET RANGAMATI HILLS ALSO SHAKEN

In the hills of Rangamati's Rajasthani upazila, another family mourned quietly. Uky Ching Marma, 13, a seventh-grade student, had been critically burned in the crash. He died at 2:25am on Monday at the Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute in Dhaka.

His father, Usai Mong Marma, a teacher, and mother Daisy Marma, an assistant teacher in Bandarban, rushed to Dhaka upon hearing the news.

"We are bringing his body back. The cremation will be held on Wednesday," Usai told The Daily Star.

Uky's village, Collegepara in Bangalhali union, fell silent in mourning. UP Chairman Adomong Marma noted, "This has shaken the entire area. Everyone is grieving."

[Our correspondents from Tangail, Gazipur, Rangamati, Barishal and Noakhali contributed to this report]

Dengue cases reach 18,000

FROM PAGE 4

"Intermittent rain is highly favourable for the spread of dengue, which is already present across the country," said entomologist GM Saifur Rahman.

He said Aedes mosquitoes are more active during overcast or gloomy weather, which has been widespread recently. "During the monsoon, dengue cases can be up to nine times higher than in the dry season," he added.

Saifur urged people to take precautions such as wearing full-sleeve clothing, using mosquito nets, and regularly cleaning areas like rooftops to eliminate breeding sites.

He criticised the authorities for inadequate anti-mosquito drives. "They often fail to operate properly in infected areas, even in homes where cases are reported," he said.

Jahangirnagar University entomologist Prof Kabir Bashar predicted that dengue cases in August could be at least three times higher than in July, with a possible further rise in September.

He stressed the importance of controlling larvae and breeding sites. "When both mosquito populations and infected individuals increase at the same time, the disease spreads rapidly," he said.

Bashar called for targeted hotspot management around the homes of dengue patients to kill adult mosquitoes and prevent further breeding.

He also warned that hospitals can become transmission hotspots if Aedes mosquitoes bite infected patients and then others, and stressed the need for mosquito control in facilities where patients are being treated.

"Without active community involvement in removing breeding sources at the household level, dengue will be difficult to control," he added.

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Hearing of Charge framing

FROM PAGE 3

-- former BRUR proctor Shariful Islam, Amir, Sujan, Imran, Akash, Rafiul Hasan Rasel, and Anowar Pervez alias Appel -- were produced before the court.

They face charges of murder, attempted murder, and complicity in crimes against humanity.

Before yesterday's proceedings began, the tribunal observed a one-minute silence to mourn the deaths caused by the crash of an air force jet on the campus of Milestone School and College in Uttara on Monday.

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DHAKA WEDNESDAY JULY 23, 2025
SRABAN 8, 1432 BS

The Daily Star

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Local residents halt substandard road work in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A road construction project in Kurigram's Ulipur municipality has come under scrutiny after allegations of irregularities, including reinforced cement concrete (RCC) casting without iron rods.

The 675-metre road is being constructed by contracting firm Messrs Mostafa Sons. The project is worth Tk 2.1 crore.

On Saturday night, residents in the Masterbari area of Ward-6 noticed suspicious activity at the site. Upon closer inspection, they found workers pouring RCC without using rods -- a violation of standard construction norms.

The locals halted the work on the spot.

Local Monjurul Haque said, "The workers were deliberately pouring concrete without using rods. When we realised what was happening, we intervened. They fled the scene. Later, we removed the ready mix that had already been poured."

Debashish Sarker, another resident, said, "In many sections, the RCC thickness was only 2.5 to 3 inches, instead of the required 4 inches. The cement to sand ratio was supposed to be 1:4, but it looked closer to 1:8. In a 20-foot stretch, there was clear evidence of concrete poured without any rods."

Assistant engineer Russell Mia, who was in charge of monitoring the project, said, "Casting without rods was a mistake. It happened unintentionally."

Executive engineer Mahbubul Alam said, "I was not present at the site... Some extra ready-mix was poured there. But it was later removed."

Contractor representative Golam Rabbani said the excess concrete had been dumped in that spot during the night, but it was removed after objections.

Yusuf, a seventh-grade student of Milestone School and College, died early yesterday from burns.

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LAW VISION

Bangladesh's Constitutional Crossroads: The Imperative of a New Charter



The courageous, necessary, and ultimately most stabilising path forward is to embark on the journey of crafting a new constitution. This is not merely a legalistic exercise; it is a fundamental step towards national reconciliation, democratic renewal, and the establishment of a just and durable rule of law that can truly serve the aspirations of all Bangladeshis.

MD. IMAMUNUR RAHMAN

The seismic events of July-August 2024 plunged Bangladesh into a profound crisis far exceeding a mere political leadership change. The nation stands at a critical juncture with a fractured legal order, compelling the question: has the existing constitutional framework irrevocably broken down, making a new constitution essential for national healing and stable governance? Sheikh Hasina's departure, the President's constitutionally questionable unilateral dissolution of Parliament, and the subsequent extra-constitutional interim government signal a deeper constitutional rupture, placing the judiciary in an unprecedented, precarious position. While the Constitution's text remains, its selective dismemberment and an alternative authority's *de facto* operation create legal duality, obliterate legal certainty, and corrode the rule of law. Thus, an outsider might ask: Is there a dual legal system within a single state? This reality demands a courageous solution: creating a new constitution.

To understand this constitutional moment's gravity, legal philosopher Hans Kelsen offers insight. Kelsen argued a legal system's coherence and legitimacy derive from norms validated by a fundamental norm—the *Grundnorm*. This *Grundnorm* is not a formal law but the foundational presupposition of legality, the ultimate validity source for the legal edifice. If this *Grundnorm* is displaced or challenged, the system it underpins risks disintegration. Importantly, invoking Kelsen here is not to legitimise any specific 2024 political outcome. Rather, Kelsenian theory is a diagnostic tool, revealing the legal fragmentation and acute rule of law crisis from the effective collapse of the *Grundnorm* that once validated Bangladesh's constitutional order.

For decades, Bangladesh's legal and

political life was nominally structured by its Constitution. This Constitution drew authority from the *Grundnorm*—the presupposed commitment to its supremacy and obedience. This provided the architecture for legal coherence. However, 2024's tumultuous events shattered its practical authority. The President's dissolution of Parliament and the installation of an interim government explicitly outside existing constitutional mechanisms signify a definitive break from the established legal order. These are not mere deviations but acts creating a new, nascent source of governing authority. The critical question is how to escape the ensuing chaos and forge a new, unified, legitimate legal foundation. The existing Constitution has proven incapable of managing such a profound crisis, highlighting its inadequacy.

The implications of this constitutional vacuum are dire, especially for the Supreme Court, the Constitution's designated guardian. It is now caught in an untenable position, navigating a landscape where the traditional legal authority, the existing Constitution, is largely moribund in practice, while a new, extra-constitutional authority issues directives. This is not a sustainable duality but a symptom of a broken system. The judiciary cannot function as the rule of law's bulwark when law itself lacks a single, undisputed legitimacy fountainhead.

The immediate casualty of this collapsed *Grundnorm* is legal certainty. A functioning rule of law, Kelsen underscores, needs a stable *Grundnorm*. When this shatters, predictability vanishes. Citizens, businesses, and institutions face uncertainty about governing legal standards, as legal validity's basis is contested. This breeds instability and undermines progress.

Furthermore, the institutional integrity of the judiciary is gravely threatened. Judges, sworn to uphold the Constitution whose

foundational *Grundnorm* is no longer operative in critical spheres, face an impossible dilemma. Attempting to reconcile the directives of an extra-constitutional interim government with the letter of a largely ignored constitution creates a judicial schizophrenia. This can lead to inconsistent rulings, erode public trust in the judiciary, and open the door to arbitrary governance.

More fundamentally, the principle of constitutionalism—the bedrock of modern democratic governance—is in peril. Constitutionalism posits the supremacy of a constitution as the embodiment of the people's will and the ultimate source of state power, a hierarchy validated by the *Grundnorm*. When an extra-constitutional body effectively governs, this hierarchy collapses, paving the way for a system where power may not be adequately constrained by law. The current situation is not merely one of 'selective non-adherence' to the existing Constitution; it represents a comprehensive failure of that constitution to serve as the nation's guiding legal and political compact.

Therefore, the challenge confronting Bangladesh is not merely to 'restore' a fractured legal system or to find ingenious ways for the Supreme Court to navigate an impossible situation. The challenge is to acknowledge that the old *Grundnorm* has lost its efficacy and that the existing Constitution, as a living document, has ceased to function as the ultimate source of legal and political authority. The urgent, overriding imperative is the establishment of a new constitution.

Why a new constitution? It is imperative for several critical reasons. First, it would establish a fresh and legitimate *Grundnorm* based on popular will, ensuring a stable and unified legal order. Second, it would definitively end the current legal duality by creating a single, coherent framework, superseding outdated and ad-hoc arrangements. Third, reflecting the people's demand for change, it would embed core principles like accountability and justice, addressing the root causes of the recent national crisis. Fourth, its creation process can foster national dialogue and rebuild trust, contributing to social cohesion. Fifth, it would grant state institutions, including the Supreme Court, a clear and accepted mandate, restoring their effective authority.

Attempting to merely amend or selectively apply the Constitution in the current context is akin to performing surgery on a patient who requires resuscitation and a complete systemic overhaul. The 'selective non-adherence' observed is not a temporary illness but a fatal symptom indicating the demise of the old order's legitimacy.

Bangladesh is at a precipice. The current untenable situation—a partially inoperative Constitution alongside an extra-constitutional governing body—creates a damaging dual legal reality, breeding uncertainty, chaos, and potential arbitrary rule. The courageous, necessary, and ultimately most stabilising path forward is to embark on the journey of crafting a new constitution. This is not merely a legalistic exercise; it is a fundamental step towards national reconciliation, democratic renewal, and the establishment of a just and durable rule of law that can truly serve the aspirations of all Bangladeshis. The time for incrementalism is over. Bangladesh must now embrace foundational renewal through a new constitutional compact.

The writer is Assistant Professor and Chair in the Department of Law at Z.H. Sikder University of Science and Technology.

COURT CORRIDOR

Revival of stopped criminal proceedings

RAJIB KUMAR DEB

Revival of a criminal proceeding previously stopped under section 249 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (CrPC) involves important questions about procedural legality and judicial interpretation. Section 249 allows a judicial Magistrate to stop the proceeding of a case instituted otherwise than upon complaint at any stage of the trial and release the accused, particularly when further prosecution witnesses are not forthcoming. However, the question remains, whether the revival of such proceedings is lawful or not.

It is significant to note that the CrPC does not provide an explicit statutory mechanism for reviving such proceedings once they have been lawfully stopped. In practice, however, some Magistrates rely on two decisions of the Supreme Court to justify such revival, namely, *Niamat Ali Sheikh v Begum Enayetur Noor* (1990) and *Mosharrif Hossain Sheikh v Abdul Kader* (2004). A closer look at these decisions reveals the correct legal position.

Firstly, in the *Niamat Ali Sheikh* case, the Appellate Division (AD) of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh (SCOB) considered whether a fresh proceeding, based on the same facts and against the same accused, could be initiated after the earlier one had been stopped. The Court unambiguously held that revival of a proceeding is impermissible in absence of a clear

legislative mandate. Nonetheless, it clarified that there is no legal bar to instituting a fresh proceeding based on the same allegations, so long as it conforms to legal standards. It will not attract the prohibition of double jeopardy. This decision was later echoed in Rule 638(2) of the Criminal Rules and Orders, which governs judicial conduct under the CrPC.

In the *Mosharrif Hossain Sheikh* case, on the other hand, the High Court Division (HCD) of the SCOB addressed a different context—one involving a case and a counter-case arising from the same incident. The Court emphasised that such matters should be tried simultaneously to prevent contradictory outcomes. Here, failure to revive one of the proceedings was deemed a procedural lapse. However, this precedent is inapplicable to situations where there is no counter-case, and the revival issue stands alone.

Furthermore, historical legislative support for revival, previously found in section 339C(4) of the CrPC, was substituted and section 339D omitted. This repeal indicates a deliberate legislative intent to bar automatic revival, thereby reinforcing the AD's position in the *Niamat Ali Sheikh* case.

In conclusion, absent a specific statutory provision, the revival of proceedings stopped under section 249 remains outside the ambit of lawful procedure. The initiation of a fresh

proceeding remains the appropriate legal recourse, subject to compliance with procedural safeguards and limitations.

The writer is Senior Assistant Judge, Bangladesh Judicial Service.



LAW REVIEW

Legal Aid Services (Amendment) Ordinance 2025

SATIRTHA CHAKMA

On 1 July 2025, the *Legal Aid Services (Amended) Ordinance, 2025* came into effect. The newly enacted ordinance introduced both pre-case and post-case mediation, either physically or virtually by mutual compromise. The most crucial part of this ordinance is its schedule which incorporates mandatory pre-case mediation in matters of family disputes, negotiable instruments, rent control, and controversially dowry violence, among others.

Notably, "mediation" means flexible, informal, non-binding, confidential, non-adversarial and consensual dispute resolution process in which the mediator shall facilitate compromise of disputes in the suit between the parties without directing or dictating the terms of such compromise. The Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (CPC) already makes the mediation process mandatory by an amendment of 2003, incorporating section 89A. The amendment of 2012 also includes section 89(D) and 89(E) to allow cases filed before 2012 to get the same benefit of mediation with a retrospective effect and later, the CPC amendment of 2017 integrated Legal Aid Officers into this mandatory mediation process under CPC (Chowdhury). However, the procedure still remains the same, adding another layer to civil litigation, and successful resolution of civil disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism remains rare.

The first impression of the fresh ordinance may seem visionary, but in practice, the outcome



appears less promising. Although mediation has long been part of the legal framework, its effectiveness in delivering measurable outcomes remains inadequate. However, The National Legal Aid Service Organisation estimates that about 90 per cent of disputes can be resolved through mediation; which aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: 'Access to Justice for All,' by making legal aid more accessible, affordable and people-friendly. Despite official claims that mediation can resolve up to 90% of disputes, there remains a lack of transparent, verifiable data from the courts or the Legal Aid offices to validate these outcomes.

By and large, the state has been quite unsuccessful to promote public awareness and understanding of the mediation process. Additionally, there lies significant shortage of judicial manpower, as the judges of civil and criminal courts remains the same and has not been separated yet and there's only one Legal Aid Office per district. Therefore, mandatory mediation puts overwhelming pressure on already stretched judicial officers and adds further procedural complexity to litigation. Hence, the practical impact remains limited as mediation does not prohibit parties from withdrawal, adjustment and compromise of the suit under Order XXIII of the CPC.

To ensure meaningful and effective mediation, it is essential to address key social and ethical concerns. Mediators must remain sensitive to issues such as gender-based power imbalances, family violence, and the dynamics of fear, silence, and control that disproportionately affect women. In the context of Bangladesh, mediators often go beyond a purely facilitative role and engage in evaluative mediation. While they may offer suggestions or assessments, it is important to note that they do not determine the outcome of disputes or impose decisions on the parties involved (Chowdhury).

Many mediators are appointed without any ADR-specific qualifications, as there is currently no national framework or accreditation standard for mediators in Bangladesh. This regulatory gap can result in inconsistent outcomes and may erode the trust of parties in the mediation process. Moreover, despite the growing reliance on digital tools, a significant portion of rural and economically disadvantaged litigants lack access to the internet or required digital literacy to participate effectively in virtual mediation. This not only hampers inclusivity but also raises concerns around privacy breaches and potential discrimination. Compounding the issue, most courts in the country are still not adequately equipped to facilitate widespread virtual proceedings.

Whether the ordinance becomes a visionary tool for justice or merely an added procedural burden will depend not on legal mandates alone, but on meaningful investment in mediator training, technological infrastructure, and the cultivation of public trust.

The writer is official contributor, Law Desk.

TIGERS MAKE HISTORY in Mirpur thriller

SPORTS REPORTER

A brilliant fast-bowling display and some power-hitting from Jaker Ali saw Bangladesh win the second T20I by eight runs and clinch the three-match series 2-0 with a game in hand, despite a nervy ending that threatened a comeback for Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Tuesday.

What could have been a portrayal of total dominance by the Tigers over Pakistan, turned into a nail-biting affair in the end – thanks to Faheem Ashraf's 32-ball 51 run cameo and a few misfielding by the hosts, giving a reprieve to Faheem on 38 via a dropped catch. Still, the Tigers prevailed, clinching their first-ever victory in a multi-game bilateral T20I series over Pakistan.

From losing seven for just 47 in 11.5 overs, Pakistan turned things around at the death, needing just 13 from the final over of Mustafizur Rahman after Faheem and debutant Ahmed Daniyal combined to amass 15 in the penultimate over, bowled by Rishad Hossain.

When Faheem was castled by Rishad in the final delivery of the 19th over, it seemed as if Bangladesh had once again tightened their grip in the game. But Daniyal struck Mustafizur for a boundary in the first delivery of the final over, keeping everyone on edge. However, he eventually departed in the next ball while trying to clear the field as Bangladesh won the thriller.

After Jaker's 48 ball 55 helped Bangladesh post a respectable 133 all out in 20 overs, it was the pacers that turned up the heat in Mirpur, reducing the visitors to 15 for five in 4.4 overs.

It started with Pakistan losing their first wicket -- that of opener Saim Ayub's -- in the very first over, owing to a collective fielding effort by the Tigers that saw a superb dive in the outfield, quick collection and swift removal of the bails



“It was tough after the early wickets. Mahedi took chances, and I tried to support him—that was the plan. I just looked to take the game deep and wait for balls in my zone. Our bowlers have done well throughout the series. Pakistan fought hard today, but we had the last laugh.”

Player-of-the-Match Jaker Ali.

by wicketkeeper and skipper Litton Das.

After that, pacers Shoriful Islam and Tanzim Hasan Sakib looked to be men on a mission. Shoriful had Mohammad Haris trapped in front with a jaffer that came back sharply in towards the right-hander before having Fakhar Zaman glove one back to the keeper.

Sakib made the Nawaz -- Hasan and Mohammad -- edge back successive deliveries to the keeper, as Bangladesh restricted Pakistan to just 17 for five in the Powerplay.

With half of their side already back in the hut, Pakistan never looked threatening in their pursuit of an undaunting total till Faheem made things interesting with a resilient effort. The spinners came into the act soon, with Mahedi Hasan having Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha caught at long-on and Khushdil Shah trapped in front to leave the visitors seven down and

gasping for breath.

Faheem stitched stands of 41 and 33 for the eighth and the ninth wickets with Abbas Afridi and Daniyal, respectively, creating panic in the Bangladesh dug out.

Like the final phase of the game, things did not go quite as planned for the Tigers in the first half of the game either. The Tigers made the same mistakes that Pakistan had made in the first match of the three-match series, just 48 hours previously at the same venue.

Poor shot selection, soft dismissals, unnecessary hastiness -- the script that Pakistan had followed when they were bundled out for 110 in 19.3 overs on Sunday -- were the traits of Bangladesh's innings yesterday, after being asked to bat first.

Had it not been for a six-laden knock from Jaker at the death, Bangladesh might as well have accumulated something

similar to that of Pakistan's total in the first game. However, with Jaker showing some true muscle power to dispatch as many as five maximums by capitalising on some full and loose deliveries from Pakistan, the Tigers were able to provide the bowlers with something to defend on a traditionally low and slow Mirpur surface.

It was the nature of the Mirpur surface and the ability to adjust to it that dominated in the post-match pressers of both sides in the first game, with opener Parvez Hossain Emon -- the player-of-the-match of that contest for his unbeaten 56 -- refuting Pakistan head coach Mike Hesson's claims of Mirpur surface not being "up to international standards".

According to Emon, Bangladesh were able to adjust better to the Mirpur wicket and would have gone on to make around 160 in that game had they batted full 20 overs as they chased down Pakistan's meagre total in the 16th over.

However, the way Emon and most of the Bangladesh batters threw their wickets away at inopportune moments could make one question whether the hosts were actually able to grasp the approach needed to bat on surfaces that Mirpur typically offers.

To put it into context, Bangladesh were four down for just 28 in 5.5 overs, with the first four batters throwing their wickets away in an attempt to score quickly from the word go.

From there on, Bangladesh bounced back through a 53-run fifth-wicket stand between Jaker and Mahedi (33 off 25) and some sparsely added runs in the last few stands.

In the end, it was an exceptional bowling effort in the initial overs that saw Bangladesh eventually edge the game, but it would be naive of the Tigers to think that they had every part of the game in their control.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh and Pakistan players observe a minute's silence, sporting black armbands, ahead of their second T20I at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. In observance of the National Mourning Day, the gesture was a mark of respect to the victims of the tragic fighter jet crash at Milestone School and College in Uttara on Monday, which claimed several lives.

“Our team played really well. We fell short in the powerplay but Mahedi and Jaker batted brilliantly. It looked like a 130-140 wicket, and we knew we could defend it. We bowled well early but some dropped catches cost us later. I want to dedicate this series win to those who lost their lives in the recent jet crash.”

Bangladesh captain Litton Das

“We always believe we can win, and that belief is strong in this team now. The way we played after being 15 for 5 was outstanding. This is the kind of belief I want from my team. It was a thriller -- definitely worth the money to watch.”

Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha

SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh: 133 all out in 20 overs (Emon 13, Jaker 55, Mahedi 33; Salman 2-17, Daniyal 2-23, Afridi 2-37)

Pakistan: 125 all out in 19.2 overs (Khushdil 13, Ashraf 51, Afridi 19, Daniyal 17; Mahedi 2-25, Shoriful 3-17, Mustafizur 1-15, Sakib 2-23, Rishad 1-42)

Result: Bangladesh won by eight runs.

Player-of-the-match: Jaker Ali

Butler's charges to 'do their best' in AFC U-20 Qualifiers

SPORTS REPORTER

Following Bangladesh's emphatic 4-0 win over Nepal on Monday, which helped the team emerge unbeaten champions of the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship, head coach Peter Butler offered an in-depth analysis of the team's growth, collective mentality, and future ambitions as they gear up for sterner challenges ahead -- including the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers next month and the senior AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia in March 2026.

Bangladesh will leave for Laos on August 2 for the U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers -- scheduled to start on August 6 -- with South Korea, Laos and Timor Leste in the same group.

Eight group winners and three best runners-up teams will qualify for the final round -- a mission Butler believes is difficult but not beyond reach.

All through the SAFFU-20 Championship, Butler said he was barely interested in winning the title, instead his focus was on future campaigns. Hence, he rotated all 23 members of his squad during the six matches of this tournament, giving ample opportunity to fringe players.

"I wanted to give all 23 players a little bit of game time and it's coming along nicely. But we just have to keep humble, keep working hard, wanting to work to improve and the girls program will go places," the Englishman said following the victory against Nepal.

What Butler's rotation policy since the beginning of his tenure a little more than a year ago has done is it gave enough confidence to players who would have otherwise not found a platform to perform. This approach, he explained, is rooted in building a competitive environment where players push each other and earn their positions through effort and performance.

Players like Mosammam Sagarika, Nabiran Khatun, Umehla Marma and Shanti Mardi -- few of whom have been with the senior side but hardly find a place in the XI -- have given enough evidence throughout this tournament that they will give their more senior compatriots a run for their money in near future.

His defensive unit, especially Afeda Khandaker and Nabiran, earned special praise for their commanding presence against Nepal's direct playing style. "They were like a brick wall. Colossal. Defensively, we were rock solid," Butler noted, expressing his satisfaction in how the team executed a high-intensity, pressing style.

However, the coach is mindful of managing young players' development. "It's a pathway. I'm not the type of coach to promise anything. Everyone's got to earn the right...their time will come -- it's a marathon, not a sprint."

As Bangladesh prepare for tougher continental challenges, Butler remains grounded. "We have to be realistic. We're coming up against more than capable teams. This is a journey and an opportunity for our girls to test themselves against stronger opposition like Korea. We'll do our best. That's all I can say."

Strikers must stay calm'

After her dazzling return against Nepal in the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship finale on Monday, all eyes have been on Bangladesh's **Mosammam Sagarika** -- the 17-year-old striker from Thakurgaon who netted four goals after serving a three-match suspension for a red-card offence. Named the tournament's Most Valuable Player for her tally of eight goals in just three appearances, Sagarika met with reporters at a city hotel yesterday. Here are excerpts from the conversation:

How did you celebrate after returning to the team hotel?

Mst Sagarika: We didn't celebrate much. There was a tragic accident in the country, and we were all deeply saddened by it. Out of respect, we even avoided taking pictures after the match.

Were you aiming to match or surpass your 10-goal tally from the previous SAFF edition?

MS: As a forward, I always hope to be the top scorer and best player. I couldn't finish as top scorer this time, but I'm happy to have earned the best player award despite playing only three matches.

How do you view the competition among the forwards, especially with Trishna Rani Sarkar performing well in your absence?

MS: Trishna played really well -- maybe even better than me. With so many forwards in the squad, everyone is motivated to perform their best to secure a place in the team.

What did you take away from your three-match suspension?

MS: It taught me that getting into confrontations isn't helpful. Strikers must stay calm -- when we do, we're able to make a bigger impact up front.

Did the suspension fuel your performance in the final?

MS: Definitely. Missing three games made me more determined. When I got the chance again, I wanted to make the

most of it -- and I'm proud I could contribute something meaningful for the country.

After winning the final, did you speak with your father, who once discouraged you from playing?

MS: He wanted to come to Dhaka to watch the matches, but couldn't -- my mother was unwell and there wasn't a place for him to stay. Still, he's really happy I was named the tournament's best player.

How have you grown as a player between the two SAFF editions?

MS: My dribbling was a weakness before, but I've worked hard and improved. My goal-scoring instincts have sharpened too, though I still want to keep getting better.

With the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers next month, how confident are you?

MS: We're prepared, but we'll need to step up our game. This tournament was just the beginning -- we'll be facing stronger teams, but we trust Peter Butler sir and hope to bring back good results.

You've spent a lot of time on the bench with the senior national team. Do you think this performance can help you break into the starting eleven?

MS: That decision is up to the coach. If he's happy with my performance, maybe I'll get that chance. I believe I can contribute more if I start for the senior team.



Crunch time in Manchester with series on the line



Since 2014, England have won eight Tests out of the 10 they've played at Old Trafford in Manchester. They lost one and drew the other.

In nine Tests played at the venue between the sides, England hold the upper hand with four wins in nine matches. India are winless at the venue as the other five contests ended in draws.

AGENCIES

India face a tough selection conundrum in their bowling attack as they prepare for the must-win fourth Test against England at Old Trafford, starting today.

With the series on the line and trailing 2-1 after a narrow 22-run defeat at Lord's, the visitors must make a call on their third seamer, with both Akash Deep and Arshdeep Singh sidelined due to injuries.

Captain Shubman Gill confirmed on Tuesday that Akash Deep is out with a groin issue, and right-arm pacer Anshul Kamboj, a late addition to the squad, is in line to debut. India must now choose between the uncapped Kamboj and the out-of-form Prasidh Krishna, as they aim to support the returning Jasprit Bumrah, who is set to lead the attack in what could be his final appearance of the series due to workload management.

Bumrah's availability provides a timely boost, having missed the second Test but returned in the third, albeit in a losing cause. Assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate confirmed that India are likely to go with Bumrah, highlighting the stakes involved.

India's team balance could also be bolstered by the return of Rishabh Pant, who trained extensively on Monday after recovering from a finger injury. His inclusion would strengthen both the batting and wicketkeeping departments. Meanwhile, England will look to wrap up the series in Manchester, sticking with a settled XI barring one enforced change -- left-arm spinner Liam Dawson replaces the injured Shaheen Shah. Dawson, who last played Test cricket in 2017, returns on the back of strong county form.

Despite their lead, England have concerns of their own, particularly with a fragile top order. Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett have lacked consistency, and Ollie Pope has only shown flashes of form. Still, captain Ben Stokes has kept faith in their aggressive template.

The battle between all-rounders Stokes and Ravindra Jadeja could once again be pivotal. Stokes starred with bat, ball, and a key run-out at Lord's, while Jadeja's unbeaten 61 nearly pulled off a remarkable comeback for India.



Md Maroof ur Rahman Mazumder has been appointed as the Managing Director of Saudi-Bangladesh Industrial and Agricultural Investment Company Ltd (SABINCO). With a career spanning over two decades, Mr Maroof is a distinguished leader in the banking and financial services sector, specializing in debt capital markets, loan syndications and advisory services. He began his professional journey in 2002 at Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited and quickly rose through the ranks at Trust Bank Limited, where he led corporate banking and loan syndication. Later he joined Standard Chartered Bank Bangladesh in 2009 as Head of Capital Markets and served for 14 years where he played the key role for the development of Bangladesh Debt Capital Market by raising more than USD 10 billion fund both in local and foreign currency. He was promoted to Executive Director in recognition of his outstanding performance, overseeing a wide array of debt capital market and loan syndication transactions across multiple sectors, including large local and foreign corporates, financial institutions, and government agencies. His portfolio includes landmark deals such as financing for Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, and major multinational companies like Grameenphone, Robi, Lafarge Holcim and many large local conglomerates, financial institutions and banks.

Before joining SABINCO, he was Managing Director and CEO of NDB Capital Ltd, a subsidiary of National Development Bank of Sri Lanka. Mr Maroof was also instrumental for advising the Government of Bangladesh for the debut sovereign rating by S&P and arranged a number of road shows in Singapore, Hong Kong, Mumbai and London to attract offshore investors. Known for his leadership, he has fostered high-performance teams and mentored countless professionals in the banking industry. He holds an MBA from IBA, Dhaka University, and a B.Sc. in Civil Engineering from BUET.

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Tajuddin Ahmad's birth centenary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the 100th birth anniversary of the first prime minister of independent Bangladesh, Tajuddin Ahmad.

To commemorate his birth centenary, a discussion titled "Inevitable Fellow of the Liberation War: Tajuddin Ahmad at 100" (Muktijuddher Onibarjo Sharothi) is being organised by Kaler Dhoni at the Bishwa Shahitya Kendra auditorium at 5:00pm today.

Renowned academic Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury will preside over the event.

Speakers and guests will include researcher and poet Prof Morshed Shafail Hasan, novelist Ahmad Mostafa Kamal, advocate Arif Khan, writer Gawhar Nayeem Wara, lyricist Shahidullah Farai, novelist Zakir Talukder, and Prof Muhammad Asaduzzaman.

Born on July 23, 1925, in Dardaria village of Gazipur's Kapasia upazila, Tajuddin Ahmad was involved in politics from his student days. After the 1947 Partition, he played key roles in all major movements in the then East Pakistan.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Bangladesh pacer Shoriful Islam (R) celebrates one of his three wickets as captain Litton Das cheers during the second T20I against Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Shoriful's career-best figures of 3-17 steered the tigers to an 8-run victory and 2-0 series win. The team dedicated the victory to victims of the Milestone tragedy.

US TARIFF TALKS Bangladesh writes to USTR, seeking date

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh yesterday sent its position paper to the United States Trade Representative (USTR), the chief trade negotiation body for the American government, and sought July 26 as the new date for launching the third and final round of tariff talks with the Trump administration.

Commerce Secretary Mabbubur Rahman told The Daily Star over the phone that the USTR can set the date at its convenience, any time from July 26 onwards.

The negotiation team from Bangladesh will fly to America once the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Govt could've acted more responsibly
Says Nahid, calls for transparency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nahid Islam, convener of the National Citizen Party, yesterday said the government could have acted more responsibly and with greater urgency following the fatal jet crash at Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara.

Speaking at an emergency press conference at the party office in the capital's Banglamotor, he said, "The situation that unfolded since yesterday [Monday] could have been contained if the government had acted responsibly and taken timely decisions. Instead, the lack of coordination and delayed

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

Raisa Moni found, but only to be buried

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

For over 24 hours, 11-year-old Raisa Moni's family had been searching for her frantically. From one hospital to another, from the crash site to morgues, they clung to the hope that she was among the rescued, that she was somewhere alive.



Just after a battle aircraft crashed into the ground floor of a two-storey building of Milestone School and College, the mother of Raisa Moni, a third-grader at the school, stood undeterred on campus, desperately searching for her little girl.

After waiting till late in the evening, Raisa's uncle Jakir Hossain took over the search, sending her exhausted mother

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

'We must stop mob culture'
Says Tarique

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday called upon all pro-democracy stakeholders in Bangladesh to remain calm and united during the national mourning, following the aircraft crash that has plunged the country into grief.

"We must form a society based on tolerance and restraint, and thus stop divisive confrontation or mob culture," he said in a post on his verified Facebook page.

The BNP leader said there are worrying reports of members of a certain banned student organisation causing agitation between the public and the police and instigating violence.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5



বাংলাদেশ শোকস্তুর্দ

মাইলস্টোন স্কুলের মর্মান্তিক দুর্ঘটনায় নিহতদের জন্য জাতির
পক্ষ থেকে জানাই গভীর শোক, আহতদের সুস্থতার জন্য দোয়া।

শোকস্তুর্দ পরিবারের পাশে আছে পুরো দেশ।



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

A LOSS Beyond Words



We are deeply saddened by the tragic plane crash at Milestone School & College. We pray to Almighty Allah for eternal peace for the departed souls and a swift recovery for the injured.

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