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Nation mourns lost children

Death of a 9-year-old early
today pushes toll to 32TUHIN 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
orderSay 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, during a meeting with Chief Adviser Prof Yunus.

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

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**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.

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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.

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**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.

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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.

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

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Air Chief Marshal Hasan 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.

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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.

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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.