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The huge crowd at yesterday's rally organised by the National Citizen Party at the Central Shaheed Minar.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ICT CASE Hasina's trial begins with a chilling testimony

SHARIFUL ISLAM and
SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

The trial of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her two top aides began yesterday at the International Crimes Tribunal 1, with a testimony from the first prosecution witness, a survivor of police atrocities during the 2024 July uprising.

Khokon Chandro Barmon, a microbus driver of a firm, recounted how police opened fire on protesters on July 18-19 in

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Thousands of leaders and activists join a rally organised by Chhatra Dal at Shahbagh intersection yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

NCP vows second republic, new constitution

Launches 24-point manifesto at Shaheed Minar rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party yesterday unveiled a 24-point manifesto pledging the establishment of a "Second Republic" and the drafting of a new constitution by an elected constituent assembly.

"We will build a new Bangladesh of many languages, cultures, and ethnicities," said NCP Convener Nahid Islam, reading out the manifesto at a rally at the capital's Central Shaheed Minar.

The NCP's idea of a new Bangladesh is grounded in

- Manifesto outlines sweeping reforms, restructuring of state institutions
- Commits to women's safety, rights and empowerment
- Pledges universal healthcare, investment in research

the people's aspirations for equality, human dignity, and social justice reflected in the anti-colonial struggle, the war

of independence, and the July mass uprising, he added.

"By casting off the old and

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Govt set to unveil July Declaration at Manik Mia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will unveil the July Declaration at a public event in the capital's Manik Mia Avenue at 5:00pm tomorrow.

The announcement was made yesterday in a post on the chief adviser's verified Facebook page.

The post reads: "36th July - on this day last year, the world witnessed an unprecedented mass uprising. As a result, the fascist fled from Bangladesh.

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'Let your first vote be for sheaf of paddy'

Tarique urges young generation at mammoth JCD rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday called on new voters to cast their first ballot for the party in the upcoming election.

"Spread my call to all the students across Bangladesh, new generations, and new voters. Let the first vote of the youth be for the sheaf of paddy. Let us pledge today that we will do whatever is necessary to make ourselves worthy of building the future Bangladesh

"...Change will surely come in this country. And students will lead that change."

Tarique Rahman
BNP acting chairman



as dreamed by the martyrs."

This was the first time Tarique sought votes for the party at a public rally and called on party members to seek votes from new voters after the ouster

of Sheikh Hasina.

Addressing a student rally from London via video link, Tarique said people no longer want politics of division,

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Invitation to a university engaged in social transformation



Grameen University

Dedicated to creating a world of three zeros

SEARCHING FOR ACADEMIC LEADERS

Position Announcement: DEANS of Schools

Grameen University is a newly approved private university in Bangladesh, founded with a bold and transformative mission. Grameen University will develop skilled and responsible professionals with purpose and compassion who will contribute to achieving a world with zero unemployment, zero net carbon emission, and zero poverty.

Grameen University will develop future world citizens by offering a robust academic foundation and fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship aimed at addressing societal and technological issues in a sustainable manner.

Grameen University invites applications from exceptional academic leaders to serve as the **Founding Deans of the following Schools:**

- School of Business
- School of Engineering
- School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- School of Sciences
- School of Social Business

This role offers a unique opportunity to shape a lasting vision for advancing management education and research in a frontier market, to lead the creation of a world-class school rooted in ethical leadership, academic excellence with innovation, entrepreneurship, social impact and sustainable development.

Key Qualifications:

- Must have a PhD degree in relevant subject or field from a reputed and internationally accredited institution.
- Proven academic leadership experience as Dean or department head or equivalent senior academic role.
- Strong academic track record with peer-reviewed impactful publications, funded research and teaching excellence.
- Experience with international accreditation and quality assurance systems and process (e.g., AACSB, ACBSP for Business and BAETE, ABET & AAEES for Engineering, etc.).
- Demonstrated success in faculty mentorship, team leadership, academic program development and interdisciplinary initiatives.
- Effective engagement with industry, government, social impact organizations and professional bodies or technology-based startups; successful in securing external funding.

Common Key Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic academic and administrative leadership aligned with Grameen University's mission.
- Develop and deliver of globally competitive, student-centered curricula.
- Lead faculty recruitment, development, and retention; promote research excellence.
- Foster an inclusive, innovative, and technology-enhanced learning environment.
- Ensure efficient planning, budgeting, and resource management.
- Implement outcome-based assessment and promote continuous improvement.
- Represent the School in national and international academic and professional forums.
- Engage stakeholders, pursue external funding, and launch industry-relevant programs.
- Launch socially relevant academic initiatives that support Grameen University's core mission.

Dean, School of Business

The School of Business will strive for global academic standards from inception, with a strategic commitment to attaining ACBSP and AACSB accreditations.

Dean, School of Engineering

The School of Engineering will emphasize interdisciplinary research, hands-on learning, and community-responsive technology development. From its inception, the school will pursue international academic and professional standards, with a long-term goal of attaining ABET & AAEES accreditation.

Special Responsibilities

- Provide strategic academic and administrative leadership to establish a world-class School of Engineering.
- Design and implement forward-looking, interdisciplinary engineering programs aligned with global and local needs.

Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences

The School will focus on fostering critical thinking, ethical leadership, integrating the liberal arts, social sciences, and community-centered innovation to solve real-world problems. It will position itself at the forefront of progressive education by embedding social justice, sustainability, and social entrepreneurship into its teaching and research framework.

Special Responsibilities

- Lead the development of interdisciplinary programs in humanities, social sciences, and social business.
- Guide the integration of social business theory and practice across the curriculum.
- Promote civic engagement, cross-cultural understanding, and ethical leadership among students.
- Cultivate partnerships with NGOs, development agencies, think tanks, and academic institutions.

Dean, School of Sciences

Grameen University is envisioned to be a national and regional center for excellence in scientific education and research with an eye to societal issues. The Dean will have the unique opportunity to shape the academic and research direction of the School from the ground up.

The School will offer programs in key scientific disciplines including Theoretical Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Biology, Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Health Science, Atmosphere and Energy, and Environmental Science, with strong emphasis on interdisciplinary research and societal impact. The School will aim to align with global academic standards and pursue future accreditation from relevant scientific and professional bodies.

Special Responsibilities

- Foster a collaborative and innovative environment to support interdisciplinary research and lab-based instruction.
- Promote partnerships with universities, research institutions, and health organizations at home and abroad.
- Oversee infrastructure planning for laboratories, research centers, and health science facilities.

Dean, School of Social Business

The school will be a pioneer in fostering a culture of entrepreneurship through social business to reach the sustainability in the most meaningful sense. The School of Social Business will promote interdisciplinary collaboration across business, social science, development studies, and innovation.

It will be positioned as a model institution for education, research, and enterprise incubation in the field of social business - with a strategic commitment to international collaboration and societal impact.

Special Qualification

- Experience and study in the theory and practice of social business.

Special Responsibilities

- Lead the design and delivery of cutting-edge, interdisciplinary programs focused on social business, social entrepreneurship, sustainable development, and ethical business. Will help develop innovative curriculum and practice towards that.
- Promote impactful research and community-based innovation in partnership with business, NGOs, development agencies, and social enterprises.
- Spearhead national and international collaboration efforts to advance social business education and practice.
- Represent the School of Social Business in international academic forums and global networks (e.g., Yunus Centre, Social Business Academia Network).
- Launch and oversee a university-based incubator or innovation hub for student-led social enterprises.

SEEKING VISIONARY ADMINISTRATIVE TALENT

Deputy Director of HR

Jobs & Responsibilities

- Formulate and implement strategic HR initiatives and policies aligned with the university's mission and objectives.
- Oversee recruitment, selection, onboarding, and retention of high-quality faculty and staff.
- Manage performance appraisal systems, employee relations, disciplinary procedures, and conflict resolution.
- Lead the design and administration of compensation, benefits, and reward systems.
- Ensure compliance with labor laws, university regulations, and best HR practices.
- Utilize HR technology and data analytics to improve service delivery and decision-making.

Qualifications

- A Bachelor's degree in Human Resources, Business Administration, Management, or a related field is required.
- A Master's degree or equivalent postgraduate qualification is strongly preferred.
- At least 10 years of progressive HR experience, including a minimum of 5 years in a senior or leadership role, ideally within a university, research institute, or large academic institution.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving capabilities, with proficiency in modern HR software and systems.

Deputy Director of IT

Jobs & Responsibilities

- Ensure uninterrupted IT services, including high-speed internet and Wi-Fi across the campus.
- Lead the development and implementation of IT policies, systems, and university management software.

- Collaborate with academic and administrative units to enhance operational effectiveness, and innovation through technology.
- Align IT infrastructure with institutional goals and ensure smooth functioning of hardware, software, and data systems.
- Manage IT budgeting and ensure cost-effective solutions.
- Oversee ERP systems, ensure data security, and manage system upgrades and integration.

Qualifications

- MSc/MBA and Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, Information Technology, or a related field from a reputed university.
- Recent professional certifications in IT (e.g., Cisco, Microsoft, VMware, Cybersecurity) are highly preferred.
- Minimum 10 years of professional experience in the IT field. At least 3 years in a senior management or leadership role.

Deputy Director/Asst. Director of Finance & Accounts

Jobs & Responsibilities

- Assist in preparation and monitoring of institutional budgets.
- Prepare financial reports and income - expenditure statements.
- Support vendor payments, and maintain fixed asset records.
- Ensure compliance with VAT, AIT, and relevant financial regulations.
- Use ERP/accounting software for financial operations and reporting.

Qualifications

- MBA or Master's in Finance/Accounting from a reputed university.
- CA (CC) / ACCA (Part Qualified) or equivalent qualification will be an added advantage.
- Proficiency in MS Office (Excel, Word, PowerPoint).
- Experience with ERP systems (Oracle/SAP/Tally etc.).
- Sound knowledge of VAT, AIT, and financial compliance.
- 3-5 years of relevant work experience in Finance & Accounts.

Deputy Director of Admission, Promotion & Digital Marketing

Jobs & Responsibilities

- Lead and manage public relations, branding, and communications strategies in alignment with the university's vision and values.
- Plan, develop, and execute integrated marketing and communication campaigns for external and internal stakeholders.
- Oversee media relations, press releases, crisis communication, and institutional branding activities.
- Manage university presence on social media and digital platforms, enhancing engagement and visibility.
- Ensure brand consistency across all communications and promotional materials.
- Liaise with print and electronic media, journalists, alumni, government bodies, and other key partners.
- Supervise the production of content including press releases, publications, videos, graphics, and event materials.

Qualifications

- Master's degree in Mass Communication & Journalism / Media Studies / Arts or a related discipline from a recognized university.
- Candidates with international training or certifications in communication/ PR/branding will get preference.
- Must be skilled in content creation, graphic designing, digital communication, and desktop publishing.
- Must be conversant with tools like Office 365, Adobe Suite, Google Workspace, and social media platforms.
- 5-8 years of relevant work experience in media/public relations.

Salary: An attractive salary package will be negotiated.

Deadline: Monday, August 18, 2025

Applicants are required to attach the following documents with their application:

- A candidate statement, briefly describing why you consider yourself to be a credible candidate.
- A copy of updated CV including a cover letter.
- Names and contact information of five professional references.

To apply please send your CV and required documents to the following email address:

Email: hr@grameenu.ac

For further information, please contact info@grameenu.ac

Campus:
06, Main Road, Diabari South, Turag, Uttara, Dhaka - 1230

The deadliest day of the uprising

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

August 4, 2024 marked the deadliest day of Bangladesh's student-led uprising, as the non-cooperation movement entered an explosive new phase.

What began with an eerie calm quickly unraveled into chaos, bloodshed, and widespread violence in at least twenty districts.

Protesters, police, and ruling party activists clashed across the country, leaving at least 93 people dead and over a thousand injured, many with bullet wounds. The day's toll pushed protest-related deaths since mid-July past 300.

In the morning, calm prevailed nationwide -- but it was short-lived.

Violence erupted after Awami League supporters took to the streets to suppress anti-government protests.

In Sirajganj, a mob attacked a police station and beat 13 police personnel to death. Five more died in nearby Raiganj upazila, making it the deadliest district that day.

Meanwhile, Dhaka turned into a battleground. Protesters and AL men clashed in Farmgate, Dhanmondi, Mirpur-10, Uttara, Shahbagh, and Gulistan. In Farmgate, police and AL men fired on a massive crowd advancing with sticks and traffic barriers. Protesters retaliated with brickbats.

In Dhanmondi, a fierce clash broke out near the AL office around 12:30pm. Gunshots and stun grenades shook the neighbourhood. At Shahbagh, tensions ran high as violence spilled into the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University premises. At least 24 vehicles were torched there.

In Mirpur-10, protesters were met by armed AL men and police, and the area



THE JULY THAT ROCKED BANGLADESH

AUGUST 4, 2024



Hundreds of protesters swarmed the Shahbagh intersection in the capital on August 4, 2024, where a fierce clash later broke out between them and ruling party supporters on the first day of the nationwide non-cooperation movement announced by the Students Against Discrimination. FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

echoed with gunfire. In Old Dhaka, clashes at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court saw over a hundred protesters and pro-BNP lawyers storm the premises, throwing bricks and damaging police vehicles.

Outside Dhaka, deadly clashes erupted in Lalmipur, Narsingdi, Feni, Rangpur, Sylhet, Bogura, Pabna, Munshiganj, Magura, Kishoreganj, Cumilla, Chattogram, Faridpur, and Khulna.

Protesters were beaten or shot; government offices and vehicles were torched. In Chattogram alone, 172 people with gunshot wounds were hospitalised. AL offices were vandalised in multiple districts.

Amid the bloodshed, students advanced their "March to Dhaka" programme to August 5. At 3:00pm, organiser Nahid Islam addressed a

Shahbagh crowd, accusing the ruling party of trying to incite civil war. He urged citizens to form resistance committees and continue sit-ins until the government resigned.

Demonstrators later attempted to march with slain protesters' bodies, but were dispersed by police.

Meanwhile, then prime minister Sheikh Hasina called the protesters criminals, not students. Her office urged parents to pull students from the streets, citing "militant threats."

A High Court observation stated that law enforcers could use rubber bullets and tear gas, and only then live ammunition -- in cases of legal violations or riots. Live fire was otherwise forbidden.

At RAOWA Club, retired army officers demanded that troops be pulled from the streets and sent back to

their barracks.

At Dhaka Reporters Unity, the University Teachers' Network proposed an interim government of teachers, lawyers, and civil society leaders -- elected with student help -- to replace the Hasina government. The proposal was announced by Prof Anu Muhammad.

The BNP formally endorsed the student demand. Speaking at the party chairperson's Gulshan office, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir called on the government to resign, declaring national support for the one-point demand: Sheikh Hasina's resignation.

By evening, the government suspended 4G internet, blocked Facebook and WhatsApp, and extended the curfew indefinitely across Dhaka and all major administrative areas.

NCP vows second republic

FROM PAGE 1

embarking on a new journey for the state, our first pledge is to adopt a new constitution through a constituent assembly," the manifesto stated.

It said the new constitution would abolish dictatorship, dynastic rule, and fascist structures, and establish a discrimination-free, democratic, inclusive Second Republic oriented toward public welfare. It would ensure the separation and balance of powers among the executive, legislative, and judiciary, and grant constitutional recognition to the July Declaration and the July Charter.

"Our new state will protect the life, livelihood, dignity, and rights of every individual."

The party, born out of the July uprising that toppled the Hasina regime last year, pledged full state recognition for the July martyrs, proper medical treatment and rehabilitation for the injured, and lifelong support for them.

"We will ensure exemplary trials and punishment for all crimes against humanity committed during the era of Awami fascism -- including the genocide of July, the Shapla massacre, the BDR killings, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings," the manifesto said.

"To honour the spirit of national unity in July and the supreme sacrifice of thousands of martyrs, we will preserve the memory of July and will always stand beside our comrades in the struggle against fascism."

The manifesto outlines sweeping reforms, starting with the restructuring of democratic and state institutions, ensuring a justice system based on fairness and legal reform, building a service-oriented and corruption-free administration, and establishing a people friendly law enforcement system.

It also emphasises the need for village parliaments and stronger local governance, along with a free media and

an active civil society.

Other key priorities include universal healthcare, a nation-building education policy, investment in research, innovation and a digital revolution, and upholding the dignity of religion, minority communities and ethnic identities.

It also commits to women's safety, rights and empowerment, along with a human-centred and welfare-driven economy.

For the youth, the party promises greater employment opportunities, a multi-dimensional policy for trade and industrialisation, sustainable agriculture, and food sovereignty.

The manifesto also pledges to uphold the rights of workers and farmers, ensure sustainable management of national resources, and promote planned urbanisation, transport and housing.

In addition, it includes commitments to climate resilience and the protection of rivers and the sea, safeguarding the rights and dignity of Bangladeshi migrants abroad, adopting a foreign policy rooted in national interest, and developing a comprehensive national defence strategy.

Regarding the manifesto, NCP Convener Nahid said, "We dream of a new Bangladesh -- where every citizen can live with dignity, justice, security, and hope."

"These 24 points are not just promises, but commitments that can lead us toward a democratic, inclusive, and sovereign future," he added.

The NCP organised the rally demanding that the July Charter containing the reform proposals agreed upon by political parties be issued by August 5 and made legally binding.

A podium was set up at the centre of the venue, with hundreds of chairs on both sides where family members of the July martyrs and injured took their seats.

Central leaders sat on a red carpet laid out on the podium. Six large screens

were installed at the venue, where the programme began at 5:00pm.

Leaders and activists streamed into the venue in small processions, carrying the national flag, festoons, and banners. By 3:30pm, a steady crowd had gathered.

Speaking at the event, NCP Member Secretary Akhter Hossen said the new generation that emerged from the July uprising would tackle any national crisis even at the cost of their lives.

"We want a state system where every public representative -- from the prime minister to union members -- must be accountable to the people," he said.

He stressed the need for freeing the judiciary and administration from political influence and ensuring transparent policymaking on public interest.

Akhter also urged constitutional recognition of the July Charter through a legal framework order and called on the interim government to implement key reforms.

NCP Chief Coordinator Nasir Uddin Patwari said Bangladesh must reject "subservient foreign policy" and unite with the oppressed people globally, with a vow to lead regional peace efforts.

Chief Coordinator (South) Hasnat Abdullah said no threat can stop the movement, warning that any harassment of NCP activists will be dealt with politically.

He urged party members to be ready to give their lives, if necessary, to implement the directives of the party's convener and member secretary.

Chief Coordinator (North) Sarjis Alam said, "NCP's struggle will not stop until the Mujibist constitution is dismantled, a new constitution is established, and justice is served for the blood of the martyrs."

Other speakers included NCP leaders Tasnim Jara, Ariful Islam Adib, Nahida Sarwar Niva, Abdul Hannan Masud, Anik Roy, and Nizam Uddin.

Addressing the students, Tarique said that if his party is voted to power in the next polls, it will carry out reforms in the education sector.

"From the school level, the curriculum will include sports, arts, culture, and technical education. The government will help students set up small industries," he added.

As thousands of leaders and activists from Dhaka and nearby districts gathered at Shahbagh, the area from Katabon to Matsya Bhawan and parts of Dhaka University campus became packed with party members.

Tarique said, "....change will surely come in this country. And students will lead that change. In all the great movements in our history, youth were at the centre. And this time it will be the same. Every activist of Chhatra Dal will be a voice for the people, a protester against oppression and injustice."

Tarique said the BNP wants to start a politics of kindness and humanity in the coming days, urging students and the young generation to stay alert and play an active and responsible role in resisting fascism, extremism, and radicalism in the days ahead.

The BNP leader said that in a Bangladesh free from fascism, there should be a qualitative change in traditional student politics.

Presenting his party's various

plans and programmes to the younger generation, Tarique said that BNP wants to build Bangladesh with the united efforts of both the young and the old.

Speaking as a special guest, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said Tarique Rahman, during a meeting with the chief adviser in London, suggested that the next election should be held in February.

The people of Bangladesh are waiting for that election. And before that, they are eagerly waiting for Tarique Rahman's return.

"He [Tarique] will come, will lead us, will show us the way."

Chaired by JCD President Rakibul Islam Rakib and moderated by General Secretary Nasir Uddin Nasir, the rally was addressed by BNP Vice Chairman Shamsuzzaman Dudu, Asaduzzaman Ripon, Chairperson's Advisory Council Member Aman Ullah Aman, Joint Secretary General Khairul Kabir Khokon, Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel, and Shahid Chowdhury Annie, among others.

Demanding that the government announce the election date immediately, the BNP leaders said the party will not tolerate any delay or conspiracy regarding the February polls, and warned that they will take to the streets if there is any kind of obstruction to the path to election.

Out of around 13 crore voters in the country right now, about four crore new voters have been added to the voter list over the last one and a half decades. Even though you became voters, the fascist group took away your right to vote. With the national election ahead, there is a big chance for you to reclaim your voting rights."

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ঘরে বসেই
ব্যাংক
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খুলুন



পাই ব্যাংক (PI Banking) –
একটি পুরালী ব্যাংক অ্যাপস

ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্মী' পুরালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

Tap into the potential of blue economy

Says Yunus; inaugurates navy, air force selection board-2025

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday stressed the importance of achieving economic prosperity through the conservation and sustainable utilisation of the country's marine resources.

Highlighting the contributions of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Air Force, he outlined various ongoing initiatives to develop the country's blue economy, including the establishment of the Maheshkhali Integrated Development Authority (MIDA), coastal region development, and broader national development efforts.

Yunus made the remarks while formally inaugurating the Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force Selection Board-2025 at the Navy Headquarters.

He commended the Bangladesh Navy's role in managing the deep-sea port, envisioned as a future economic hub, and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus signs the visitors' book at the Navy Headquarters after inaugurating the Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force Selection Board-2025. Chief of Bangladesh Navy Admiral M Nazmul Hassan and Chief of Bangladesh Air Force Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan were also present.

PHOTO: PID

FLIGHT EXPERT 'SCAM' Case filed, 3 staffers held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have arrested three staffers of Flight Expert, an online travel agency in Bangladesh, in a case filed over the embezzlement of crores of taka from customers, after its managing director reportedly went into hiding.

The arrestees are Sakib Hossain, head of finance; Sayeed Ahmed, chief commercial officer; and AKM Sadat Hossain, chief operating officer, said Mezbah Uddin, officer-in-charge of Motijheel Police Station.

Bipul Sarker, proprietor of Sarker Tours and Travels, filed the case with Motijheel Police Station on Saturday night, accusing five persons – the three arrestees, Flight Expert managing director Salman Bin Rashid Shah Sayem, and his father MA Rashid.

Police are trying to arrest the other accused, the OC said.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court sent the three accused to jail after the investigation officer appealed to the court to keep them confined until the investigation is completed.

In the case, Bipul said he, along with other tour agencies, had been conducting business with Flight Expert, providing

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Form taskforce to carry out health reforms

Speakers urge govt; call for incorporating healthcare into July Charter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing frustration over the delay in implementing the Health Sector Reform Commission's recommendations, health experts and campaigners yesterday called for a high-powered taskforce and a transition plan to carry out the proposals.

They also urged the incorporation of health sector reform into the July Charter, the formation of a civil society platform to sharpen reform priorities, and the engagement of major political parties in implementing the commission's recommendations.

They were speaking at a policy dialogue titled "Health System Reform – Where Are We?" organised by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) in partnership with the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Forum and Unicef at the CIRDAP auditorium.

The discussion took place three days ahead of the Health Ministry's first meeting, scheduled for August 6, on the reform commission's report submitted on May 5.

Initially, the ministry plans to prepare a three-month action plan and begin implementing it. It has also asked all its wings and agencies to prepare their own plans and

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⦿ Create transition plan for implementation
- ⦿ Make healthcare constitutional right
- ⦿ Set up permanent health commission
- ⦿ Engage political parties for support
- ⦿ Set up a civil society platform
- ⦿ Launch national health insurance

present them at the August 6 meeting.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of PPRC and convener of the UHC Forum, said the first and an important step had been taken with the submission of the Health Sector Reform Commission's report.

"But the absence of visible action [to implement the reform] risks repeating the country's historical tendency to shelve important policy recommendations," he

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Prof Shamsher
Ali no more

BSS, Dhaka

Prof M Shamsher Ali, an eminent nuclear physicist, pioneering educationist and a leading voice in science advocacy in Bangladesh, passed away at a Dhaka hospital early yesterday. He was 87.

A towering figure in the nation's academic and scientific circles, Prof Ali's career spanned decades of groundbreaking work in nuclear physics, leadership in higher education and a lifelong dedication to the public understanding of science.

Born on November 9, 1937, in Bheramara, Kushtia, Shamsher Ali

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Healing together at Milestone

Uttara campus reopens 12 days after jet crash; classes to begin Aug 6



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Diabari area reopened yesterday on a limited scale, aiming to support students' mental well-being in the wake of the July 21 plane crash that left the campus into mourning.

No classes or examinations will be held for now. Instead, the students will interact with teachers and peers, aiming to gradually restore emotional normalcy. Principal Mohammad Ziaul Alam told The Daily Star.

Officials said classes will begin August 6.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Media must be accountable to people, not govt
Says info adviser; journos martyred and injured in July uprising honoured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The July uprising last year marked the beginning of a "new Bangladesh", but such a nation cannot be realised in just one, two, or a few years, said Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam yesterday.

"It [new Bangladesh] will be achieved with continued struggle," he added.

Mahfuj made the remarks while addressing a function recognising journalists killed or injured during the uprising, organised by Bangladesh Journalist Welfare Trust at the capital's Tathya Bhawan.

Speaking as the chief guest, Mahfuj, one of the key figures of the uprising, said many might view such statements as excuses or attempts to shift blame, which, he acknowledged, is valid in terms of public expectations.

However, he noted, democratic transition is a long-term struggle in any country.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

রাত বা দিন
ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক
ফাস্ট ট্র্যাক
খোলা প্রতিদিন

ডাচ-বাংলা র্যাঙ্ক
ফাস্ট ট্র্যাক সার্ভিস
দিন-রাত 24 ঘণ্টা টাকা জমা, উত্তোলন এবং পার্থানো যায়
সব ধরনের ব্যাংকিং একাউন্টসহ
রকেট একাউন্ট খোলা, লোন প্রসেস করা, কার্ড এবং চেক বই
ইস্যু করার ব্যাপারে সহযোগিতা করা হয়



ডাচ-বাংলা র্যাঙ্ক
আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী

Youth beaten to death on theft suspicion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jamalpur*

An unidentified youth, aged around 35, was allegedly tied to a tree and beaten to death by locals on suspicion of theft in Jamalpur yesterday.

The incident took place at Ujanpara village in Char Jatharpur of Sadar upazila around 9:30am. Police recovered the body around noon and sent it to Jamalpur General Hospital morgue for autopsy, said Faisal Md Atiq, officer in-charge of Jamalpur Sadar Police Station.

Quoting locals, the OC said the youth, along with two others, had allegedly tried to steal mobile phones from several houses in the area. As residents raised an alarm, two of the suspects managed to flee. The other was caught, tied to a tree, and beaten. He died on the spot.

"There were injury marks on his hands and below the knees," said Shahazada Mohammad Abdullah Al Mamun, in-charge of the Baruamari Police Investigation Centre.

"We are trying to identify the deceased through technological assistance," said OC Atiq, adding that legal proceedings are underway.

5 die in B'baria road accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Brahmanbaria*

Five people were dead and several injured in a collision involving two motorcycles and a CNG-run auto rickshaw in Bijoynagar upazila of Brahmanbaria yesterday.

The accident happened around 5:00pm on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway near Rampur Government Primary School at Chandura, said Bijoynagar Police Station OC Shahidul Islam.

The identities of the deceased have not yet been confirmed, the OC said.

Quoting Sub-inspector Shafiqul Islam, who was at the scene, OC Shahidul said the incident initially involved two motorcycles coming from opposite directions. Moments later, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw collided with one of the bikes and fell into a roadside ditch.

All five victims died on the spot, he said.

Form taskforce to carry

FROM PAGE 3

said, adding, "We have arranged today's programme to bring it to the centre of attention."

He said they want to draw attention so that quality universal primary healthcare is declared a constitutional right, as recommended by the reform commission.

The July Charter will be declared within two days, and they want at least one sentence – necessary measures must be taken to ensure the right to universal healthcare – incorporated into the charter, he said.

After several participants suggested forming a civil society platform to accelerate the implementation of the reforms, Zillur said such a platform would work to sharpen reform priorities and engage with major political parties to secure their commitment to implementing the commission's recommendations once in power.

Aminul Hasan, member

secretary of the UHC Forum, said although the Health Reform Commission has already submitted its recommendations, there is no mechanism in place to transform them into action.

So, a high-powered taskforce must be formed to implement the recommendations, he said.

Prof MA Faiz, former director general of the Directorate General of Health Services, said providing quality primary healthcare should be the top priority. "Ensuring emergency health services is also crucial."

He emphasised the need to use existing platforms for disseminating health information more effectively, engage communities in a more structured way, and introduce an insurance mechanism to help people bear medical costs.

Prof Liaquat Ali, a member of the reform commission, said implementing two of their recommendations – declaring primary healthcare a constitutional right through an amendment and forming a permanent health commission – would pave the way for implementing the other recommendations.

Instead of piloting, the recommendations should be implemented in phases, he said.

Prof Syed Md Akram Hussain, another commission member, said while the consensus commission has been given significant importance, the health reform commission has been equally neglected.

He said they have submitted a memorandum to the chief adviser to include health reform in the July Charter.

Prof Syed Abdul Hamid of the Institute of Health Economics at Dhaka University, Prof Mohammad Zakir Hossain, another reform commission member, Prof Abul Kalam Azad, another former director general of DGHS, Mushtuq Husain, adviser to the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research, and Shishir Moral, special correspondent at the Prothom Alo, also spoke at the programme.

PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 4

Fazr Zohr Asr Magrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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তারিখ: ৩০/০৭/২০২৫

e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, ঢাকা (উত্তর-পশ্চিম) দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিয়ন্ত্রিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Reference	Title of Works
1134055	27.21.0000.633.07.001.25.508; Date: 28.07.2025	Cutting Jungles and shrub including removing and cleaning the spot/site work, overhead water reservoir, clearing masonry surface drain and supplying spray machine at Savar 132/33 KV Grid Substation Under GMD, Dhaka (North-West), Power Grid.
1134056	27.21.0000.633.07.001.25.509; Date: 28.07.2025	Cutting Jungles and shrub including removing and cleaning the inside and outside of boundary wall, overhead water reservoir and cleaning masonry surface drain, sewerage system and inspection pit at Mirpur Grid Substation Under GMD, Dhaka(North-West), Power Grid.

আগ্রহী টিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

শেখ কুষ্টুম পলাশ

নির্বাচী প্রকোশলী, জিএমডি, ঢাকা (উত্তর-পশ্চিম)

মোহাম্মদ মোহিনুল হক

Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Room no.- 4015.A (Annex), Bar Association Annex Building, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Mobile no.- 01712-755096

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INDO-PAK BATTLE IN MAY

'Intel failure' leads Indian jets into ambush: report

DAWN ONLINE

India's intelligence failure was central to the hour long air battle between Pakistan and India in May, which led to the downing of Rafale aircraft by the Pakistan Air Force's J-10 fighters using PL-15s missiles, according to a report.

Reuters interviews with two Indian officials and three of their Pakistani counterparts found that the performance of the Rafale wasn't the key problem: central to its downing was an Indian intelligence failure concerning the range of the China made PL-15 missile fired by the J-10 fighter. China and Pakistan are the only countries to operate both J-10s, known as Vigorous Dragons, and PL-15s.

The faulty intelligence gave the Rafale pilots a false sense of confidence that they were out of Pakistani firing distance, which they believed was only around 150km, the Indian officials said, referring to the widely cited range of PL-15's export variant.

Faulty intelligence about range of PL-15 missile gave Rafale pilots 'false sense of security'

Electronic assault on Indian communications systems reduced situational awareness: Pak officials

"We ambushed them," the PAF official said, adding that Islamabad conducted an electronic warfare assault on Delhi's systems in an attempt to confuse Indian pilots. Indian officials dispute the effectiveness of those efforts.

"The Indians were not expecting to be shot at," said Justin Bronk, air warfare expert at London's Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) think-tank. "And the PL-15 is clearly very capable at long range." The PL-15 that hit the Rafale was fired from around 200km away, according to Pakistani officials, and even farther according to Indian officials. That would make it among the longest-range air-to-air strikes recorded.

India's defence and foreign ministries did not return requests for comment about the intelligence mistakes. Delhi hasn't acknowledged a Rafale being shot down, but France's air chief told reporters in June that he had seen evidence of the loss of that fighter and two other aircraft flown by India, including a Russian-made Sukhoi. A top Dassault executive also told French lawmakers that month that India had lost a Rafale in operations, though he didn't have specific details.

Reuters spoke to eight Pakistani and two Indian officials to piece together an account of the aerial battle, which marked the start of four days of fighting between the two nuclear-armed neighbours that caused alarm in Washington.

Dormant Russia volcano erupts for first time in 450 yrs

AFP, Moscow

A volcano erupted for the first time in 450 years in Russia's eastern Kamchatka region, the nation's emergency authority said yesterday, days after one of the strongest earthquakes on record hit the region. Pictures released by Russian state media show a towering plume of ash spewing from the Krasheninnikov volcano, which last erupted in 1550, according to the Smithsonian Institution's Global Volcanism Program. The plume is estimated to have reached an altitude of 6,000 metres, Kamchatka's Ministry of Emergency Situations said.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian is welcomed by Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad, Pakistan, yesterday. Sharif stated that the Pakistani and Iranian leadership are eager to raise bilateral trade volume between the two countries to \$10 billion as soon as possible.

PHOTO:REUTERS

Zila Parishad
Chuadanga
zp.chuadanga.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.42.1800.004.14.001.24-617

Date: 03-08-2025

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2025-2026

e-Tenders are invited for 30 (Thirty) Nos. Package in National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following works under Zilla Parishad, Chuadanga.

SL No.	Package No. and Tender ID	Tender method	Last date & time for selling/downloading document	Last date & time for e-Tender closing/submission
1	1133743, 1133744, 1133745, 1133746, 1133747, 1133748, 1133749, 1133750, 1133751, 1133752, 1133753, 1133754, 1133755, 1133756, 1133757, 1133758, 1133759, 1133760, 1133761, 1133762, 1133763, 1133764, 1133765, 1133766, 1133767, 1133768, 1133769, 1133770, 1133771, 1133772,	LTM	20-Aug-2025 17:00	21-Aug-2025 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

03/08/2025

Mst. Anisa Khanom
Assistant Engineer
Zilla Parishad, Chuadanga



Demonstrators, including WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, march across the Sydney Harbour Bridge during a pro-Palestinian rally in Sydney, Australia yesterday, protesting Israel's actions and ongoing food shortages in the Gaza Strip.

PHOTO: AFP

Ukrainian drones spark fire at Sochi oil depot

120 firefighters battle the blaze; Russian missile attack injures seven in Mykolaiv

REUTERS



More than 120 firefighters were trying to extinguish a blaze at an oil depot in the Russian city of Sochi that was sparked by a Ukrainian drone attack, regional Governor Veniamin Kondrat'yev said yesterday on the Telegram messaging app.

In the Krasnodar region on the Black Sea where Sochi is located, a fuel tank with a capacity of 2,000 cubic metres was on fire, Russia's RIA news agency reported, citing emergency officials.

The Russian defence ministry said in its daily morning report on Telegram that its air defence units destroyed 93 Ukrainian drones

overnight, including one over the Krasnodar region and 60 over the waters of the Black Sea.

Rosaviatsiya, Russia's civil aviation authority, temporarily halted flights at Sochi's airport to ensure air safety before saying on Telegram that flights resumed as of 0200 GMT yesterday.

Meanwhile, a Russian missile strike on the city of Mykolaiv in southern Ukraine injured at least seven people and destroyed or damaged dozens of homes and civilian infrastructure buildings, the regional governor said yesterday.

Two of the injured were hospitalised as a result of the late Saturday attack, Mykolaiv Governor Vitaliy Kim said on the Telegram messaging app.

Kim posted photos showing single residential buildings almost destroyed, with building debris spread around. He said 23 private homes, 12 apartment buildings and a post office were damaged.

Saudi Arabia executes eight people

AFP, Dubai

Saudi Arabia has executed eight people in a single day, state media said, amid a surge in the use of the death penalty in the Gulf monarchy particularly over drug-related convictions.

The official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported that four Somalis and three Ethiopians were executed on Saturday in the southern region of Najran "for smuggling hashish into the kingdom".

Israeli ground troops conduct raids in Syria

Renewed sectarian clashes in south Syria kill four

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel's military said yesterday ground troops had operated in southern Syria, seizing weapons and questioning individuals suspected of arms trafficking, in the latest cross-border raid since the fall of Bashar al-Assad in December.

A military statement said that troops had completed overnight "a mission involving on-site questioning of several suspects involved in weapons trafficking in the Hader area in southern Syria", near the Israeli annexed Golan Heights.

"Troops entered four locations simultaneously and located numerous weapons that the suspects had been trafficking," the statement said.

Meanwhile, renewed sectarian clashes in southern Syria's Druze majority Sweida province killed at least four people yesterday, a war monitor said, in the first deadly incident since a ceasefire last month. Fighting also erupted around the city of Thaala, it said.



China, Russia start joint drills in Sea of Japan

AFP, Beijing

China and Russia began joint naval drills in the Sea of Japan yesterday as they seek to reinforce their partnership and counterbalance what they see as a US-led global order.

Alongside economic and political ties, Moscow and Beijing have strengthened their military cooperation in recent years, and their relations have deepened since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

The "Joint Sea 2025" exercises kicked off in waters near the Russian port of Vladivostok and would last for three days, China's defence ministry said in a statement yesterday.

The two sides will hold "submarine rescue, joint anti-submarine, air defence and anti-missile operations, and maritime combat".

Four Chinese vessels, including guided-missile destroyers Shaoxing and Urumqi, are participating in the exercises alongside Russian ships, the ministry said. After the drills, the two countries will conduct naval patrols in "relevant waters of the Pacific". China and Russia have carried out annual drills for several years, with the "Joint Sea" exercises beginning in 2012.



ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Ministry of Religious Affairs
Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.islamicfoundation.gov.bd

Invitation for e-Tender (Open Tender Method)

Memo No. 16.01.0000.000.026.34.001.25.

Date: 03/08/2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following works.

Tender ID	Name of works	Tender publication date & time	Tender last selling date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
11366 26	Reconstruction of Toilets, Ablutions, sewerage drain, false ceiling of Baitul Mukarram Mosque (East side) including renewing waste water pipes, water supply pipes etc. at Baitul Mukarram, Dhaka-1000.	06/08/2025 at 12.00am	19/08/2025 at 17.00	20/08/2025 at 12.00

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy is accepted. To submit e-Tender please register in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to 20/08/2025 at 11.00am. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all Applications.

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Political decisions must include women

An inclusive democracy cannot be built by ignoring their voices

We share the concerns of rights groups regarding the National Consensus Commission's (NCC) decision on reserved women's seats. The decision reflects no change in the current number of reserved seats or the method by which parties nominate female candidates. Of the 350 parliamentary seats in Bangladesh, where women make up about 50 percent of voters, only 50 seats (or 14 percent) remain reserved for women.

But should this decision really come as a surprise? Since the regime change last year, women have faced increasing hostility in public spheres and women's issues have repeatedly come under attack. When it came to the reform commissions, we saw that only one was headed by a woman. None of the seven NCC members are women. According to a report, the NCC did not even include the report from the Women's Affairs Commission in its discussions, as it reportedly did not fall within the NCC's "terms of reference (TOR)." It is baffling how recommendations aimed at improving the lives of half the population can fall outside the TOR of a national body. What kind of reforms did the commission and the political parties envision by sidelining the concerns of women? One wonders whether the NCC deliberately excluded the Women's Affairs Commission's input to avoid backlash from certain quarters.

The limited presence of female representatives from political parties during the daily discussions was equally disheartening. From established legacy parties to newer ones, female participation was minimal. Senior leaders from BNP—a party led by a female chairperson for over four decades—were predominantly male. Even the National Citizen Party, whose leaders championed the July uprising in the name of a discrimination-free society, failed to send an adequate number of women representatives. The voices of most minority communities, too, were absent throughout the process.

In this context, can we truly expect political parties to keep their promise that five percent of all their nominees in the next election will be women? And even if they do, it's likely that female candidates will be fielded in constituencies where the party has a weaker presence, reinforcing the pattern of tokenism in a male-dominated political culture. Since independence, symbolic representation has done little to meaningfully empower women in Bangladesh. It is time to demand real change. We, therefore, urge the NCC and political parties to consider the demands of the rights activists and revisit the agreed-upon issues in consultation with the groups representing marginalised communities before finalising the July Charter. Reforms that exclude the voices of women and minorities will ultimately ring hollow, and the vision to build a democratic society based on equity and fairness will falter.

Who will cover the drains in Gazipur?

Open drains, manholes continue to pose risks in various areas

Just the other day, we pointed out how waterlogging in Dhaka has become as predictable as the monsoon downpours. But this observation would be incomplete without mentioning another predictable monsoon occurrence: the open drain nuisance. In Dhaka, as in Gazipur, Chattogram, or other congested cities, open drains have repeatedly caused injuries and even deaths, especially during and after heavy rains when such drains overflow and become invisible traps. Ideally, downpours and waterlogging should not be mutually inevitable. There should be efficient drainage systems in place to prevent rainwater from inundating roads, and proper safety measures to ensure that drains—if exposed—do not pose risks.

That such basic safeguards are still missing in many cities speaks volumes about the lack of accountability and planning on the part of the relevant authorities. Last week, this negligence claimed another life when the body of 32-year-old Faria Tasnim Jyoti was recovered from a beel in Tongi, Gazipur, two days after she fell into an open drain along the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. Reportedly, Faria had gone to see a doctor at a nearby hospital when she accidentally stepped into an uncovered drain, which had reportedly been left exposed for some time without any warning signs. Naturally, locals have blamed the Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) for the tragedy.

Open drains and manholes are a common sight in Gazipur. A recent visit to the four-kilometre stretch from Board Bazar to Tongi's Hossain Market has revealed at least 25 drains and manholes left without covers. During rains, when the manholes are submerged, pedestrians risk unknowingly walking into danger, especially at night. Reportedly, miscreants often steal the manhole covers, which are sold off as scrap metal, and things turn risky when this goes unnoticed or unaddressed. Drain covers may similarly go missing. But the fact that GCC still has no comprehensive list of the open drains and manholes shows how indifferent it has been in addressing this hazard. In Chattogram—another city notorious for its open drains—the risk remains similarly unaddressed despite countless complaints and media reports. Only last month, a three-year-old died after falling into an open roadside drain.

This cycle of tragedies must stop. With the country witnessing persistent downpours, we urge the authorities of all city corporations and municipalities to take immediate measures in this regard. Every exposed drain or manhole must be covered without delay, and cover theft must be prevented simultaneously. The authorities should also prepare lists of all dangerous spots linked to drains and connected water bodies to guide their efforts. Equally important is solving the waterlogging problem in most-frequented areas so as to prevent any tragic incident.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Anne Frank arrested

On this day in 1944, Anne Frank was arrested in Amsterdam by German Security Police (Grüne Polizei) following a tip-off from an informer who was never identified.



When revolutions forget why they began



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H.M. NAZMUL ALAM

All societies carry within them the seeds of transformation. Like tectonic plates beneath the Earth's surface, the political and moral foundations of a society often shift in silence until the pressure becomes unbearable and an earthquake erupts. That eruption is what we call "change"—revolution, reform, rebellion, or resistance. In the face of injustice, the arrogance of rulers, or institutional decay, societies respond with forceful motion, demanding realignment. But history often looks upon these ruptures not as roads to redemption, but as repetitive cycles of hope turned to despair.

If we look back through the corridors of history, from the fall of the Roman Republic to the Arab Spring, the one thread that connects these upheavals is the tragic irony that the very structure meant to uplift the masses ends up replicating the oppression it sought to dismantle. Take the French Revolution, for instance. The storming of the Bastille on July 14, 1789 was meant to herald *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. But soon, Robespierre's Reign of Terror painted Paris in blood. The monarch was gone, yes, but in his place came new tyrants draped in the banners of liberty. Edmund Burke warned presciently in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), "The effect of liberty to individuals is that they may do what they please: we ought to see what it will please them to do before we risk congratulations." Burke understood that revolution is not always rational, and that liberty, once unleashed without vision, can turn into its opposite.

And yet, each new revolution sings the same song—that the past was poisoned, that the future holds healing, that this time it will be different. In Bangladesh, how many times have we broken with the past to start anew? How many times has the slogan of justice been raised, only for the people to find that the judge has merely changed costumes? A society cannot evolve if it only changes its rulers but keeps the architecture of oppression intact.

The very psychology of power lies at the heart of this betrayal. As Lord Acton famously wrote, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Yet, there's a more insidious truth beneath this adage: power doesn't merely corrupt, it seduces. And once seduced, even the purest revolutionaries forget their origins. The heat of power draws opportunists, "millions of bees," as it were, who arrive not to pollinate progress but to bask in



We must educate ourselves and our children not just in history but in the lessons of history.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

its heat, building a suffocating cloud of illusion around the leader. Truth is distorted, conscience is numbed, and change becomes cosmetic.

This is not merely politics; it is a tragedy in the Aristotelian sense, where the protagonist's downfall is born of "*hamartia*," a fatal flaw. The revolutionaries believe they are incorruptible. They believe that, by virtue of being on the "right side" of history, they are immune to the temptations that ruined others before them. And yet, when they assume

vision. He served only one term as the president of South Africa, prioritising reconciliation over retribution. He once said, "Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people." But these examples are tragically rare. More often, change is reduced to a mere change in symbols, flags or faces, not substance.

George Orwell understood this better than anyone. In *Animal Farm*, he writes of the animals who overthrow their human farmer to build an egalitarian paradise. But as

the pigs assume control, they become indistinguishable from the oppressors they replaced. The final line pierces with prophetic irony, "The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which."

And so, we are left with the same cycle: protest, change, disappointment, silence. The people bleed, but the wounds never heal. The oppressed scream, but the system remains deaf.

Why does this cycle persist? Because we confuse rebellion with renewal. We believe that to remove a leader is to redeem a nation. But true change—sustainable, moral, and just—requires a reimagining of values, not just institutions. This is where most revolutions fail. They aim to control the state, but not to transform the soul of the society. They build new roads but carry the same burdens. They install new leaders but inherit the same blindness. And so, the ordinary citizen, full of hope at first, gradually feels betrayed.

This is not just a political failure; it is a moral and spiritual failure. When the sacrifices of martyrs and dreamers are squandered, it impoverishes the collective soul of a nation. Cynicism creeps in. The youth, who once believed in the poetry of protest, now embrace apathy. The intellectuals retreat, the activists burn out, and the people learn to survive in silence.

But is there a way out of this vicious cycle? Perhaps the answer lies not in seeking perfect revolutions, but in demanding imperfect but accountable leadership. In creating mechanisms that prevent the centralisation of power. In remembering, always, that no one is beyond scrutiny, not even those who once led the charge for change.

And most importantly, we must educate ourselves and our children not just in history but in the lessons of history. To know not only what happened, but why it happened, and why it failed. Otherwise, we are doomed to re-enact the same tragic play, with only the actors changed. Let us remember that true change is not a moment, but a movement. Not a face, but a philosophy. Not a seizure of power, but a renewal of purpose.

As Che taught us, revolution is not about sitting on thrones. It is about standing with the people, even when the cameras are gone. And if that is forgotten, then every revolution will meet a miserable death.

SHAHBAGH PROTESTS

Pursuit of justice must not make the public suffer



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SAMIA JAMAN KAROBI

Shahbagh, one of the most critical intersections in Dhaka, has been a recurring site of protest throughout 2025. Yesterday, Chhatra Dal held a rally there, with activists from around the country participating. The party hired a special 20-coach train from Chattogram to facilitate attendance.

Another youth-led political party, NCP, also held their rally on the same day at the Central Shaheed Minar. In anticipation of possible traffic disruptions, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) advised the public to avoid the Shahbagh area and recommended that HSC, equivalent, and BCS candidates keep ample time in their hands to reach exam centres.

Whether the causes behind the rallies are just is a separate issue; however, the methods, especially prolonged blockades of a major traffic hub, have had disproportionate consequences for ordinary citizens.

This year, Dhaka has witnessed several days when Shahbagh was effectively shut down. On February 6, protesters blocked the intersection for over nine hours, causing gridlock that extended across major arteries such as Farmgate, Banglamotor,

Dhanmondi, and Moghbazar. The blockade lasted into the night and resumed the following day. Similarly, on May 15, another major blockade halted traffic. Yet again, on July 29, protesters returned, intensifying their demands as dialogue with authorities stalled.

The aftermath for the general public has been overwhelming. Commuters walked miles in the sun, students missed exams, and patients' access to major hospitals, such as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and Dhaka Medical College Hospital, faced dangerous delays. Ambulances were stuck for hours, and some commuters reported walking up to five kilometres as ride-sharing services suspended operations or hiked prices.

According to the Numbeo Traffic Index 2024, Dhaka is already ranked as one of the most congested cities in the world, and Shahbagh is a critical traffic node. Protest organisers cite a lack of effective response from the government. However, the tactic of full-scale intersection blockades imposes collateral damage on millions who have no direct role in the political

crisis. Bangladesh's constitution guarantees the right to freedom of assembly and expression under Article 39. However, it also guarantees the right to life (Article 32) and freedom of movement (Article 36). None of these rights is absolute, and each must be exercised without infringing on the fundamental freedoms of others. The current form of protest, though constitutionally grounded in its intent, often violates other protected rights by obstructing roads, trapping ambulances, and endangering lives.

From a legal perspective, the balancing of rights is essential. As the Supreme Court of Bangladesh has noted in several public interest cases, the government has a duty not just to protect speech but also to ensure public safety, health, and order. Prolonged occupation of major public roads without alternative arrangements fails this balance. Even in democracies with strong traditions of protest, such as India or the UK, courts have ruled that public inconvenience cannot become a permanent feature of protest.

This does not mean the demands of protesters are invalid or that civil disobedience has no place. On the contrary, their grievances regarding many civilians being killed in clashes with security forces during the July uprising, deserve legal and moral attention. The July Charter, calling for institutional reforms, compensation, and transparent investigations, addresses real governance gaps. However, tactics that replicate harm to the public in the name of justice may

erode public support and entrench polarisation.

So, what's the way forward? Firstly, the authorities should sincerely consider the protesters' demands and initiate a structured dialogue. Ignoring or delaying responses only fuels more disruptive actions. Secondly, protest zones should be designated for large-scale gatherings, which can accommodate crowds and media coverage without bringing the capital to a halt. Thirdly, authorities should coordinate with protest leaders to set time limits or create "protest windows" during off-peak hours. South Korea and Germany have implemented such models with significant success. In situations where roads are to be occupied, even temporarily, emergency corridors must remain open. No protest should compromise access to hospitals or fire services.

Finally, the public must also reflect critically on protest culture. It is easy to support a cause in principle, but when tactics repeatedly endanger lives or livelihoods, they require scrutiny. Citizens should be able to stand for justice without causing others to be trapped in traffic for six hours on a weekday, miss critical medical appointments, or fear for their elderly parents stuck in public buses.

Regardless of who is responsible for resolving the political dispute, it is unacceptable to impose prolonged hardship on ordinary citizens. Protest must not be equated with punishment for the uninvolved. The city and its people deserve better.

Arbitrary detention and the hypocrisy within the government



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DAVID BERGMAN

On July 1, 2024, as student protests over job quotas erupted in Bangladesh, Prof Muhammad Yunus faced a serious risk of imprisonment. Just six months earlier, in his role as the chairman of Grameen Telecom, the Nobel Peace Prize winner had been convicted of labour law violations and sentenced to six months in jail. The trial court, pending a review application, granted him bail, which was subsequently extended by the appeals court.

The prosecution and sentencing of Yunus was widely regarded as politically motivated. For years, the Awami League government had subjected Yunus to harassment and intimidation. Had Grameen Telecom even committed the minor technical violations that were alleged, the employees had suffered no detriment, and a six-month sentence imposed on Yunus (and others) was plainly disproportionate and inconsistent with other similar cases.

However, due to the bail provided by the courts, Yunus remained a free man. Yet, with an appeal decision looming—which would likely have been as motivated as the original conviction—imprisonment still remained a real possibility for these alleged labour law violations.

Simultaneously, Yunus faced another criminal case based on even more spurious

for political ends, arbitrary detention, and the importance of bail.

One would, therefore, imagine that following the fall of the Awami League—the government responsible for such judicial harassment—and amid widespread promises of creating a reformed “Bangladesh 2.0,” these two figures would be especially committed to ensuring that the state, under their leadership, would not subject others to

several detailed articles exposing the lack of evidence in the corruption cases against him. Yet now, when he has the power and authority to take steps to halt arbitrary detentions taking place against others, he chooses inaction.

The same applies to Adilur Rahman Khan, who once championed human rights and accountability, and is now silent about the same abuses to which he was earlier subject—

targeted with false accusations, misusing the legal system to torment opponents.” But he claimed that the situation now, where “current cases were mostly filed by members of the families of the victims of repression during the previous regime,” was different to the situation during the Awami League period, where criminal cases were “mounted by state-designated, state-sponsored and the state’s police and judicial system with a predetermined outcome.”

This response, however, which seeks to exculpate the government by hiding behind the principle of judicial independence, is a total cop-out.

First, there is his argument about the distinction between cases filed by private citizens and those filed by the police.

There is indeed a difference between these two categories. But under the Awami League government, there were hundreds of cases, including most of the cybersecurity prosecutions, which were filed by private citizens, resulting in arbitrary detentions. According to Alam’s argument, the Awami League government had no responsibility for these detentions, and no responsibility to stop them from happening. Is that really Yunus’s position? Clearly, every government is ultimately responsible for stopping a system that allows people to be arrested and imprisoned when there is no evidence that they were involved in the offences alleged against them.

There was a clear way for the government to stop the arbitrary arrests, and that was to change the law and set up a centralised investigation body, staffed by professional investigators, responsible for investigating all alleged murders and other Penal Code offences in July-August 2024—one that could only arrest people on the basis of actual evidence of a crime. This was a very obvious option which the government failed to implement.

Second, in relation to bail, it is not interfering with the justice system to give clear instructions to the state prosecutors and the Attorney General’s Office requiring them not to oppose bail where there is no substantive evidence linking the detained person to the crime for which they are accused. This practice should, in any case, be an implied part of their professional obligation—but it is something which right now is being routinely ignored in relation to any high-profile case. It would also not be interfering with the justice system for the inspector general of police to give the police similar instructions.

Third, where it is clear to the government—which it surely must be—that the courts are acting in a clearly partisan, “politicised” manner, to the benefit of a populist base that does not want to see Awami Leaguers released (however innocent they may be), a government concerned to stop arbitrary detentions cannot simply wash its hands of responsibility by hiding behind judicial independence. It has a responsibility to do something.

For Muhammad Yunus and Adilur Rahman Khan, there is, of course, one word for all this: hypocrisy. And journalists and commentators should, from now on, “hold their feet to the fire” until the government sets out a plan to deal with these serious human rights violations.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

bail provided by the courts.

So Yunus, now head of the current interim government, knows first-hand what it means to face baseless accusations, politicised prosecutions, and a looming threat of imprisonment, and to be given the lifeline of bail.

He is not alone in the interim government to have had this experience.

Adilur Rahman Khan, a member of the interim cabinet, also experienced the sharp edge of political persecution on the basis of frivolous allegations—though in his case he was in fact imprisoned.

Once the head of one of Bangladesh’s most respected human rights organisations, Odhikar, Khan was detained on two occasions for allegedly “prejudicing the image of the state” and “instigating violence” following alleged inaccuracies in his organisation’s report on the security forces’ killings of Hefazat protesters in 2013. At the trial, it turned out that the alleged inaccuracies concerned at most only six out of 61 deaths.

Khan was first detained for two months following his initial arrest in 2013, and then for one month in 2022, following his conviction and a sentence of two years’ imprisonment. In both cases, he was released from detention after the court granted him bail.

So both Yunus and Khan are intimately familiar with the abuse of the justice system

the same arbitrary detentions they had either endured or were about to face.

Not so. The new government, with Yunus at its helm and Khan as a particularly powerful member, is presiding over a system of justice where any person who held an official position within the Awami League, from the upazila level upwards, as well as many people who were strong public supporters of the previous government, have either been arrested and imprisoned for involvement in the July-August killings and shootings last year, or have a legitimate fear of it happening to them at any time.

Putting to one side the relatively small number of arrests by the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD), the hundreds of arrests and detentions for Penal Code offences, like murder or attempted murder, are happening without any investigation. And the police, public prosecutors, magistrates, district court judges, the Attorney General’s Office, and Appellate Division judges are all taking steps to prevent people from being released on bail, despite there being no evidence directly linking the accused to the crimes they are alleged to have committed.

When Yunus was facing his own legal persecution, he rightly and loudly insisted on his innocence and challenged the absurdity of the charges against him. I, too—without any prompting from him or his team—wrote

and which I also wrote about—and which are now committed by the government of which he is a part. When I interviewed him, before he went to jail, Khan told me, “Whatever we have done has been done for the cause of human rights and the cause of justice. This is our motto, our belief.” Clearly, things have changed very much since then.

This is, of course, a governmental responsibility, and all those in the cabinet—in particular, the law and home advisers—have a role and responsibility, and they must also take their share of the blame. But Yunus and Khan’s failure to take any leadership on this matter is remarkable in light of their own history and background.

Khan did not respond separately to a request for comment, but Shafiqul Alam, Yunus’s press secretary, was unapologetic about the government’s hands-off approach. “Unlike under the previous regime, the state is now leaving the judicial system to deal with these cases. By calling on the government to get involved in the judicial process, you are encouraging the state to adopt the AL playbook.”

In saying that, Alam did nonetheless acknowledge that “the ongoing issue of arbitrary and illegal detentions in Bangladesh is deeply troubling and cannot be justified under any circumstances” and that “thousands of innocent people have been

AN ODE TO YASMEEN MURSHED

The passing of a quiet revolutionary



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TAQBIR HUDA

On July 31, 2025, Bangladesh lost one of its silent revolutionaries: Mrs Yasmeen Murshed. She was best known as the founder of Scholastica’s school, but she was also a businesswoman, a diplomat, and a civil society leader.

Most students of my generation and after did not have many interactions with Mrs Murshed. This is because soon after our move to Scholastica’s senior section (where she was based), she became preoccupied with her appointments as adviser to the government in 2006 and then high commissioner to Pakistan in 2007. However, I lived every day in the institution she built, walked through the halls she envisioned, and benefited from an educational system she pioneered.

In 1977, Yasmeen Murshed rented a two-storey building in Dhanmondi to establish the school, both academic and administrative, was overwhelmingly female. And then there’s STM Hall, built and named after her late husband, Syed Tanweer Murshed. A hall where generations of Scholastica students would graduate, perform, and debate their way into adulthood. That a Bangladeshi woman could honour her husband’s memory by building a modernist architectural structure on a major highway in the capital of a country where the vast majority of women are precluded from owning any landed property also seems, in retrospect, like a quiet revolution. At the time,

key neighbourhoods. Scholastica’s journey is not just one about business expansion. It is a story of Mrs Murshed’s perseverance, foresight, and a refusal to settle for the norm.

Scholastica was far from perfect, but it was, in many ways, ahead of its time. In a country where gender roles remain deeply entrenched, I now realise how rare the institute’s emphasis on equality of opportunities was. I remember how, in Grade 6, it was the girls’ handball team that flew to an international tournament in Italy instead of the boys’ football team. I remember how in Grade 4, all the boys from my grade were cheering on the girls as they battled it out in an inter-school tournament, instead of the other way round.

I remember how the senior leadership of the school, both academic and administrative, was overwhelmingly female. And then there’s STM Hall, built and named after her late husband, Syed Tanweer Murshed. A hall where generations of Scholastica students would graduate, perform, and debate their way into adulthood. That a Bangladeshi woman could honour her husband’s memory by building a modernist architectural structure on a major highway in the capital of a country where the vast majority of women are precluded from owning any landed property also seems, in retrospect, like a quiet revolution. At the time,

none of this felt extraordinary. Only years later, when I joined the development sector and saw the many ways gender inequality manifests, did I fully grasp how unusual that environment was and how intentional it must have been.

Mrs Murshed also believed that education should not begin and end with books. Long before “holistic learning” became a buzzword, she worked to institutionalise extracurriculars (such as drama, art, music and debate) as an integral part of Scholastica’s pedagogy. Scholastica also had a dedicated internship office (possibly one of the firsts of its kind in the country), which helped high school students secure summer placements. It is through these internships that I gained my first round of professional experience (first at Rahimafrooz and then at JAAGO Foundation). They helped me realise quite

Of course, not everything Scholastica (or Etcetera, for that matter) represented was radical or accessible. It remained a private enclave catering to a particular class. But within that space, Yasmeen Murshed carved out something rare. And many of us, whether we realised it at the time or not, absorbed values that shaped how we saw ourselves and our role in society.

early on that I was meant for the public sector, not the private one.

At the same time, Mrs Murshed did not



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Mrs Yasmeen Murshed

believe that modern secular education needed to be at odds with religious identity. In a country where the education system is deeply bifurcated, split between so-called “mainstream” schools and madrasas, her approach was, in retrospect, quite groundbreaking. Religious instruction in most households entailed children learning how to recite the Quran phonetically, without translation or interpretation. Mrs Murshed chose a different path. At Scholastica, every morning assembly began with a recitation of Surah al-Fatiha, first in Arabic and then in English, followed by the national anthem. She introduced a subject called Islamiyat and even authored the textbooks herself. These books did not treat the Quran as a text to be committed to memory in fragments, but

as a source of ethical thoughts. We were not asked simply to recite; we were invited to think. I remember reading the story where three children are asked by their father to go somewhere where no one could see them. One hides in a cupboard. Another crawls under the bed. The third searches quietly, then returns and says, “There is no such place. Wherever I go, God can still see me.” That was the first time I truly understood what it meant that God is all-seeing.

Outside the classroom, she created Etcetera, possibly Dhaka’s first departmental store that felt like a portal to a mall in Singapore or Kuala Lumpur. I looked forward to going there every Thursday evening after school, browsing the latest DVDs and CDs. Etcetera also introduced the book-cafe culture through Coffeeworld, where you could sip a flavoured iced latte while reading a Booker-nominated paperback without having to purchase it. It is hard to explain how rare such a place was in Dhaka in the early 2000s, where there was very little to do by way of recreation.

Of course, not everything Scholastica (or Etcetera, for that matter) represented was radical or accessible. It remained a private enclave catering to a particular class. But within that space, Yasmeen Murshed carved out something rare. And many of us, whether we realised it at the time or not, absorbed values that shaped how we saw ourselves and our role in society.

She has now passed on to her Creator. But undoubtedly, she lives on through the works of the thousands of students quietly shaped by the institution she built. Mrs Murshed did not just found a school; she fundamentally altered the trajectory of Bangladesh’s educational and cultural landscape. May she rest in eternal peace.

Rickshaw
Rally returns
with graffiti
tribute to
July uprising



Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy (BSA) hosted a grand Rickshaw Rally yesterday, as part of the *July Revival Festival 2025*. Organised under the patronage of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, this vibrant event showcased nearly 300 rickshaws adorned with graffiti related to the 2024 July Uprising.

In a symbolic and heartfelt gesture, the rally was inaugurated by Rahima Begum, mother of July martyr Sohel. The opening ceremony was attended by Mofidur Rahman, secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, and AHM Shafiquzzaman, secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Mohammad Warees Hossain, secretary and acting director general of BSA, presided over the ceremony.

Organisers described the rally not just as a cultural festivity but a symbolic act of remembrance, reclaiming public spaces with stories of resistance, dignity, and creative defiance.

STOP TAGGING AND BERATING US

SABNAM FARIA

Actress Sabnam Faria has sharply criticised Bangladesh's worsening political crisis, calling out political parties for corruption, manipulation, and treating citizens like pawns in their battle for power ahead of the upcoming national election.

In a blunt social media post that quickly went viral, Faria wrote, "Born in a country where I don't even know who to seek justice from." She accused political leaders of looting public funds, silencing dissent, and engaging in staged outrage while the public suffers.

"Leaders of one of the political parties are running off with stolen money, the younger ones mourn online with offensive hashtags and the rest are busy fighting over extortion, donations, and

exit strategies," she stated.

Faria said ordinary citizens have become mere spectators in a political circus: "We stay silent while watching this colourful farce. Speak up, and one side calls you a dollar-eating traitor, the other shouts, 'Why didn't you speak for 16 years?' Meanwhile, no country even wants to give us a visa anymore."

Her post ends with a plea: "Oh Allah, save our beloved motherland from the curse of politics."

This isn't the first time the actress has taken a stand. Known for speaking out on social issues, Faria's latest remarks strike a nerve amid growing public frustration over economic hardship, rising political instability, and a yet-to-be defined electoral system.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Baatighar to restage 'Radcliffe Line' after two-year hiatus



Baatighar Theatre's acclaimed play *Radcliffe Line* will return to the stage on August 15 at 7:15pm at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy (BSA). Written and directed by Sanjoy Sarker Muktonil, it was last performed in August 2023.

At the heart of this play are two characters—Jamal, a member of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and Hiralal, a member of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

Hiralal spots a cow near the border and chases it into a tunnel, ending up in no man's land. Meanwhile, Jamal pursues the same cow and encounters Hiralal inside.

The play explores political history, shared suffering, and border tragedies. Amid rising tensions and armed standoff, Jamal and Hiralal realise their struggles are alike despite divisions of nation and religion.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

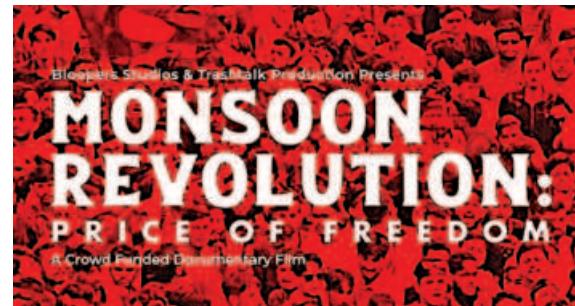
'Monsoon Revolution: Price of Freedom'

As part of the *Monsoon Revolution Spirit: July Revival* festival, Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy presents the documentary *Monsoon Revolution: Price of Freedom*. The film captures the sacrifices of the masses, the brutal truths of July 2024 protests, and the silent struggles of the marginalized. The screening is open to all.

Date: Tuesday | August 5, 2025

Time: 5:30 pm onwards

Venue: National Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy



Dhaka's Geet and Sangeet cinemas close down again amid industry slump



Two of Dhaka's longest-standing single-screen cinema halls, Geet and Sangeet, have shuttered operations once again, citing a dramatic decline in audience turnout.

Tucked along the Dholairpar-Jurain stretch beside the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway, the twin theatres had been screening local films regularly. But with few compelling titles on offer and dwindling footfall, both cinemas went dark last Saturday.

The closure is indefinite, although authorities have left the door open for a potential reopening during next year's Eid season — contingent on stronger film offerings and a renewed interest in theatrical viewing.

Tom Holland unveils new suit for 'Spider-Man: Brand New Day'

Tom Holland has been spotted wearing a fresh Spider-Man suit for the upcoming *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, set for release on July 31, 2026.

In a video shared by Sony Pictures on social media, Holland sports a redesigned costume featuring a larger chest emblem, inspired by earlier versions worn by Tobey Maguire and

Andrew Garfield.

Brand New Day will continue the story from *No Way Home*, where Peter Parker's identity is forgotten by the world he lives in. It features returning characters like Zendaya's MJ, Jon Bernthal's Punisher, Mark Ruffalo's Hulk, and Michael Mando's Scorpion.

Destin Daniel Cretton is directing the film with a script by Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers.

NEWS

US retailers lean on suppliers

FROM PAGE 12
previous 10 percent baseline tariff pushed the total to 29.5 percent. With the new 20 percent reciprocal tariff, the rate will now stand at 39.5 percent.

Ramzul Seraj, managing director of Elite Garments, said he had already been absorbing a portion of the initial baseline tariff. His buyers have not asked him to shoulder more.

However, some retailers are also adjusting prices for the end consumers to offset the higher import costs. Seraj said a higher-end woven shirt his factory sells for \$10, which previously retailed for \$65 in the US, is now being marked up to \$70. He

added that buyers may slightly increase the price they pay him to compensate.

The pressure from retailers appears to be a temporary measure for some, designed to bridge the gap until the new costs can be fully integrated into their pricing models.

Shovon Islam, managing director of Sparrow Group, said his buyers have asked him to share a portion of the additional tariff until the next summer season, ending around February 2026.

Despite the squeeze on margins, exporters are reporting a positive development: work orders, which had been pending amid uncertainty over the

final tariff rate, are now flowing back. "The buyers are taking all the pending work orders after the announcement of the new tariff rate," said Zahir.

Officially, the industry's main body has yet to register the trend.

Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said that no exporters had formally complained to him about the cost-sharing requests and that he was not otherwise aware of the issue. This suggests that these negotiations are happening on a direct, buyer-to-supplier basis as companies navigate the fallout from the new trade policy.

Gaza aid site

FROM PAGE 12
October 2023 attack on Israel.

United Nations agencies have said that airdrops of food are insufficient and that Israel must let in far more aid by land and open up access to the war-devastated territory where starvation has been spreading.

Meanwhile, Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir yesterday visited the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem and prayed there, violating a decades-old arrangement covering one of the most sensitive sites in the Middle East.

In a separate development, Hamas has rejected reports that it expressed a willingness to disarm during Gaza ceasefire negotiations with Israel, stressing that it has a "national and legal" right to confront the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, reports Al Jazeera.

The Palestinian group responded on Saturday to recent remarks purportedly made by United States President Donald Trump's special envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, during a meeting with relatives of Israeli captives held in Gaza.

Citing a recording of the talks, Israeli news outlet Haaretz reported that the US envoy told the families that Hamas said it was "prepared to be demilitarised".

But in a statement, Hamas said "the resistance and its weapons are a national and legal right as long as the [Israeli] occupation persists".

That right "cannot be relinquished until our full national rights are restored, foremost among them the establishment of a fully sovereign, independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital", it said.

Legal challenges have been filed against some of Trump's tariffs, arguing he overstepped his authority.

An appeals court panel on Thursday appeared skeptical of the government's arguments, though the case may be ultimately decided at the Supreme Court.

Trump was "elected to assess the foreign affairs situation... and take

appropriate action," he added.

Meanwhile, White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett said that while talks are expected to continue over the next week with some US trade partners, he concurred with Greer's tariff assessment in that the bulk of the rates "are more or less locked in."

Asked by the host of NBC's Sunday talk show "Meet the Press with Kristen Welker" if Trump could change tariff rates, should financial markets react negatively, Hassett said: "I would rule it out, because these are the final deals."

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Trump was "elected to assess the foreign affairs situation... and take

our responsibilities. However, we're also revealing to the public where the problems lie, and through our actions, people will gradually see that the EC lacks backbone."

When asked why he was making such remarks, Patwari said, "If they don't let me vote, why should I participate? But the process is yet to reach a conclusion. We are engaging with them regularly, pointing out flaws and giving them the chance to rectify them."

"If the commission wants to wear military and party uniforms, sell its backbone, and deny people their voting rights, we may eventually be forced to take a final decision. But for now, we're still giving them a chance. May they have a change of heart, return to the democratic process, and work towards restoring the people's

right to vote."

Patwari was joined at the EC by NCP Chief Organiser (South) Hasnat Abdulla, Joint Convener Khaled Saifullah, and Joint Member Secretary Zahur Islam Muda.

The visit took place on the final day for 144 new political parties, including the NCP, to complete registration with the EC. Parties were required to submit all documents by yesterday.

Staffers at Janakantha

FROM PAGE 12

capital's New Eskaton.

Her allegation is against several individuals, including major (retd) Afizur Rahman, chief operating officer of Globe Janakantha Shilpa Paribar, and Joynal Abedin Shishir, joint convener of National Citizen Party and planning adviser for the newspaper.

Shamima in an audio message said, "For the last few days, a certain group had been creating unrest, and we sensed something was about to happen. We had planned to publish a tribute in red for the July-August martyrs, but they sabotaged it by changing it to black [in online edition] — implying a rejection of the uprising. Soon after, their actions escalated, making it clear this was part of a plot.

to take over Janakantha."

Talking to BBC Bangla, both Afizur and Shishir have denied the allegation of taking over Janakantha.

Shishir said they have merely

formed a board for management

purposes. "This decision was taken unanimously by all working

journalists."

BBC Bangla adds that Afizur, who had served for a long time at the DGFI under the AL regime, said, "There is no question of taking over the house. I do not deserve such accusations. Madam (the editor) has said many untrue things."

On Saturday night, at a gathering outside the Janakantha Bhaban, protesters announced the suspension of all activities at the newspaper. The same night, the dismissed employees

and journalist union leaders formed the new editorial board and took control of operations.

The new board includes Shishir, Mir Mohammad Jasim, adviser (online) Sabrina Binte Ahmed, deputy chief reporter Israfil Forazi, and representatives from the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists.

As of yesterday, the online version of Janakantha no longer shows the names of the editor and publisher in the printer's line. Instead, it says the paper is "Published and printed by the Editorial Board under Globe Janakantha Shilpa Paribar member institutions Globe Printers Ltd and Janakantha Ltd."

However, the print edition still names Shamima A Khan as editor.

Govt set to unveil July declaration

FROM PAGE 12

Artcell, Warfaze, and Souls.

According to the Chief Adviser's Press Wing, the declaration will be read out in the presence of all stakeholders of the July uprising.

The interim government has prepared the July Declaration in consultation with key political parties, including the BNP. Major parties have endorsed the declaration's state and constitutional recognition.

The process to draft the declaration was initiated in

response to demands made by the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) last December.

The student protests, which began on July 1 last year against the quota system in government jobs, quickly turned into a mass uprising that toppled the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5.

According to a report by a UN fact-finding mission in February, up to 1,400 protest-related deaths occurred between July 15 and August 5.

Election Commission

FROM PAGE 12

[those of that party] will create obstacles... And the Election Commission is conspiring to enable that.

"For the past 15 years, no one was able to give votes. Now, if someone goes to take votes in a democratic way, they are being obstructed," he added.

"Secondly, the more we observe the Election Commission, the more we understand it is a spineless body... Thirdly, such a commission is supposed to guide Bangladesh towards democracy. But we see that most of its components are either in military uniforms or clad in party colours.

"The Election Commission is a vital constitutional institution. We have taken part in its registration process, submitted the necessary documents, and will continue to fulfil

our responsibilities. However, we're also revealing to the public where the problems lie, and through our actions, people will gradually see that the EC lacks backbone."

When asked why he was making such remarks, Patwari said, "If they don't let me vote, why should I participate? But the process is yet to reach a conclusion. We are engaging with them regularly, pointing out flaws and giving them the chance to rectify them."

"If the commission wants to wear military and party uniforms, sell its backbone, and deny people their voting rights, we may eventually be forced to take a final decision. But for now, we're still giving them a chance. May they have a change of heart, return to the democratic process, and work towards restoring the people's

right to vote."

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The visit took place on the final day for 144 new political parties, including the NCP, to complete registration with the EC. Parties were required to submit all documents by yesterday.

The EC had received applications from all 144 parties by June 22. None met the registration criteria during the initial screening. The commission later granted a 15-day extension in two phases to allow them time to comply.

Md Shariful Alam, director (public relations) of the EC Secretariat, 80 parties have submitted their required information with EC for registration.



People gather at an OMS truck in Khulna city's Mujgunni area to buy essential commodities at subsidised prices yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Man stabs wife to death in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A woman was allegedly stabbed to death by her husband in front of their two children in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila yesterday.

The victim, Kakoli, 35, was attacked at their home in the Jelkhana area. She was pronounced dead at Sakhipur Health Complex.

The accused, Md Mehedi, fled the scene and remains at large, said police.

Sakhipur Police Station OC Abul Kalam said Mehedi, was reportedly suffering from depression after failing to achieve financial success abroad and fought with his wife frequently.

"This [yesterday] morning, a quarrel broke out between the couple. During the altercation, Mehedi attacked Kakoli with a sharp weapon while their minor children looked on helplessly," he said.

The body was sent to Tangail General Hospital for autopsy.

Evict 508 illegal structures from Gomti river: HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the deputy commissioner of Cumilla to take necessary steps to evict 508 illegal structures occupying the banks of Gomti river in the district within six months.

Delivering a verdict on a petition, the court also directed the Water Development Board to decide within three months regarding the proposed dredging plan for the river.

The authorities were further instructed to resolve budget allocations for the eviction process within the next three months.

The superintendent of Cumilla police and the respective UNOs were asked to actively monitor the area to prevent further encroachment or landfilling.

The bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Bashir Ullah delivered the verdict following the petition filed in 2011 by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB).

The petition was filed following multiple media reports highlighting rampant encroachment and illegal construction along the Gomti, one of Cumilla's major rivers.

On March 2, 2011, the then HC bench comprising Justice Md Mumtaz Uddin Ahmed and Justice Gobinda Chandra Tagore issued a rule and instructed the DC of Cumilla to conduct a survey, demarcate the river boundaries, and submit a list of illegal structures and encroachers.

Following the court's directive, the DC identified 623 illegal structures during the survey.

Among these, 115 structures were reportedly removed, writ petitioner Lawyer Senior Advocate Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star.

Prof Shamsher Ali no more

FROM PAGE 3

began his academic journey at the Dhaka University, where he completed his Bachelor's in Physics in 1959, followed by a Master's in 1960.

From 1970 to 1978, he served as Director of the Atomic Energy Centre in Dhaka, during a period when nuclear science in Bangladesh was still in its formative stages. His contributions helped lay the groundwork for future research and policy in atomic energy.

Prof Ali became the founding vice-chancellor of both Bangladesh Open University (1992-1996) and Southeast University (2002-2010).

From 2004 to 2012, he presided over the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, where he championed the role of scientific research in national development.

Among his many accolades were the Hari Prasanna Roy Gold Medal from Dhaka University for his contributions to nuclear physics, the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences Gold Medal in 1984 and the prestigious TWAS-ROCASE Award in 2013 for his efforts in promoting public understanding of science.

In 2009, he was recognized internationally with the Lifetime Achievement Award in Higher Education Leadership by the International Leadership Colloquium in Malaysia.

He was named an honorary lifelong professor of physics at the Dhaka University.

Prof Shamsher Ali is survived by his family, colleagues and countless students and admirers.

Media must be accountable

FROM PAGE 3

Reflecting on the nation's history, Mahfuj said that in the 54 years since independence, institutions including the media had not developed to the expected level.

Mahfuj urged journalists to ensure accuracy in their reporting and said the media should be accountable to the people rather than the government.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, speaking as special guest, urged journalist unions and associations to work for the welfare of their members, particularly those at the grassroots.

BJWT Managing Director Mohammad Abdullah said five journalists were killed and

at least 200 were injured during the uprising.

He said the event recognised family members of the five martyred journalists and 192 injured and brave journalists by presenting each with Tk 25,000 and a crest.

The programme began with a one-minute silence in memory of the victims of the uprising.

Samsi Ara Zaman, mother of slain journalist Tahir Zaman, Financial Express Editor Shamsul Huq Zahid, Press Institute of Bangladesh Director General Faruk Wasif, and the Information Ministry's Additional Secretary Kawser Ahmed also spoke at the event.

Viscera report

FROM PAGE 4

On the evening of July 17, his body was found floating in a pond next to Shah Azizur Rahman Hall on the university campus.

The IU police recovered the body around 6:00pm, said Mehedi Hassan, officer in charge of the police station.

The following morning, his autopsy was conducted at 9:30am at the 250-bed Kushtia General Hospital morgue, said Hossain Imam, a resident medical officer at the hospital.

Sajid's janaza was held before Juma prayers that day on the mosque compound of the hospital.

His father, Ahsan Habibullah Delwar, and classmates alleged that Sajid could not have drowned accidentally, as he was a strong swimmer and physically fit. They suspected foul play and demanded a proper investigation.

Speaking to The Daily Star after the viscera report was released, Sajid's father said, "We've said from the beginning that our son knew how to swim. He could not have drowned in that pond. Our suspicion has now been proven true.

It is the responsibility of the authorities to find those responsible. We are not suspecting anyone."

The RMO said, "Based on the autopsy and viscera findings, we can confirm that Sajid died from suffocation. It is likely that he was already dead before the body entered the water."

Healing together at Milestone

FROM PAGE 3

"The entire campus has been grieving since the July 21 plane crash. At this moment, our priority is the psychological recovery of our students and bringing them back to regular life," he said.

Shah Bulbul, public relations officer of the college, said several thousand students from class nine and upwards arrived at the campus yesterday morning and took part in a doa mahfil, seeking blessings for the deceased and injured of the crash.

They talked to each

other, to friends and teachers. Many guardians also took part in the prayers, he said.

A medical camp, run

in coordination with the Bangladesh Air Force, is also operating on the campus to provide both physical and mental health support to students.

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Sound of the July uprising

Rap songs appeared on social media like a bulldozer, speaking truth to power, as the cliché goes. These songs were powerful because of their specificity—documenting the injustices perpetrated by the state, listing the reasons why they no longer trusted the state. This appeared to be a generational shift, with younger Bangladeshis choosing a global style of music—one that was foreign to older generations—but still resonated with them because of the messages they conveyed. “Awaz Utha” and “Kotha Ko” can be seen as representative of the new-to-Bangladesh style of protest.

NAVINE MURSHID

While the July Uprising was sparked by economic problems, political repression, and a desire for democracy, it found a strong and surprising voice in a new form of music for Bangladesh: rap. Two songs, “Kotha Ko” (Speak Up) and “Awaz Utha” (Raise Your Voice), came to represent the sentiment of the movement in July. They captured the anger, frustration, hope, and defiance of a younger generation demanding change.

In earlier movements, like the one against General Ershad in 1990, traditional protest songs were key. Songs by Rabindranath Tagore (Rabindra Sangeet) and Kazi Nazrul Islam (Nazrul Geeti), which often talked about nationalism and rebellion, were widely performed. These movements utilised well-known and traditional cultural forms and were supported by established cultural groups, such as the Shammilito Shangskritik Jote and Udichi. They effectively provided the cultural justification for democracy, as people joined together in a mass uprising to end Ershad’s decade-old military rule.

The 2013 Shahbagh movement, demanding punishment for war criminals, maintained similar cultural practices. Thousands of people would be singing Rabindra Sangeet and other patriotic songs throughout the day and night, demanding justice overdue since 1971. What started as a spontaneous protest—where a single invitation to come out to Shahbagh resulted



Protesters gather at the Central Shaheed Minar on August 2, 2024.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Hannan’s “Awaz Utha” channelled raw emotion and political defiance, transforming a protest song into a rallying cry of the July Revolution. Illustration by Mahiya Tabassum. Images courtesy of Hannan’s official social media pages.



PHOTO: THE DAILY STAR

in thousands and then hundreds of thousands joining—turned into a mass movement where people held ground for days on end. It was cultural practices of singing together and painting together, whether walls or streets, that sustained enthusiasm and solidarity, day in, day out.

Soon, and predictably, the Awami League government found it useful to co-opt it, insidiously introducing divisive politics into this supposed leaderless movement, given that the war criminals predominantly came from the Jamaat-e-Islami. The slogan “Tumi ke, ami ke, Bangali, Bangali” (Who are you, who am I? Bengali, Bengali) became very popular, showing a shared national identity, but as progressives pointed out, it was exclusionary—excluding those not Bangali. Read cynically, it would also be a marker for those they would not consider to be Bangali—that is, the Islamists, whose support for the Jamaat-e-Islami could be interpreted as anti-national. Indeed, Islamists read it that way, in turn labelling the Shahbaghis—those protesting at Shahbagh—as atheists and anti-Islam. In turn, this became the justification to attack, even kill, writers and bloggers writing about the Shahbagh movement for being atheists. Clearly, the fractures that the Shahbagh movement revealed made way for violence, foretelling further identity-based violence to come.

The 2024 uprising was different

in that it started fairly innocuously. The quota reform movement relied primarily on slogans and graffiti. Soon, the demands surrounding the protests shifted from a single issue (jobs) to multiple issues, ranging from reforms to democratic rights and anti-authoritarianism. Surprising older generations, the movement was dominated by the so-called complacent and indifferent Gen Z. They spoke a different language, it appeared—new words, new phrases, almost a new lexicon that combined abbreviations from both English and Bangla appeared on the walls. They spoke of inclusivity, of social justice.

Perhaps it is unsurprising that this new vernacular needed new music. The traditional Rabindra-Nazrul repertoire was insufficient—or so it seemed. No more generalised notions of anti-authoritarianism and people’s will. Songs about ideal/utopian futures were out of vogue. Interestingly enough, artists who had been at the forefront of the cultural movements in 1990 and 2013 in favour of democracy and justice were missing this time. The belief that this was an Islamist takeover kept many of them silent, even in the face of state-sponsored killings, while others became fatalists and depressed.

Yet, the singing continued. “Muktiro Mondiro Shopano Tole Koto Pran Holo Bolidan,” for example, became a favourite chorus, for its ability to speak to the pain of watching a friend die while also hoping that the sacrifice would mean something.

Rap songs appeared on social media like a bulldozer, speaking truth to power, as the cliché goes. These songs were powerful because of their specificity—documenting the injustices perpetrated by the state, listing the reasons why they no longer trusted the state. This appeared to be a generational shift, with younger Bangladeshis choosing a global style of music—one that was foreign to older generations—but still resonated with them because of the messages they conveyed. “Awaz Utha” and “Kotha Ko” can be seen as representative of the new-to-Bangladesh style of protest. Choosing rap showed a rejection of the old ways and a desire for a more direct way of speaking out.

“Awaz Utha” took an explicitly confrontational tone. The title, “Raise Your Voice,” was a direct call to action. The lyrics include condemnation of state violence, references to specific incidents, emotive language, and explicit calls for revolution. The artist, Hannan, incorporated elements of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s historic 7th March 1971 speech, including the call to “give more blood for freedom” and the iconic slogan “Joy Bangla.” By reclaiming these symbols of the Liberation War, Hannan asserted that the spirit of 1971 and “Joy Bangla” belonged to the entire nation, not just the Awami League, as they claimed. This tied the 2024 movement to a broader narrative of Bangladeshi nationalism, challenging the ruling party’s hegemonic control over historical memory.

“Kotha Ko,” too, directly addressed the culture of silence. The title itself, “Speak Up,” is a bold challenge. Using direct criticism of the government,

colloquial language, and references to historical injustices, it calls for unity and action.

Thus emerged a new wave of protest music, complementing the traditional mould of collectively singing protest songs. Distinctively, these songs spread in a new way; they weren’t sung in unison at protests or even at protest concerts. These were produced in small studios or at home and released directly online, with social media acting as the primary conduit. This was a decentralised, digital movement, very different from the past, where chorus music dominated protest.

This shift was epitomised by a burgeoning cohort of rappers and indie artists who channelled the anger, frustration, and aspirations of the student-led movement into powerful tracks. Platforms like YouTube and Facebook became the new protest stages, allowing for instant dissemination and circumventing traditional media gatekeepers. The comment sections of these online releases transformed into virtual gathering places for supporters, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose in a movement that was both physically on the streets and vibrantly alive in the digital realm. This organic, artist-led musical outpouring underscored the grassroots and tech-savvy nature of the July Movement.

The timing was critical too. These songs were all over social media just as the government lifted the internet blackout in late July. The songs seemed to consolidate all the angst and anguish of the week of information blackout amidst escalating state repression. They seemed to prove that people wouldn’t be silenced. These were not famous artists—they became

for state patronage and a fear of rising Islamisation, led to a complex situation during the 2024 uprising.

While some individual artists may have privately sympathised with the movement’s goals, the established cultural organisations, traditionally at the forefront of protest, were largely silent or, in some cases, even implicitly supportive of the state’s narrative. This perceived complicity with the increasingly authoritarian regime alienated them from the largely youth-led, digitally-driven protest movement. This created a vacuum—a void in the cultural landscape of resistance—that was swiftly filled by new voices, like the creators of “Kotha Ko” and “Awaz Utha,” who were unburdened by ties to the existing power structure and unafraid to directly challenge the state’s authority.

The traditional artists’ fear of Islamisation, ironically, led them to support a regime that, through its actions, facilitated the conditions for a more polarised and volatile social environment, and enabled a silencing of voices. A year in, when emboldened Islamists speak of curtailing freedom, especially of women, we see the same people claiming the Awami League’s repressive regime was better, instead of fighting for women’s rights or progressive change in the present day—again participating in regressive politics through inaction.

But even as this new style of music emerged during the Uprising, a year in, we realise it might have been a momentary surge to meet the political urgency of the day. Other old habits, too, have continued. Protest slogans, for example, continue calls to “burn it down” (“agun jalo”). In a political climate where parties use fire as a weapon to mobilise support through fear—by burning down

The Convenient Narrative of a “Rightist” Uprising

In the wake of the July Uprising, a narrative has emerged that seeks to portray the movement as a right-wing or Islamist conspiracy. This narrative has been promoted by both the remnants of the Awami League and by the right-wing groups themselves, as it serves their respective interests.

For the Awami League, this narrative is a way to delegitimise the protest movement and discredit its opponents. By framing the uprising as a “rightist” plot, the party can avoid acknowledging the genuine grievances that fuelled the protests, such as economic inequality, political repression, and the lack of democratic freedoms. It also allows the party to portray itself as a bulwark against religious extremism—a tactic it has used in the past to rally support both at home and abroad.

For the right-wing groups, the narrative of a “rightist” uprising is a way to exaggerate their own strength and influence. By taking credit for the downfall of the Hasina government, they can position themselves as the true voice of the opposition and attract new followers. This narrative also helps to obscure the fact that the uprising was a broad-based movement that brought together people from a wide range of political and ideological backgrounds.

The reality, of course, is that the July Uprising was a complex and multifaceted event that cannot be reduced to a simple narrative of left versus right or secularism versus Islamism. It was a spontaneous and largely leaderless movement that was driven by the anger and frustration of a generation that had been denied a voice for too long. The rap songs that became the anthems of the uprising are a testament to the power of culture to articulate the aspirations of a people and to challenge the structures of power.

Yet, we also know from history that such movements are susceptible to co-option. Just as the AL had co-opted the Shahbagh Movement, a whole slew of rightist political actors is now out to co-opt the July Uprising.

The future of Bangladesh remains uncertain. The country is at a crossroads, facing a host of challenges, including political instability, economic uncertainty, and rising religious and political polarisation. The July Uprising has opened up a space for new political possibilities, but it has also unleashed forces that could lead the country down a dangerous path. The challenge for the people of Bangladesh is to build a more inclusive and democratic society in which the voices of all citizens can be heard. The hundreds of thousands of people who took to the streets to protest state-sponsored killings—and the rappers of the July Uprising—have shown the way, demonstrating that even in the darkest of times, the human spirit can find a way to “speak up” and “raise its voice.”

Dr Navine Murshid is a professor of political science and the author of *India’s Bangladesh Problem: The Marginalisation of Bengali Muslims in Neoliberal Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2023) and *The Politics of Refugees in South Asia* (Routledge, 2013).



With his fiery track “Kotha Ko”, rapper Shezan helped ignite a wave of resistance among the youth, emerging as one of the most vital cultural voices of the July Revolution.

ILLUSTRATION BY DOWEL BISWAS

well-known because their songs captured the mood of the uprising and the times. They voiced the anger and hopes of a movement that was quickly changing from a complaint about job quotas to a demand for the government to step down. This shift was further accentuated by a notable realignment within the cultural sphere. Many traditional artists and singers, long associated with secular and progressive movements, had, over time, become increasingly aligned with the Awami League government. This alignment, often driven by a perceived need

buses, for example—“agun jalo” becomes not only about lighting the fire in our hearts but also takes on a very literal meaning. In the wake of the July Uprising, the fact that homes were being burnt down—in fact, entire rows of homes—meant that slogans such as “agun jalo” are not only symbolic but literal.

Similarly, the continued demands for the death penalty (“jashi chai”) show that anger and a desire for revenge are still part of Bangladeshi politics, with reforms still at the stage of rhetoric, despite the language of a “new” Bangladesh.



Pacer Mohammed Siraj was distraught while the India fans had their hands on their heads moments after the pacer caught England batter Harry Brook at fine leg off Prasidh Krishna, only to step onto the ropes to make it a six. Brook, getting a reprieve on 19, went on to make a 98-ball 111, finally departing at the cusp of tea with Siraj taking the catch. Just 73 runs away from the target, with a well-set Joe Root in the middle, a victory seemed like a matter of time for the hosts. However, India fought back in the final session, with Prasidh removing Jacob Bethell (five) and Root (105) before poor light ended the day early, setting up a thrilling fifth day, with England, on 339-6, needing 35 runs and India four wickets to win the Oval Test.

Butler gets his players 'moving' in Vientiane

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh coach Peter Butler got his 'players moving' through the first practice session in Vientiane on Sunday morning, a day after reaching the Laos capital for the upcoming AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers.

Bangladesh, pitted in Group H, will take on hosts Laos on Wednesday before playing against Timor Leste on Friday and wrapping up the campaign against favourites South Korea two days later.

After journeying on the previous day, Butler took his charges to training early in the morning -- his usual modus operandi -- in an effort to get them 'out of their comfort zone'.

"I always think it's important to get your first session under your belt, get the players moving. Get them out of bed and shake them out of the comfort zone and most importantly, get into work mindset and work ethic," the Englishman said in a video message shared by the Bangladesh Football Federation.

With two days left for the opening match, Butler, guided the team to SAFF U-20 Women's Championship title two weeks ago, will have another session with the ball on Monday before focusing on Laos the day before the match.

"There are one or two little injuries, one with fever. Other than that they trained well this morning. The girls know how I work. They always respond extremely well," Butler added.

The top teams from the eight groups along with three second-best finishers will join hosts Thailand in the final round, which will be held in April next year.



FIH JUNIOR WORLD CUP Aikman wants to give opponents a hard time

SPORTS REPORTER

Dutch coach Siegfried Aikman has not set any specific targets for Bangladesh in the upcoming FIH Hockey Junior World Cup, but he is determined to make their pool stage opponents -- France, Australia, and South Korea -- work hard for their wins.

Aikman arrived in Dhaka on Thursday and signed a contract with the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) the next day. The agreement, effective from September 1 until the end of the Junior World Cup, marks a significant step for the Bangladesh U-21 side. The tournament will be held in India from November 28 to December 10.

Aikman, who previously guided Japan to gold in the 2018 Asian Games and has also coached Pakistan and Oman, expressed his enthusiasm about working with the young Bangladeshi squad.

"This is a good opportunity to work with Bangladeshi youth. I was asked many times before to come and contribute, but it didn't happen until now. This time, the federation is committed to developing the youth," Aikman said during his introductory press conference at the BHF headquarters on Sunday.

The 66-year-old coach praised the natural talent within the



Bangladesh ranks but pointed out the need for better preparation.

"Bangladesh have always had very skilful and talented players, but they haven't been well prepared to compete against top-tier teams. Now the challenge is to take them to the next level."

Although Bangladesh are making their debut at the Junior World Cup, Aikman emphasised on a realistic approach in a tough group.

"We must be honest about where Bangladesh currently stand. Australia are a hockey superpower. France reached the semifinals of the last World Cup, and their youth team did the same in Europe. South Korea are one of the strongest sides in Asia. So, our goal is to give them a tough time. If we can surprise one of them on a day they underestimate us, that would be fantastic. Now, it is

up to us to improve for the dream."

Aikman highlighted the importance of building stamina and introducing a fast-paced, two-touch playing style to cope with high-pressure games against possession-dominant teams.

"These players are highly motivated. Playing in a World Cup is a dream, and they are eager to change and improve. Change isn't easy, but if they are willing -- and they are -- then we can achieve something special."

Meanwhile, BHF general secretary Lt Col (retd) Riazul Hassan stated that one-third of the estimated Tk 5 crore budget for the Junior World Cup campaign has already been secured. As part of their preparation, the team will travel to Pakistan and Germany to play 10 matches ahead of the tournament.

'Went into games knowing we would struggle'

AGENCIES

Manchester United coach Ruben Amorim opened up about the anxiety he experienced last season, admitting he would often travel to matches fearing the worst for his team.

Speaking to reporters at the Chicago Fire's training ground during United's pre-season tour of the United States, Amorim reflected candidly on what was the club's worst campaign since their relegation in 1973-74. United finished 15th in the Premier League -- their lowest since 1989-90 -- and ended the season with a crushing Europa League final loss to Tottenham in Bilbao.

Amorim, who replaced Erik ten Hag in November 2024, managed only seven wins from 27 league matches. During a particularly difficult stretch, United lost four consecutive matches and won just three out of 11.

"It's not how I returned to my house after the games, it was how I left to go to the games, because I felt that sometimes we will struggle," Amorim said.

"All the struggles we had in games, I felt it before. That was the hardest part. To go to the games and know that we are not going to be competitive, I was really frustrated."

"All the credit I had when I arrived was used last year. Now we have to perform. If I have the feeling before the game we are going to be competitive, then we'll be OK. I just don't want



to return to that feeling."

Amorim, however, says his perspective has since shifted.

"I have a less romantic view of the job now," he added, acknowledging his evolving mindset. "But I see things that make me believe better days are ahead."

He was repeatedly questioned for refusing to compromise his tactical philosophy, even amid poor results.

"Sometimes, when you are losing, you might think let's change the standards a little bit for them [the players] to be with me," he said.

"I didn't and they saw it. Now they understand when I say something, I will do it."

"I don't treat players as babies. If you don't train the right way, I have footage to show you. And I show you in front of everybody."

To instill discipline and uphold team values, Amorim has appointed a six-man leadership group: Bruno Fernandes, Harry Maguire, Tom Heaton, Diogo Dalot, Lisandro Martinez, and Noussair Mazraoui. Their role is to ensure standards are met in the dressing room and to handle minor issues.

United will return to training at Carrington on Wednesday, with four players -- Alejandro Garnacho, Jadon Sancho, Antony, and Tyrrell Malacia -- continuing to train separately. "The market is open. I'm just working with the players that I think are going to stay."



Brazilian players jubilantly lift the trophy, celebrating their ninth Women's Copa America title after a thrilling 5-4 shootout win over Colombia in Quito on Sunday, with Marta's stoppage-time heroics setting up the dramatic victory as they prepare to host the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup.

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
West Indies vs
Pakistan
3rd T20I
Live from 6:00
am

SONY
SPORTS 1
England vs India
Fifth Test, Day 5
Live from 4:00
pm

Faulty domestic yardstick fueling batting inconsistency

SPORTS REPORTER

While listing off issues plaguing Bangladesh batters in international cricket across formats, inconsistency has to be placed somewhere around the top.

Right from Bangladesh's nascent days in international cricket, one good innings would all but guarantee a batter's place in the side for a few games, a tendency that is still prevalent, and because of that, players never really needed to strive for consistency.

According to Bangladesh Tigers programme coach Sohel Islam, scoring runs consistently is a "habit" which needs to be drilled into the players at the domestic level, but that is hardly done in Bangladesh as players often receive a lot of hype for achieving very little.

"I feel that culture is very important regarding how we rate players. If you look at India where domestic cricket is very competitive, a hundred or two is not a big deal there. Here, one big score satisfies the players, coaches and the media," Sohel told the media yesterday.

"Scoring big runs back-to-back is a matter of habit. It can't be that you score two hundreds in



a match but then in the next innings you don't score," he added.

In June, Najmul Hossain Shanto struck back-to-back tons in Galle during the first Test against Sri Lanka but produced scores of eight and 19 in the second, which highlights the inconsistency of established batters.

Sohel feels that batters need to develop the hunger to keep scoring big runs.

"We have talked to Shanto and that he should have scored more runs in the next Test after back-to-back hundreds... We are trying to get out of this situation and trying to change their mindset. The runs you scored yesterday is in the past, the determination you have on the first day and the commitment that you scored the runs with has to be continued.

"We are not trying to measure players by just numbers. What impact and what scenario he is performing in should also be important," he added.

Often, batters with high averages in domestic cricket have not performed well in international cricket or in 'A' team fixtures -- case in point Anamul Haque Bijoy, who struck 700 runs at an average of over 50 in the last National Cricket League (NCL).

Last NCL, Khaled Ahmed was the only top pacer to have played five matches in the first-class competition which meant batters did not face steep challenges across a whole innings against most oppositions.

Sohel pointed out this particular facet and said, "If the opposition has two quality bowlers, you know that if you can survive them you can bring things under your control. In countries with quality domestic cricket, you will find that four of the five bowlers are good and they threaten for a long period."

PHOTO: AFP

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RECRUITMENT AT RU Ex-Jamaat MP's referral surfaces on pro-VC's Facebook story

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RU

Criticism has surfaced over claims that a former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker recommended a candidate in the teacher recruitment process at Rajshahi University (RU).

The controversy unfolded after the admit card of Azmira Afrin, an applicant for the post of lecturer in the crop science and technology department, was posted to the Facebook story of RU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Farid Uddin Khan around 12:30am yesterday.

Afrin is scheduled to sit for the viva voce today.

The admit card carried a handwritten recommendation from Md Latifur Rahman, a former Chapainawabganj-3 MP and nominated candidate of Jamaat-e-Islami.

He is also a life member of the RU Alumni Association.

Although the story was deleted shortly after being uploaded, screenshots of the admit card quickly spread on social media, drawing criticism and raising concerns over political influence and transparency.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Students who returned to Milestone School and College yesterday identify their peers on the photo montage of those who lost their lives when a fighter jet crashed into one of their school buildings just 12 days ago. The institution reopened on a limited scale to provide emotional support and a space for students to process the loss of their classmates.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Baby born from embryo frozen over 30 years ago

CNN ONLINE

A baby boy born last week to an Ohio couple developed from an embryo that had been frozen for more than 30 years in what is believed to be a record length of storage time before a birth.

In what's known as embryo adoption, Lindsey and Tim Pierce used a handful of embryos donated in 1994 in their pursuit of having a child after fighting infertility for years. Their son was born Saturday from an embryo that had been in storage for 11,148 days, which the Pierces' doctor says sets a record.

It's a concept that has been around since the 1990s but is gaining attraction as some fertility clinics and advocates, often Christian-centered, oppose discarding leftover embryos because of their belief that life begins at or around conception and that all embryos deserve to be treated like children who need a home.

"I felt all along that these three little hopes, these little embryos, deserved to live just like my daughter did," said Linda Archerd, 62, who donated her embryos to the Pierces.

Just about 2 percent of births in the US are the result of in vitro fertilisation, and an even smaller fraction involve donated embryos.

However, medical experts estimate about 1.5 million frozen embryos are currently being stored throughout the country, with many of those in limbo as parents wrestle with what to do with their leftover embryos created in IVF labs.

Trump tariff rates unlikely to change Says US trade adviser

AFP, Washington

New US tariff rates are "pretty much set" with little immediate room for negotiation, Donald Trump's trade adviser said in remarks aired yesterday.

Trump, who has wielded tariffs as a tool of American economic might, has set tariff rates for dozens of economies, including the European Union, at between 10 and 41 percent come August 7, his new hard deadline for the duties.

In a pre-taped interview broadcast on CBS's "Face the Nation," US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said "the coming days" are not likely to see changes in the tariff rates.

"A lot of these are set rates pursuant to deals. Some of these deals are announced, some are not, others depend on the level of the trade deficit or surplus we may have with the country," Greer said.

"These tariff rates are pretty much set."

Undoubtedly, some trade ministers "want to talk more and see how they can work in a different way with the United States," he added.

But "we're seeing truly the contours of the president's tariff plan right now with these rates."

Last Thursday, the former real estate developer announced hiked tariff rates on dozens of US trade partners.

They will kick in on August 7 instead of August 1, which had previously been touted as a hard deadline.

Among the countries facing steep new levies is Brazil. South America's largest

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Election Commission a 'spineless' institution Says NCP's Nasiruddin Patwari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwari yesterday said the Election Commission is a "spineless" institution.

Speaking to reporters at the EC headquarters in the afternoon, Patwari said his party is giving the commission a chance to make corrections.

Around noon, a four-member NCP delegation met Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin, after which Patwari told reporters, "In the situation we are headed towards, if anyone, apart from [those of] a particular party, tries to get votes in a democratic process, they

US retailers lean on suppliers to absorb tariffs

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

American clothing brands and retailers are pressuring their Bangladeshi suppliers to absorb a portion of new tariffs levied by the Trump administration, squeezing the already thin margins of garment exporters.

The new tariffs, effective from August 7, come on top of existing duties, creating a complex and costly environment for exporters and importers. For many common apparel items, the effective tariff rate will now surge to 36.5 percent, combining the new 20 percent levy with an existing 16.5 percent duty.

President Donald Trump's tariff regime, officially the responsibility of the American importing companies, has triggered a fierce, behind-the-scenes struggle over who will ultimately bear the financial burden.

Rather than absorbing the cost or immediately passing it on to consumers, many US apparel retailers and brands have turned to their suppliers in Bangladesh, demanding they share the pain. This pressure campaign, unfolding in private negotiations, has placed Bangladeshi exporters in a tight spot.

The requests from US buyers are not subtle. Across the industry, Bangladeshi garment manufacturers are systematically asked to

absorb a portion of the new tariff costs by reducing their prices, according to several leading exporters. Some retailers asked for adjustments equivalent to a quarter of the new cost.

This move mirrors the strategy employed by buyers when a preliminary 10 percent baseline tariff was introduced on April 9. That levy, now replaced by the new 20 percent rate, also saw retailers successfully push suppliers to share the cost.

"We have little to say and many of us have been accepting the buyers' demand, although the profit is squeezed to 3 to 4 percent. We are against the wall," said AK Azad, chairman of Ha-Meem Group, a major apparel supplier to the US. He said some buyers are demanding both a share of the tariff cost and a general price reduction.

The situation places exporters in a precarious position, forcing them to erode their profitability and risking long-term business relationships.

"My buyers are requesting me to bear up to 5 percentage points of the additional tariff," said Sharif Zahir, managing director of Ananta Group. "I also responded to the buyers' call as we have long term business relations."

The impact varies by product. For woven shirts, the existing tariff was 19.5 percent. The

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Staffers at Janakantha call owners 'unwanted'
Sue them, form board for running paper; editor alleges takeover plot

STAR REPORT

A group of journalists and staffers at the Dainik Janakantha declared the editor and owners "unwanted" at the daily and formed a six-member editorial board on Saturday night.

The journalists and staffers, who were appointed at various times after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 last year, also filed a case with Hatirjheel Police Station in Dhaka against the owners on charges of wrongful termination. They also branded the owners as "allies of fascists".

The case was filed hours after the newspaper owners fired eight employees.

DMP's Tejgaon Division Deputy Commissioner Md Ibne Mizan confirmed the filing of the case.

M e a n w h i l e , Janakantha's Editor and Publisher Shamima A Khan alleged that a "mob" forcibly occupied the Janakantha Bhaban in the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

WE MOURN



With deep sorrow, Partex Star Group mourns the passing of **Mr. Azim Uddin Ahmed**, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees, North South University and a lifelong contributor to the Nation's education and business sectors. His visionary leadership and lasting legacy will always be remembered with great respect.

PARTEX STAR
GROUP

Our Deepest Condolences



We mourn the demise of the Founder Vice-Chancellor of Southeast University, Professor Dr. M. Shamsher Ali (Inna illahi wa inna ilaihi raijin). His life was full of extraordinary achievements, dedicated to the advancement of science, education, and human understanding.

Dr. Ali was a respected scholar who made significant contributions to the field of nuclear physics, with a large body of published research in international journals. His academic career was marked by distinction, including being awarded the Hari Prasanna Roy Gold Medal and the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences Gold Medal. As Founder Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Open University and Southeast University, He played a pivotal role in shaping the

institutions and the higher education landscape of Bangladesh. He was a passionate advocate for the popularization of science, a theme he explored through numerous talks on radio and television, and through his writings on the synthesis of science and culture. His commitment to understanding the relationship between science and religion and his work on interfaith harmony demonstrated his deep concern for global peace and harmony.

His legacy continues through the countless students, faculty, and alumni whose lives were touched by his vision and commitment to excellence in education. The Southeast University community, including members of the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, students, and alumni, extends its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prays for the 'Magfirah' of departed soul. His contributions to the university will be remembered, and his legacy will live on long after his passing.

SOUTHEAST UNIVERSITY
Meeting the Challenges of Time

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1