



Says Ukraine's Zelensky

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Hasina's final days BEFORE THE FALL

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and ZYMA ISLAM

A desire to cling to power, intolerance for dissent and failure to see the writing on the wall were what eventually undid Sheikh Hasina's iron-fisted rule of 15 years.

The walls came crashing down when Hasina's brutal tactics led to a bloodbath and the intelligence agencies suppressed information to feed her only what she wanted to hear. By the time she realised it, things had already spiralled out of control.

Neither the large-scale killings, nor the relentless propaganda, nor the repressive machinery could

transpired between Hasina and her close aides inside the Gono Bhaban during her last days in power.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

August 5, 2024. The final day unfolded with intense drama.

Around 9:00am, Hasina came down to the ground floor of the Gono Bhaban, prepared to head to the Bangabhaban to request a declaration of a state of emergency, according to sources present with her.

Around the same time, the Special Security Force sought clearance from the police via wireless communication, stating: "Victor-2 will go to the Bangabhaban to meet with

Hasina that the situation was under control and a declaration of emergency was unnecessary. Following their assurance, Hasina returned to the first floor of the Gono Bhaban, according to the sources.

Meanwhile, preparations were underway at the Gono Bhaban for Hasina's scheduled address to the nation. A script was supposed to be drafted but she later decided to speak extempore. A BTV recording unit had been summoned. The camera unit remained on standby at the premises.

According to the sources, some of Hasina's key personal staff were denied entry to the Gono Bhaban. They were asked to wait in the



On this day last year, just minutes after Sheikh Hasina fled the country, a jubilant tide of people defied the curfew and swarmed the Gono Bhaban -- the official residence of the prime minister. Some climbed to the rooftop and hung the national flag as a symbol of victory.

FILE PHOTO: AFP



THE 36TH DAY OF JULY

AUGUST 5, 2024

The day the people triumphed

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

August 5 became a watershed in Bangladesh's history -- the climactic peak of the July uprising.

After weeks of bloodshed, defiance, and unyielding protest, the people's movement surged past its tipping point, toppling the 15-year-long authoritarian rule of Sheikh Hasina. What began as a student-led protest over civil service quotas had, within a month, transformed into a nationwide revolution for

dignity, justice, and democracy.

That morning, defying curfew and amid a steady drizzle, hundreds of thousands of people began marching towards Dhaka. Their chants echoed through alleyways and highways as waves of protesters poured into the capital from every direction.

Streets that had seen teargas shells, bullets, and grief in the preceding weeks now pulsed with hope and resistance. Despite brutal crackdowns, the spirit of the masses remained unbroken.

Around noon, unconfirmed reports spread like wildfire: prime minister Sheikh Hasina had resigned and fled the country. Then came the official confirmation. Army chief General Waker Uz Zaman addressed the nation and declared

that an interim government would soon be formed. In his televised address, the army chief urged all, including students, to refrain from violence and cooperate with the armed forces. He assured that all demands would be met and that justice would be ensured. "Together," he said, "we will move towards a beautiful future."

Hasina, along with her younger sister Sheikh Rehana, had departed on a military helicopter to Agartala, India, later flown to the Hindon Air Force Base near New Delhi. Indian media

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prevent Hasina's downfall -- one that jeopardised the future of her decades-old political party and left hundreds of thousands of activists in uncertainty.

Hasina fled to India exactly a year ago this day as her fabled fortress of popularity was washed away by a deluge of angry protesters in Dhaka.

The Daily Star talked to seven key Awami League leaders and senior police officials who were delegated with crucial responsibilities during the tumultuous days of July-August of 2024. Taken together with the information from the UN fact-finding report on the uprising, these personal accounts provide a vivid description of what

Victor-1." According to the police code, Victor-1 and Victor-2 refer to the president and the prime minister, respectively.

The police responded promptly, clearing Hasina's movement immediately. Under normal circumstances, a VIP movement typically occurs within 10 minutes of receiving police clearance. However, even after 40 minutes, no such movement took place in this case.

Then a message was relayed to the police's wireless system, saying "Victor-2 will not move now. We will inform you if there is any movement later on."

During those 40 minutes, senior officers of the security forces stationed on the ground floor of the Gono Bhaban assured

"call-on" room located beside the main congregation hall of the Gono Bhaban.

Meanwhile, in Uttara, a huge segment of the "March to Dhaka" entered the city without any obstacle by late morning. News of this breach spread rapidly, prompting a surge of protesters on the streets.

To counter the Dhaka March scheduled for August 5, leaders and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations had been deployed across the capital beginning the night of August 4. However, when the processions managed to enter Dhaka on the 5th, most of the deployed activists retreated.

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NOTICE
The office of The Daily Star is closed today on account of the public holiday for July Mass Uprising Day. However, the regular issue will come out tomorrow under special arrangements.

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Sheikh Hasina ordered not to treat or release July victims

Prosecution witness tells ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The treatment of survivors of police brutality was halted at NITOR following the order from then prime minister Sheikh Hasina, a prosecution witness told the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday.

Survivor Abdullah Al Emran, who was undergoing treatment at the hospital during her visit there, said that after talking to him and several others injured, Hasina went to the help desk and instructed "no release, no treatment".

Emran is the second witness, after Khokon Chandro Barmon, to testify before the court in the case filed over police atrocities during the July uprising against Hasina, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal,

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Preparations were underway at the Manik Mia avenue yesterday afternoon, as the interim government is set to unveil the July Declaration today at 5:00pm.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Authoritarian system yet to be taken apart

Says TIB report; new parties on self-destructive path

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Systemic maladies in politics, governance, and society persist even a year after the uprising, and these cannot help dismantle the authoritarian system, says Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB).

"We have overthrown an authoritarian regime, but unless we put an end to the authoritarian practices, we cannot really create a new Bangladesh," said TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman at the launch of a report at the TIB Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

TIB researchers Shahzada M Akram and Mohammad Juklarnayeen presented the report, titled "One Year After the Fall of Authoritarian Regime: Expectation and Achievement", which was prepared based on events from August last year to July this year.

According to the report, while the interim government made some important progress on reforms, the challenges that remain are enormous.

"There are troubling signs of corruption, conflicts of interest, and attempts to undermine the Anti-Corruption Commission," said Iftekharuzzaman.

The report states that 121 people were killed and 5,189 injured in 471 incidents of political violence across Bangladesh between August last year and June this year.

The BNP was involved in 92 percent of the incidents. The Awami League followed at 22 percent, while Jamaat-

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