



Anatomy of BGB shootings in Rampura

FROM PAGE 1

He said a BGB Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) stopped near the entrance of G Block after protesters created a barricade with tree logs and other items on the main road. By then, most protesters had abandoned the main road and retreated into the residential blocks of Banasree.

At one point, while other BGB personnel were clearing the road, two soldiers, one visibly armed, entered Banasree, Alam added. Footage we verified also confirmed his account.

"I saw a man fall right beside a shop in G Block," he said.

He, along with Ashiquel and about 15 others, ran for cover down Road 1 of G Block.

"The gates of all the buildings were closed, but an aunty from a nearby house opened their residence for us. We were all rushing towards the garage of that building. Ashiquel was just behind me. I entered, and then I saw Ashiquel... I don't know what got hold of him; probably he wanted to have another look at where the BGB personnel were.

"He ran a few steps back, took a glance towards where the two officers were, and then tried to return to the building. As far as I can remember, I heard one shot, and I looked back and saw Ashiquel falling with blood pouring from his head, face, and mouth," Alam said.

This newspaper also spoke with Mahbuba Kayes Lucky, the woman Shah Alam referred to, who shared a similar account.

With Lt Col Redwan positioned on the main road to Ashiquel's left, a distance of just 84 metres, and Ashiquel turning to glance back before trying to re-enter the building, the boy was caught in a fatal perpendicular line of fire. The bullet striking him below his left ear suggests he was moving laterally at the exact moment the shot was fired.

The death certificate issued by Banasree's Advanced Hospital shows he died from a "gunshot wound".

Recalling the last time she saw her son, Ashiquel's mother, Alisha Afroz, said Ashiquel joined the protests after 3:00pm that day. She was worried that he was not coming home, but she could not step outside to find him as the sounds of gunfire kept rocking the Banasree area till about 9:30pm.

"After 10:00pm, a protester came to our house and showed me footage of a body lying unclaimed at the hospital. I immediately recognised it was my Ashiquel. I raised him with tears, sweat and blood as a single mother. My world revolved around him. Seeing his body, I fainted."

She collected the body from the hospital around 11:00pm, hired an ambulance, and set out for Dinaipur, their ancestral home, to bury her son.

TURNING POINT IN KILLING SPREE

Ashiquel's death was the brutal climax of a day that saw the Rampura-Banasree area of Dhaka being turned into a killing zone.

From July 16 till August 5, the BGB deployed nearly 4,000 members to 58 locations across the country, according to the UN fact-finding report published in February 2025.

An investigation by The Daily Star found that on the evening of July 18, ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina

Identifying a potential shooter: METHODOLOGY

Multiple eyewitnesses in Rampura said they saw BGB personnel wearing vests, particularly a small-statured officer, shooting at unarmed protesters. To verify the direction of movement, and the role of BGB personnel that fired shots towards Ashiquel were achieved through a multi-step forensic analysis of 15 different videos and images during a joint investigation by The Daily Star and Tech Global Institute (TGI), a technology nonprofit whose forensics investigation arm has been documenting digital evidence related to the Monsoon Revolution.

While TGI's forensic analysis confirmed a match by comparing the Banasree and Rampura footage, indicative that the same individual was likely present in both locations on that day, The Daily Star independently verified his name and identity by speaking with sources in intelligence agencies, the International Crimes Tribunal, and journalists who were present on the ground.

The forensic analysis was based on two primary methods: chronolocation and pattern configuration. The premise of the latter is based on identifying similar or the same patch configurations on uniforms at a given time, allowing us to distinguish an individual's uniform from others.

Using multiple images of BGB officers from the day and location, TGI's forensics investigators identified a unique combination of patches and shapes on specific areas of their uniform: the upper chest, chest, right wrist, and right and left thighs.

This distinct pattern was then compared to footage of soldiers filmed shooting in Banasree, where Ashiquel was killed on the same day and time. The analysis of the uniform's camouflage pattern confirmed an exact match with the patch configuration for one individual's uniform. We consistently found the same patch configuration on one uniformed BGB officer of small stature, who appeared in multiple footage recorded on the same day in Rampura-Banasree, indicating they are likely the same individual.

To confirm the distinctiveness of the camouflage patches, it was compared against the camouflage patterns on uniforms of other BGB soldiers at the scene on the same day. None of the other uniforms shared this specific combination of patches.

gave a "shoot-on-sight" order that the UN report confirms was part of a broader government directive to use lethal force. From the following day, BGB, Rab, and police acted on these orders, carrying out extrajudicial killings in different parts of the

This analysis was further supported by observing that the small-statured BGB officer was consistently accompanied by an accomplice wearing a red helmet, and hand gloves in multiple footage from Rampura and Banasree on that day.

To further corroborate, this investigation used facial reconstruction and matching techniques to assess whether the distinct facial features for the suspect could be matched throughout different footage using open-source tools.

We used three different facial recognition and matching models that generate high-dimensional embeddings of unique facial features. All three models produced positive matches for the suspect.

To reduce risks of false positives, the analyses were replicated with facial features of other BGB soldiers present at the scene. It consistently returned a negative match for all other personnel.

While facial reconstruction, recognition and matching shows



Lt Col Redwanul Islam

promise, the method has several limitations, including the quality of images or footage available, restricted negative testing, and environmental factors. To address ethical and privacy considerations, the analysis only used publicly available materials used for journalistic or public awareness purposes, and strictly limited data collection, processing and retention throughout the process.

The Daily Star shared clear footage of the small statured officer with three high-level sources who confirmed the person in question is Lt Col Redwan. One photojournalist present at the scene on July 19 said he also saw the name plaque, which read: Redwan.

country, the UN report said.

In Rampura, our reporters witnessed the BTV building being vandalised around 1:00pm on July 18. The first BGB unit arrived at the scene around 4:30pm, but they were significantly outnumbered by

thousands of protesters.

Video footage from this period shows protesters chanting slogans while standing on top of a BGB armored carrier. At one point, the BGB unit had to fall back.

As evening fell, things took a fatal turn.

Around 7:30pm, our reporters saw a second, heavily armed BGB unit arriving at Rampura via Hatirjheel. First, they seized control of the Rampura bridge area by firing blank shots to disperse the crowds. Then, around 8:00pm, they advanced on the BTV building, clearing the area with live ammunition. By 9:00pm, the BGB had secured the Rampura TV centre area.

This sequence of events matches with information from two high-level official sources who are investigating the Rampura killings. The first unit was the BGB's 5th Battalion, they said.

The second unit, called in as reinforcement, was the 26th Battalion, commanded by Lt Col Redwanul Islam, sources in the International Crimes Tribunal said.

The Daily Star also spotted an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) from the 62nd (Narayanganj) Battalion at Aftabnagar Gate at 5:00pm on July 19, suggesting that the government ordered a large-scale BGB deployment in the area.

The UN fact-finding team found that after the attack on BTV station, the BGB was used as a "strike force" to reinforce orders to use lethal force. The instruction was issued by both the Prime Minister's Office and home ministry on the evening of July 18 and again on July 19, leading to a near-tripling of reported deaths.

The UN report gives an overview of the violence in this area, classifying "Rampura and Badda (19 July)" as a specific case of indiscriminate shooting. The UN found that BGB and police shot lethal ammunition directly into crowds.

One witness recalled how security forces "cornered" protesters from three sides and fired simultaneously.

"Bullets were dropping down on us like rain," the UN report quotes him.

The UN report also documents how hospitals in the area were overwhelmed, with one receiving over 600 injured patients and 20 dead bodies that day.

The Daily Star saw 13 bodies in three hospitals of Rampura-Banasree in one hour from around 4:00-5:00pm that day.

Separately, a TGI & ITJP investigation documented at least 23 killings in Rampura-Banasree area on July 19, according to a report published in January 2025.

In a report sent to the UN, BGB claimed they only fired warning shots and caused no casualties.

However, this directly contradicts evidence and reports from other government intelligence agencies such as the NSI. The NSI report sent to the UN mentions three killings by the BGB on July 19 in and around Rampura-Banasree.

MORNING SHOWED THE DAY

The day's bloodshed began early. Verified footage shows Ramzan, a 24-year-old in an orange T-shirt, standing among protesters at the entrance of Rampura Wapda Road around 9:46am on July 19.

Just about 2:38 minutes later, Ramzan collapses, as a single bullet pierces his neck. He was shot from the front, where a contingent of 27 BGB personnel was positioned. At least 11 of them were carrying assault rifles, our forensic analysis finds.

In contrast, 35 police personnel were nearby, but only six carried weapons, mostly non-lethal (shotguns and gas guns). Twenty-one police officers carried only shields and sticks.

The shooter is not visible, but the distance and wound are consistent

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journalist of The Daily Star who was on the ground tracking the BGB's movements and the unfolding bloodshed on July 19 in the area also took his photos and videos.

The eyewitness account of our journalist and the photographs provide a direct trail of evidence.

He said a BGB unit, armed with Type-56 SMGs, was advancing from the BTV Centre towards the Abul Hotel area around 4:50pm.

They were accompanied by police, who were mostly equipped with less-lethal shotguns and tear gas canisters.

WEAPON DISTRIBUTION RAMPURA, JULY 19, 2024		
Weapon Category	BGB	Police
Lethal (primary) (Type 56 Assault Rifles)	91	5
Lethal (sidearm) (pistols)	0	3
Less-lethal (impact) (shotguns, tear-shell guns)	0	35
Less-lethal (defensive) (shields & sticks)	15	105

Note 1:
7.62MM TYPE 56 SMG AND 7.62MM CHINESE RIFLE:
The Type 56 is a Chinese-manufactured assault rifle based on the design of the Soviet AK-47. It is the standard issue service rifle of the Border Guard Bangladesh and is widely used in military contexts across the world. The weapon fires 7.62x39mm cartridges, which are high-velocity military rounds. The effective combat range of the Type 56 is between 300 and 400 meters.

Note 2:
Counts are based on documented instances in the provided visual evidence and represent the number of times personnel were visibly identified with specific equipment, not a total census of all officers present.

with a shot from a high-velocity rifle.

According to an eyewitness, who watched the events unfold from a window nearby, protesters began congregating on the streets from 6:00am. An initial police advance around 7:00am led to a cat-and-mouse dynamic.

"When the police came up the main road, the protesters went inside the lane to hide," he said. "Then the police went away... the protesters came back into the street."

This pattern repeated until a joint BGB and police force advanced from the Rampura Bridge road.

He described how the police advanced as far as the Al Kadiya restaurant and then began to pull back. "When they started going back, people came out from the alleyways. They thought the police had gone," he recalled.

"At that point, there was a gunshot by the BGB. The boy just fell," he added.

WHO KILLED ISMAIL?

An image of rickshaw puller, Md Ismail, lying in a pool of blood in front of Delta Hospital in Banasree, went viral after the July protest. A

The journalist, who was positioned just behind the BGB contingent, said that the unit was "firing live rounds while advancing."

In multiple footage, we see a BGB officer leading the pack. He was holding an assault rifle. It was about 47 metres from Delta Hospital.

Our journalist, while slowly moving behind the BGB-police contingent, suddenly turned right and saw the blood-soaked body of Ismail. Before that, he took a photograph of the BGB officer in question in a firing position a little past Delta Hospital. The photo was taken from behind, so the officer's face was not visible.

Md Nazim Uddin, a security guard of the hospital who witnessed the killing, said Ismail was shot in the back of the head as he tried to flee from bullets coming from the direction of Rampura TV centre around 5:00pm.

This matches the description of our journalist. Photographs he took from the scene document a catastrophic exit wound that shattered the back of his skull, leaving brain matter visible in the pool of blood on the pavement.