

## Shamsul Hoque Mojumder's death anniversary

CITY DESK

The 17th death anniversary of Shamsul Hoque Mojumder, a retired engineer of PWD and social worker, was observed yesterday, said a press release.

On this occasion, a doa and milad mahfils were held after the Juma prayers at Amjad Mojumder Bari Jame Masjid, Hosne Ara Bulbul Hifzul Quran, Wadarul Orphanage Mosque, Al-Haj Shamsul Haque Mojumder Jame Masjid, Purba Devpur Patuabari Jame Masjid, Adddar Bari Jame Masjid and Ferdous Nagar Jame Masjid in Amjadhat union of Fulgazi upazila, Feni.

The friends, relatives and well-wishers of Shamsul Hoque Mojumder, father of Zakir Hossain Mojumder, BJMC retired engineer, and Ferdous Alam Mojumder, chairman and managing director of Frontline Communications Limited, are requested to attend the programmes to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

## KCC halts dog

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Animal welfare activists condemned the move. "Any form of culling is illegal and inhumane," said Bappy Khan, a member of a local group. "The government must prioritise vaccination and sterilisation. Dogs are part of the ecosystem."

The High Court banned dog culling in 2020. Under the Animal Welfare Act, 2019, stray dogs cannot be killed or displaced unless proven rabid or dangerous. Khulna had carried out vaccination campaigns in recent years, with 5,900 dogs vaccinated in 2023. However, sterilisation programmes have lapsed.

"There are more than 6,000 stray dogs in the city," said KCC veterinary surgeon Dr Perugopal Biswas. "Sterilising a dog costs Tk 500 to Tk 1,500 and requires several days of care. Without proper budget and ministry approval, the programme cannot continue."

Residents say the problem is worsening. "We cannot even ride motorbikes without being chased by packs of dogs," said Wahiduzzaman. "Every day someone is bitten. As a public servant, I feel helpless."

At the same time, pet owners are also worried. A Maheshwarpasha resident said one of his dogs was nearly seized during the drive after neighbours complained. "Local youths intervened, and I am now treating the dog at a vet," he said.



Chickens perch on a bamboo pole after their coops were destroyed by the waters from the Padma. Many crops were damaged and some livestock lost to foxes. As the water recedes, villagers are returning to their ravaged homes with whatever poultry they managed to save. The photo was taken in the Madhya Char area of Paba upazila, Rajshahi yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## MAWLANA BHASHANI BRIDGE

# Incomplete approach road poses risk for vehicles

S DILIP ROY, *Latmonirhat*

Around three kilometres of the approach road on Kurigram's Chilmari side of the newly built Mawlana Bhashani Bridge remain unfinished, forcing buses and goods-laden trucks to navigate it at risk every day.

Heavy rainfall on August 27 caused two portions of the incomplete road to collapse. Although the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) carried out emergency repairs, the road has yet to be fully carpeted.

The 1,490-metre-long bridge over the Teesta River, connecting Chilmari upazila in Kurigram with Haripur in Gaibandha's Sundarganj upazila, was inaugurated on August 20.

Since then, thousands of light and heavy vehicles have been crossing the bridge daily, improving connectivity between Chilmari, Gaibandha, Dhaka, and other parts of the country.

Chilmari Upazila Engineer Julfikar Ali said, "The incomplete road has made our movement difficult."

Truck driver Jahanul Haque, 50, said,

"The bridge has eased travel from Chilmari to Gaibandha and Dhaka, reducing both time and costs. But driving heavy trucks on the unfinished road is still risky."

Bus driver Mizanur Rahman, 55, echoed him.

According to LGED sources, a total of 57 kilometres of approach roads has been built on both sides of the bridge. Of this,



51.77 kilometres in Sundarganj upazila of Gaibandha have been completed, while 5.23 kilometres in Chilmari upazila remain partially unfinished.

Chilmari Upazila Engineer Julfikar Ali said, "Out of 5,230 metres of approach road, carpeting of 2,150 metres has been completed. Another 2,380 metres are

ready for carpeting. But 700 metres have been delayed due to land acquisition complications. Although heavy rainfall caused some damage, we repaired it quickly. At present, there is no major problem for movement."

Executive Engineer of LGED in Gaibandha, Uzzal Chowdhury, said, "We have instructed the contractor to complete the remaining work in Chilmari quickly. The entire approach road will be finished within this year."

The project was implemented by China State Construction Engineering Corporation under LGED, with joint funding from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and the Opec Fund for International Development (OFID).

The bridge was built using 290 piles, 30 pillars, 28 spans, and 155 girders. In addition, 12 bridges, 58 box culverts, and 57 kilometres of approach roads with river training works were constructed after acquiring 133 acres of land.

The core bridge structure cost around Tk 367 crore, while approach roads, river training, culverts, and land acquisition required another Tk 363.85 crore.

## Umama eyes major

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and ensure political  
coexistence of all views,"  
she said.

She added, "Before August 5, I was involved in numerous movements and student-oriented initiatives, while continuing my studies. I tried to balance academics and activism."

"After August 5, when the country was in crisis, I stepped forward as one of the faces of the July movement -- working on issues from ensuring treatment for the injured to holding the government accountable," said Umama.

Now, according to Umama, she wants to do something concrete for her alma mater.

"I want to continue working on the campus issues I have long been engaged with. Recently, through our science organisation, I arranged a science fest. I have also called for a healthy campus environment and hall politics. Dhaka University has long suffered from partisan politics, and I want to end that," she said.

The former spokesperson of Students Against Discrimination also stressed the lack of female representation in the Ducusu leadership.

"Since independence, no woman has ever been elected VP. Women themselves can best raise their safety concerns and rights on campus. For decades, women led movements, but when it came to securing rights, they were sidelined."

Umama said female

## Haunted by scars, still waiting

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demanded an end to the culture of state violence. "Almost a year has passed, but many remain missing, and there is still no clarity on how trials will take place. It is very frustrating," he said, urging that secret detention centres be preserved as evidence.

These testimonies are among 1,752 complaints now under investigation by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances. Human rights groups say the scale of disappearances remains alarming. Odhikar recorded 708 cases between 2009 and June 2024, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) listed 629 from 2007 to 2023, HRSS counted 392 from 2015 to 2024, Human Rights Watch estimated nearly 600 from 2009 to 2021, while the International Federation for Human Rights reported 709 cases between 2009 and June 2024.

Of these, 471 people eventually returned or were produced in court, 83 were found dead, and 155 remain missing. At the event, HRSS Secretary General Muniruzzaman presented seven key demands, including Bangladesh's full implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

He urged that families be informed of relatives' whereabouts, each case investigated, perpetrators brought to justice, and victims and witnesses

given protection. He also called for public awareness through textbooks and the media.

Nur Khan Liton, a member of the inquiry commission, said political parties have pledged commitments, but accountability is essential.

"We must ensure that the word 'disappearance' no longer exists in Bangladesh. While we say we have defeated fascism, we must also remove the fascism that lives in our

and false cases. "Civil society has long demanded this, but political leaders are the ones in power. We want this promise from them."

Huma Khan, chief of mission of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, urged Bangladesh to act urgently to ease families' suffering.

She highlighted three priorities: ensuring victims' families' right to death certificates, property transfers, and bank access;

the need for nationwide consultations with victims and families.

Regarding the reliance on the death penalty, she said, "What is needed is an impartial and efficient justice system." She appealed to the interim government and the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs to prioritise accountability and meaningful justice over rushed legislation or symbolic punishments.

Political representatives present at the event, including Mahdi Amin of BNP and Advocate Ehsanul Mahbub Zobaer of Jamaat-e-Islami, promised to address enforced disappearances in their election manifestos.

International Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor SM Mainul Karim, Inquiry Commission Member Nabil Idris, Jatiya Nagarik Party's Senior Joint Convenor Ariful Islam Adib, and Nagarik Oikya's General Secretary Shahidullah Kaiser also spoke.

Meanwhile, in a statement yesterday, ASK urged the government to ensure justice, compensation, protection for families and witnesses, and rehabilitation for victims of enforced disappearances with international standards.

She referred to the offer of technical assistance from the UN Working Group, which she said Bangladesh did not accept, and warned that the draft law does not align with international human rights standards.

ASK added that these measures are essential not only for victims but also for the safety of society and the rule of law.

minds," he said. "What is happening now cannot be denied. Whether it is mob actions or other methods, these must be stopped, because they create opportunities for fascism to return."

Sara Hossain, honorary executive director of BLAST, warned that justice must be fair. "If innocent people are falsely implicated, then it will again be injustice," she said, urging political leaders to pledge an end to disappearances, killings,

ending harassment through fabricated cases; and aligning the draft ordinance on enforced disappearances with international standards.

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Justice cannot be achieved by rushing a law," she said, stressing the rule of law.

## Latif Siddique refuses

FROM PAGE 1  
unidentified individuals, committed the offence of incitement and conspiracy to destabilise the country in an attempt to overthrow the interim government.

Sumon mentioned that around 300 to 400 individuals had gathered in the capital's Bhatara with the same goal of reinstating Hasina, subsequently blockading Shahbagh. He claimed that the meeting was part of a broader blueprint to sabotage the upcoming election.

After the prosecution's submission, he started speaking with the court's permission.

"I am a teacher of law. For 33 years, I have taught the constitution. Yet today, a conspiracy is being hatched against me involving the Liberation War and the constitution. Yesterday [Thursday], a mob was created against us, and we were arrested. We were the victims, yet the police arrested us."

The DU professor said, "The protections guaranteed under article 33 of the constitution were denied to us. We were locked in a small room without a fan. The physical and mental harm inflicted on us by the state -- for that, the state should pay Tk 5 crore in compensation."

At that time, Prof Hafizur held up a copy of the constitution and said, "We will protect the constitution. We will protect the Liberation War."

The DU professor said, "The platform has been formed to prevent the distortion of Liberation War history and to protect the dignity of freedom fighters."

Prof Anu Muhammad, a former teacher at Jahangirnagar University, expressed shock at the DRU incident, saying that a simple discussion was attacked by a group.

"They assaulted freedom fighters, university teacher, and journalist -- people who only wanted to speak. Wasn't it for this very right to free expression that we fought against Sheikh Hasina's regime?" he said while speaking at a condolence meeting on Prof Jatin Sarker at the Central Shaheed Minar.

He further said the biggest problem today is mob violence. "Certain groups are resorting to mob violence to silence thoughts, opinions, and the very right to speak."

Opposing the bail petitions, Additional Public Prosecutor Md Shamsuddoha Sumon told the court that the accused showed up in a roundtable discussion organised by "Moncho 71", which was founded on August 5.

He questioned the timing of the platform's formation, noting that the date coincides with the ousting of the fascist Awami League that had long oppressed the nation. "Why was Moncho 71 established on that very day?" he said.

"Their main objective is to bring [Sheikh] Hasina back, and the attackers -- whose faces were clearly visible in video clips -- are roaming freely, preparing for the next wave of mob terror," he said.

Bamboo trade thrives

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Sajjad Hosain, a contractor from Sylhet town, said he frequently sources bamboo from Kalarbazar for construction projects.

Mahendra Sarkar, a 60-year-old cane craftsman from Rajapur village, said, "I've been buying bamboo here for 40 years. I use it to make baskets, kula, and kholai. I don't know of any bamboo haat as large as this one in our area."

Despite these challenges, the market remains a key source of quality bamboo.

Instead, to our shock, the government moved in the opposite direction of the democratic spirit: those who were attacked were charged under the Anti Terrorism Act and sent to prison. Meanwhile, the attackers -- whose faces were clearly visible in video

clips -- are roaming freely, preparing for the next wave of mob terror," he said.

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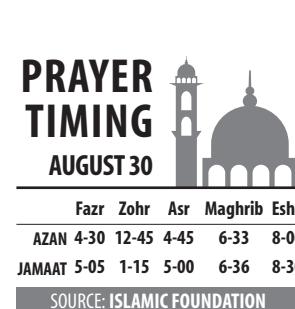
He alleged that the interim government failed to provide safety for people and political parties.

"The government has also lost the capability of holding free and fair polls," he added. Shamsheen Haider said Gono Odhikar Parishad carried out the attack from its procession.

He said several JP leaders suffered injuries and were admitted to hospital.

Latif Siddique refused to provide safety for people and political parties.

Contacted, Patuakhali District Fisheries Officer Md Kamrul Islam said, "Ecofish never handed over the project to us. Moreover, sustaining such an initiative on an open beach is very challenging. If the fisheries department had been involved from the beginning, it could have yielded long-term benefits."



SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION