

PHQ issues alert over possible clashes

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platform that led the July uprising, creating risks of deterioration in the law and order situation, the notification said.

The directive also warned that AL activists could turn hostile towards law enforcers if they are prevented from holding such programmes.

Several officials of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and superintendents of police in different districts confirmed receiving the precautionary instructions.

Meanwhile, at a press briefing yesterday, DMP Additional Commissioner (Crime and Operations) Md SN Nazrul Islam said there was no specific threat centring the issue but police were maintaining a heightened alert in the capital.

"There are various programmes throughout the year. Our major upcoming events include the Muharram, or Ashura. Besides, the founding anniversary of a political party is scheduled for June 23. We are maintaining the highest level of vigilance," he said.

He said, "To ensure the safety of city residents, necessary security measures, including checkpoints, patrols and special drives, are continuing and will remain in place."

BNP trying to establish

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"History should not be forgotten. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman also established a one-party system under BakSAL, but could not remain in power even for half a year afterward. People will not accept one-party rule in this country," he added.

Referring to recent political developments, the Jamaat chief said, "This parliament, government, and opposition exist because of the sacrifices of many during the 2024 movement. Disrespecting those who were martyred, injured, or disabled would amount to betrayal."

He alleged widespread irregularities including fraud, intimidation, and the use of black money in the parliamentary election.

"Despite all obstacles, the alliance managed to secure at least one seat in Narayanganj. Had the vote counting been fair, the alliance would have won more seats," he claimed, adding that the "victory was snatched away."

He also criticised BNP's stance on the referendum, claiming the party initially opposed it and later changed position under public pressure.

Speaking about the national budget, he said, "A large budget has been announced, which is the government's responsibility. But over the past 15 years, crores were looted. People need assurance that corruption and extortion will not continue."The event was presided over by Narayanganj city Jamaat Ameer Abdul Zabbar. Central and local leaders also spoke at the event.

During the programme, Abdul Zabbar was announced as the party's potential mayoral candidate for the upcoming Narayanganj City Corporation election.

Gaza ceasefire a 'deadly illusion'

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"They were killed in their homes. In their schools. Playing football. Fishing. They were shot, bombed struck by quadcopters," he said.

"If a child is being killed every day, surely the debate is no longer about the quality of the ceasefire. It is about the credibility of calling it one."

This week, he pointed out, "a two-year-old boy was shot and killed by Israeli forces; a 13-year-old boy was shot and killed inside his tent; a five-year-old boy and his father were killed by an Israeli strike, and on and on it goes".

Currently, he said, "hundreds of children urgently require medical evacuation", even as Israeli "restrictions on essential medicines mean wounded children are enduring greater pain and face an increased risk of infection, complications and further amputations".

Elder also highlighted the deep trauma suffered by Gaza's children.

"Fear, loss and violence... is woven into the very fabric of their childhood," he said, pointing out that "the trauma is so profound that it affects children's ability to eat, sleep and, of course, to develop normally".

Elder insisted: "The continued killing of children is not the consequence of a lack of options. It is the consequence of a lack of political will."

"We must stop accepting levels of child deaths that would provoke international outrage anywhere else in the world," he said.



A child cools off under a water spray in Brussels, Belgium, during a heatwave yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Foreign student enrolment drops over past 3 years

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relations, and a sharp increase in medical education opportunities in India.

A widespread negative campaign in India discouraged students from pursuing medical education in Bangladesh, contributing significantly to the decline. A similar campaign in Nepal also led to a fall in the number of Nepali students here, he noted.

Health ministry data show that Indian students accounted for between 68 percent and 72 percent of all foreign students enrolled in Bangladesh's medical colleges from the 2021-22 academic session to 2023-24. Their share fell to 44 percent in the 2024-25 session.

In the 2021-22 session, 1,432 of the 1,992 foreign students were Indian. In the last academic session, 507 of the 1,156 foreign students were from India, show the data.

The association ran promotional campaigns in Nepal, drawing around 200 students from there in this session, but the number of Indian students remained low compared to previous years, he added.

A Times of India report published

in October 2025 said India saw a rise in the number of medical colleges from 387 in 2014 to 819 in 2025. Seats for undergraduate courses rose to 129,000 from 51,000 and those for postgraduate courses to 78,000 from 31,000 during the period, the report said.

In July 2022, India's National Medical Commission directed that fees for 50 percent of seats in private medical colleges and "deemed universities" (institutions granted university status by the government) be aligned with those of public medical colleges, substantially lowering costs for many students, according to Indian media reports.

The drop in foreign student numbers is also linked to the pending global recognition of Bangladesh Medical Education Accreditation Council (BMEAC), which accredits both public and private medical colleges, said Prof Nazmul Hossain, director general of the Directorate General of Medical Education (DGME).

Many prospective foreign students may hesitate to pursue medical studies in Bangladesh as the World Federation for Medical

Education (WFME) has yet to recognise BMEAC, he told this correspondent recently.

Besides, the overall situation in the country following the 2024 political changeover may have discouraged some foreign students from choosing Bangladesh as a study destination.

REVIVAL PLAN
Prof Nazmul said that bilateral relations with India have improved since this government took office, raising hopes for an increase in the enrolment of Indian students.

He said the government has already taken several steps to attract more foreign students. The foreign and home ministries have already been asked to simplify visa procedures for foreign students.

Following instructions from the health minister, the authorities are also planning to lower the minimum academic requirements for foreign students seeking admission to medical colleges here, he added.

Prof Humayun Kabir Talukder, registrar of BMEAC, said the council has been implementing WFME's recommendations and has so far received positive feedback.

PM orders renaming

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for LGRD Mir Shahe Alam.

The unions are "Simanta" and "Diganta".

Bogura Deputy Commissioner Toufikur Rahman told The Daily Star that the PM called him yesterday afternoon and gave the instruction. "Necessary steps are being taken in this regard."

Sources at the Prime Minister's Office said the premier was displeased over the controversy.

"As the issue drew criticism from different quarters, it is also thought that the government's image has been harmed. This is why the move has been made to change the names," said a PMO official.

The sources said locals' opinions, the area's history and traditions, and its geographical identity would be given importance when choosing the new names. A public hearing will be held before the new names are finalised.

People from different walks of life, public representatives, and political leaders will be asked to provide their views at the hearing.

The proposed names will then be scrutinised and sent to the ministry concerned.

Once the new names are finalised, they will be published in a gazette after completion of the administrative process, the sources said.

Over the naming issue, the state minister faced questions in parliament on Monday.

Rejecting the allegation of renaming the unions after his sons, Shahe Alam said the names had "miraculously" matched those of his two sons.

The Bogura-2 MP said the names were chosen based on geography: Syedpur union was adjacent to the border and has therefore been named "Simanta", while Deuli union was located farther away and has therefore been named "Diganta".

He added, "If I had wanted to, I could have asked the DC to name them Mir Simanta or Mir Diganta. However, the prefix Mir is not included."

PMO officials said the controversy reached the highest level of the government after it caused discomfort within the administration and drew public attention.

Amid criticism over the naming, a fresh controversy has erupted over a proposal to rename an old educational institution after Shahe Alam, reports

"We hope to receive WFME recognition soon. Once we obtain it, it will help attract more foreign students."

He said the council has accredited four public medical colleges and one private college so far. Another 13, mostly private colleges, are in the process of obtaining BMEAC accreditation.

Pointing to the similarities in medical curricula in Bangladesh and India, Prof Moazzem said, "India can still remain a major source of foreign students for us."

He further said the association plans to launch promotional campaigns in India next month and explore new markets such as Indonesia and South Africa.

Moazzem pointed out that in the past, a large number of foreign students from Bangladeshi expatriate families in the Middle East used to enrol in Bangladeshi medical colleges but their numbers have declined in recent times.

"We have requested the government to arrange admission tests in those countries so that more students can come from there," he added.

our Bogura correspondent.

A proposal was recently sent to the education ministry to change the name of Shibganj Pilot Girls' High School.

The Secondary and Higher Education Division wrote to the Bogura DC, seeking an on-the-spot investigation report along with recommendations regarding the name change.

Contacted yesterday, DC Toufikur said that after receiving the letter, the district education officer visited the school. "Since there were no objections, we sent a positive report for changing the name."

Ten minutes later, the DC called back this correspondent and said that the state minister himself sent a DO letter to the education secretary, stating that since there are already some institutions named after him, no new institutions should be named after Shahe Alam.

After the issue of renaming the school drew widespread flak on social media, the verified Facebook page of BNP Media Cell yesterday shared Shahe Alam's DO letter.

The post stated that it has been noticed that many are engaged in such ill-attempts to use the state minister's name for their own narrow interests.

It added that a directive has been sent to the education secretary not to take any initiative to name any educational institution after Shahe Alam.

Regarding the sharing of the DO letter, Salma Akhter, additional district commissioner (Education and ICT), Bogura, told this newspaper, "We received the ministry's letter on June 9. The DC sir got a copy of the DO letter today [Friday]."

Asked about the proposal of changing the institution's name, Tajul Islam, headmaster of Shibganj Pilot Girls' High School, said Shahe Alam has contributed significantly to the education sector. "Considering that, we spoke with teachers, students, and locals, and proposed renaming the school after the state minister."

However, after learning about the matter, the state minister strongly objected to it. "Following his objection, I sent another letter to the chairman of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Rajshahi, on June 11, requesting that the school's previous name be retained," the headmaster added.

Canadians celebrate

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flag to every person he could find as Canada's win looked inevitable.

"I love Canada. I'm going to bring... free flag every game," he said.

In a country where ice hockey and baseball take the limelight at the expense of every other sport, the euphoric win seemed to warm some Canadians to the sport.

One Canadian security guard at the venue said he would now follow the team more closely following their performance. Another tried to buy a not-for-sale giant football displayed at a nearby store.

BNP leader hacked

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locals rushed to the spot and took him first to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital. He was later transferred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Billal said the family does not yet know why the attack was carried out or who was behind it.

He added that, besides his political role, Nurul is also involved in the waste management business.

Inspector Md Farouk, in-charge of DMCH police camp, said the BNP leader has injury marks on his face, shoulder, and several other parts of his body.

Journo held in case over reports on Shahe Alam

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Tanvir Alam Rimon, treasurer of Bogura Press Club, filed the case with Bogura Sadar Police Station on Wednesday.

Besides Rezanur, the case accused Mehedi Hasan, editor and publisher of Agrajatra Pratidin; Ashraf Ali Faruki, news editor; Saleh Kaiser, reporter; Shams, Bogura correspondent; and Md Sabbir Hasan, district correspondent, said Bogura Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Ibrahim Ali.

According to the case statement, Agrajatra Pratidin published a report on its Facebook page on May 4 under the headline, "State Minister Mir Shahe Alam in corruption controversy", which the complainant described as defamatory, false and fabricated.

It further alleged that another "defamatory and false" report was published on June 11 under the headline, "Forgery of corrupt state minister with the prime minister exposed in Bogura."

After Shahe Alam, who was elected from Bogura-2, held a press conference at Bogura Press Club, the newspaper published another report on June 12 titled, "Now the State Minister Mir Shahe Alam, controversial in 'road incident', advises journalists", according to the case statement.

It also alleged that while preparations were underway to file a case over the reports, Agrajatra Pratidin Editor Mehedi contacted Tanvir via WhatsApp and demanded Tk 20 lakh.

The case statement alleged that Mehedi threatened to defame both Tanvir and the state minister if the money was not paid.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a relative of Rezanur said, "A bail petition was moved for Rezanur [on Friday], but the court rejected it and sent him to jail. The judge has fixed Sunday for the next hearing."

Before the cyber security case was filed, Tanvir had attempted to file another case on June 13 with Bogura Sadar Cognizance Court over the same matter against four journalists.

That complaint accused four people, including Agrajatra Pratidin Editor Mehedi, of making misleading and defamatory allegations against the state minister.

However, court sources said Senior Judicial Magistrate Mehdi Hasan returned the complaint during the hearing due to technical issues related to certain legal provisions and asked for corrections. The complainant did not refile the case in court.

Asked about the matter, Tanvir's lawyer Abdul Wahab told The Daily Star, "The court case was later corrected and filed as a regular case with the police station, and an accused was arrested."

Meanwhile, State Minister Shahe Alam expressed regret over the incident involving the Agrajatra Pratidin journalists and said no one should take legal action, issue statements, or undertake any initiative on his behalf.

In a press release issued yesterday and signed by his Press Secretary Md Atikur Rahman, he expressed hope that the arrested journalist would be released soon.