

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FACT-FINDING REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE

On

Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh



A Preliminary Report

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Introduction

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a fact-finding report on 12 February 2025 on the human rights violations and abuses linked to the July–August 2024 protests in Bangladesh. The fact-finding team was tasked with reporting on events that occurred between July 15 and August 15, 2024. The report documents incidents that violate universal human rights, including the excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly, as well as recommendations to prevent future occurrences of such violations. While the report plays an important role in favoring the Interim Yunus government and drawing international attention to state accountability and the protection of fundamental rights, it also has its fundamental flaws. It raises questions regarding methodological limitations, including the complex political landscape of the country, the selection of a biased background description, political framing, and the challenges of documenting abuses in a polarized socio-political environment. The report as a whole appears seriously biased, mainly used the selected information and documents provided by the newly recruited or promoted (the so-called reward promotion) loyal officials of the interim government, and interviews of the victims, witnesses and supporters of the winning party in the political fight and completely ignored the defeated party, i.e., the previous government, officials and members of Bangladesh Awami league (BAL) and the officials and who were in charge of maintaining law and order situation in the field at the time of protest. Most disturbingly, the report consciously underestimated rights violations involving thousands of victims who lost everything, including their lives, property, and even the right to live in their own country due to atrocities committed by the supporters and alliance political parties of Dr Yunus, particularly Jamat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), from 15 July to 15 August 2024. The most disturbing aspect of the report is that, while describing these events and violations, the OHCHR fact-finding team consciously and deliberately used Dr. Yunus’s view by repeatedly labeling such events and violations as revenge attacks. The first impression of any average, conscious, and neutral reader of the report will be that human rights are something only applicable to and enjoyable by the winning party in a political conflict. The report also has some self-contradictory and weak arguments.

The report is presented in a format similar to a legal document, where the entire body of the report is structured by consecutively and continuously numbering the paragraphs, starting from the introduction and continuing through to the conclusion.

This critical analysis examines the report's findings, evaluates its strengths, legitimacy in highlighting patterns of abuse, and interrogates its shortcomings, particularly in evidence-gathering and evidentiary standards, use of restricted methodology, representation of diverse voices, and the implications for Bangladesh's internal political dynamics and international human rights discourse and the psychological authority based on people's belief in the UN-led human rights reporting. This analysis is structured in a way to facilitate referring to the listed events, violations, and shortcomings and discussion from the continuous paragraph numbering or the outline numbering format of the OHCHR fact-finding report.

Strengths of the Report

Normative Legitimacy: As an OHCHR publication, the report has institutional weight, aligning with established UN human rights mechanisms (Simmons, 2009).

Attempts to internationalize local violations: legitimizing local grievances at the international level and reinforcing the centrality of accountability have far-reaching implications.

Visibility of Abuses: Whether consciously or unconsciously, because of the team's bias towards Prof Yunus, the report amplified the selected concerns already documented by global rights groups, ensuring the depicted violations gain international recognition (Amnesty International, 2024; Human Rights Watch, 2024).

Policy Relevance: The findings have the potential to influence donor engagement, counter international diplomatic pressure, particularly from Western countries supportive of Prof. Yunus and recommendations in the UN Human Rights Council's *Universal Periodic Review* (UPR) process (Hafner-Burton, 2013).

Critical Concerns and Limitations

1. Use of a selective and narrow background of the July-August protest.

OHCHR Fact-finding team provided a skewed background description, emphasizing only (1) the discontent of the students on the unfair quota system, (2) general discontent because of economic inequality and deprivation of the public. To justify the public discontent, the team relied mostly on a single reference published by the Asis Foundation, based on their opinion survey (Citizens' Perception Survey, 2024), a subjective rather than objective research publication. We do not believe that the publication accurately described the country's actual situation during the previous government's rule. OHCHR fact-finding team ignored more relevant and objective research findings describing socio-economic, education, health, poverty alleviation, infrastructure, and other developments of the country during the past 15 years (2009 to 2024) by Sheikh Hasina's government. There are multiple objective research findings published by reputed organizations and individuals, including the government's relevant ministry (SDG Bangladesh Progress Report 2022) (The Trillion-Dollar Prize, <https://web-assets.bcg.com/6e/15/0081bc4b4871b53ea0f25348bb0d/the-trillion-dollar-prize-local-champions-leading-the-way.pdf>) (Bangladesh economy: A case of 'development miracle', <https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/bangladesh-economy-case-development-miracle-620306>) (Bangladesh ahead of India in social indicators: Amartya, <https://www.thedailystar.net/top-news/bangladesh-ahead-india-social-indicators-amartya-3540>).

Most critically, the report ignored or intentionally avoided highlighting the most critical factors: the complex social and geo-political landscape of the country, and the involvement of certain foreign organizations and governments that transformed the very reasonable and fair quota abolishing movement of the students into a full-blown, hostile, bloody regime-changing conflict leading to human rights violations (American Aid and Regime Change in Bangladesh: A Primer, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/american-aid-and-regime-change-in-bangladesh-a-primer>).

Negative impression of readers as a seriously biased report

Any reasonable and conscious reader will have serious difficulty in accepting the report as an unbiased, factual account of the events due to faulty narration, use of a narrow and skewed

background, use of restricted methodology, and an overt and unjustified attempt of portraying the Sheikh Hasina Government, Bangladesh Awami League (BAL) and Bangladesh Chhatra League (SL) as an extreme devil. On the other hand, the report has attempted to portray the protesters (ultimately, who formed a political party, the National Citizen Party, NCP, promoted by Dr Yunus) as a symbol of democratic restoration. However, since August 5th, 2024, the situation has unfolded in a manner far from the promised progress. The Yunus government now faces accusations of committing the very human rights abuses it aimed at, thereby threatening its moral legitimacy. In this context, it is worth mentioning that the OHCHR report did not criticize the interim government for offering the indemnity to the perpetrators of atrocities, killing, maiming, arson and all types of crimes committed at the height of the conflict from 5 Aug to 10 August. "The students and people who actively worked for the movement on the field to make this mass uprising successful will not be arrested or harassed. Cases will not be filed against them for the incidents related to the uprising from July 15 to August 8" (Bangladesh immunity order sparks fears of justice denied <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/july-uprising-protesters-be-shielded-cases-3727191>). The OHCHR team did not even describe the implications on human rights in Bangladesh due to this indemnity proclamation. Because of the implicit bias of the fact-finding team towards the interim Govt, interested readers would like to verify the relationship between Prof. Yunus and the OHCHR team, particularly with the high commissioner, Mr. Volker Turk. Readers also will be interested in verifying cross-relationships among Hilary and Bill Clinton, Prof Yunus, and Mr. Volker Turk. It appears that the widely accepted view that decades of enmity between Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina and prof Yunus played the most vital role in the regime-change turn of the July-August quota reform agitation by the students.

The bias is also explicitly evident in the report. For example, the OHCHR team labeled the July-August event and their report as the "turning point in the country's recent history" (see paragraph 4 of the report), which well echoed the sentiment of the country's fundamentalists and antiliberation forces and the chief adviser, Dr Yunus himself. In this context, we refer to the famous remark of pushing the "reset button" of wiping out the country's history of liberation war. Dr Yunus's staunch alliance, Bangladesh Jamat-e-Islami, and other fundamentalist forces, those who opposed the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, define the turning point as the demise of the spirit of the liberation war and the defeat of proliferating forces. As Yunus' indirect partner, OHCHR's turning point can easily be understood by the events that were unfolding in the aftermath of the fall of the Sheikh Hasina Government. People

saw the unparalleled and unimaginable destruction of the symbols, monuments, and achievements of the liberation war, atrocity, killing, mob violence, extortion by forces aligned to Dr Yunus, and most importantly, impunity granted by the Yunus government for the crimes committed by Yunus' political alliances.

2. The report is a compilation of a selective narrative

The report foregrounds state violence but gives less attention to protester-led violence and the structural socioeconomic drivers of unrest, leading to partial framing (Riaz, 2022).

3. The report poses a politicization risk

In Bangladesh's polarized environment, the report risks being dismissed as externally biased, a common challenge in human rights monitoring (Moyn, 2018).

4. Methodological Limitations

- a. The report was prepared based on 230 confidential interviews, mostly conducted online and reportedly in face-to-face interviews and meetings conducted in Bangladesh. Curiously, the report did not clarify the number of online and face-to-face interviews. The methodology also did not define the criteria for choosing the interviewees. This is a serious methodological weakness and suggests that they might have relied on the interim government in choosing the victims, witnesses, students and other protest leaders, human rights defenders, university professors, journalists and other civil society representatives, medical professionals, lawyers, businesspeople, and various other experts and persons of relevance (See paragraph 5 of the report). This restricted online access and reliance on the secondary sources of testimony and media reports raise issues of verification and representativeness (Mertus, 2009).
- b. OHCHR only examined 29 Victims out of the reported 11,700 victims, which is utterly inadequate, and they did not mention how these victims were selected. If they were selected by the Interim government or any of their allies, the information they collected was seriously prone to bias and misguided (paragraph 6 of the report).
- c. OHCHR interviewed with the current Inspector-General of Police and the current Directors-General of Bangladesh's three paramilitary security forces: Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), the Ansar/Village Defence Party (Ansar/VDP), and the Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB). Except for the BGB chief, none of these officials was in

their post at the time of the protests. Despite OHCHR's requests, the Interim Government did not allow the team to meet with the leadership of the Army or the Directorate-General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) (Paragraph 7). This indicates that the interim government only gave access to selected individuals and organizations who would deliver information favoring the Interim Government. This also indicates that OHCHR was either unable or unwilling to work independently. Given the long-term friendship with Prof Yunus, Hilary Clinton, and, consequently, the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights, it can easily be inferred that the fact-finding mission and its report are part of the broader meticulous design of Dr Yunus to discredit the ousted government and BAL. The activities of the Interim government reinforce this since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina Government.

- d. Despite the OHCHR team's request, the interim government denied access to conduct a follow-up visit and interview the detained former Inspector-General of Police (Paragraph 9). This inability of the team might be the sequelae of friendship between Mr. Volker Turk and Prof Yunus, since the terms of condition were to give unfettered access to any person, entity or document (please see Annex 2 of the OHCHR report)
- e. OHCHR team interviewed several Jamaat-e-Islami and Chhatra Shibir supporters (methodology, Paragraph 10). Jamat-e-Islami and Chhatra Shibir are strong partners of the interim govt., and their version of any information must be biased. It is widely believed that these entities and their armed supporters were behind most of the deaths and atrocities of the July-August 2024 agitation.
- f. OHCHR team sent a written request to seek written information from the interim government on 12 September 2024 (see Annex 3 of the report for the comprehensive list of information sought). The government provided partial information on 9 December 2024, from BGB, NSI, SGFI, Ansar/VDP, and the Coast Guard. However, the government denied providing any information from the Army (Paragraph 12). Neither the team nor the government provided any explanation as to why it took 3 months for the Interim Govt to deliver the information. After another month, on 30 January 2025, the Interim Government shared an additional detailed report from the Bangladesh Police and the RAB. It was also not clarified why a report from the army was not submitted. This casts doubt that the Interim Govt was unwilling to provide any information from the Army for fear of an impartial report, since the Bangladesh Army is usually more independent than other security establishments of Bangladesh. Curiously, the OHCHR team portrayed the Bangladesh Army as an innocent bystander

in the July-August protest, accounting only for 3 incidents of shooting and only one death.

In accordance with OHCHR methodology (paragraph 15), this report contains findings on facts when OHCHR found reasonable grounds to believe that an incident or pattern of conduct occurred. This standard of proof is lower than that required to find an individual guilty of a crime before a competent criminal court. But it is sufficiently high to warrant further investigations of serious crimes by competent criminal justice authorities. This effectively showed a tacit acknowledgement that the report was not factual. It was an ordered story based on belief in reasonable grounds; patterns and those grounds were provided by the Interim Government and its supporters.

- g. Another important weakness of the report is that OHCHR shared this report with the Interim Government before publication. This is likely a mutual agreement that allowed the Interim government to shape the report in their favor (paragraph 18). This clearly showed that it was not an independent report; it was a report with major input from the Interim Government and a biased report with a legal covering of the UN.

5. Deficiencies in the OHCHR Mandate

The OHCHR inquiry into Bangladesh’s July–August 2024 protests rests on a fragile mandate. It was not authorized by the Human Rights Council, which is the established UN practice for politically contested contexts. Still, it was instead invited solely by the Interim Government of Dr Muhammad Yunus (OHCHR Report, Intro paras 1–3). Unlike mandates rooted in formal multilateral resolutions—such as the OISL inquiry on Sri Lanka (HRC Res 25/1, 2014)—the Bangladesh mission rested on the authority of a regime that itself lacked constitutional legitimacy. The Interim Government emerged from political upheaval, rather than electoral or constitutional endorsement, thereby lacking the sovereign standing to authorize such an international intervention.

The credibility deficit is compounded by the OHCHR’s validation procedure. The draft report was shared exclusively with the Interim Government prior to publication, and their comments were incorporated into the final version (OHCHR Report, Methodology). This is contrary to OHCHR’s own guidance on commissions of inquiry, which stresses equal opportunity for all parties to be heard (OHCHR, *Commissions of Inquiry Guidance* (2015)). By excluding the

ousted administration and independent critics, OHCHR created an asymmetry that aligns its findings with the Interim Government’s political narrative.

The problem deepened when the Bangladesh High Court Division declared the OHCHR report a “historic document” and directed its official recognition (Dhaka Tribune, 21 August 2025). This judicial canonization of a provisional report—produced under a questionable mandate—transforms a politically colored fact-finding exercise into quasi-legal authority for ongoing trials. The combination of contested origins, selective validation, and judicial sanctification fundamentally undermines the neutrality of the OHCHR’s mandate.

6. Neglect of Non-State Violence and Protester-Side Abuses

The OHCHR report demonstrates a stark imbalance in its treatment of abuses by state and non-state actors. While allegations against security forces are described in emphatic terms such as “extrajudicial executions” and “systematic killings” (OHCHR Report, Sec V), violence committed by protesters and opposition-linked groups is acknowledged only in passing and characterized with minimizing language such as “revenge violence” or “retaliatory attacks” (OHCHR Report, para 222).

This asymmetry overlooks the scale and systematic nature of non-state abuses. Evidence from contemporaneous reports points to coordinated attacks on more than 400 police stations, arson targeting critical infrastructure, including metro lines and the state broadcaster, and targeted assaults against Hindu and other minority communities. Deaths of police officers—including vulnerable individuals such as pregnant women—were not accounted for with the same quantitative or legal precision given to civilian casualties attributed to state actors.

International human rights law does not permit such selectivity. Rights to life and non-discrimination under the ICCPR (arts 2, 6, 7) apply equally to victims regardless of the perpetrator. By minimizing the abuses of protesters and opposition groups, OHCHR has effectively treated some categories of victims as less deserving of recognition and protection. This undermines the principle of universality that anchors the international human rights regime.

7. Arbitrary Temporal Scope and Misallocation of Blame

The report's decision to confine its analysis to the period 1 July–15 August 2024 (OHCHR Report, Intro) is both arbitrary and politically consequential.

First, the start date disregards critical antecedent developments. The protests were triggered by a High Court judgment reinstating certain quotas, but the Government had already appealed this decision, and the Appellate Division granted a stay order on 17 July 2024. By excluding this context, the report implies that the Government had been inert or dismissive, rather than actively engaged with constitutional remedies.

Second, the end date of 15 August excludes the widespread violence that followed the fall of the Sheikh Hasina administration. Police officers, Awami League supporters, and minority groups were systematically targeted in the days and weeks following 5 August, but these incidents are relegated to the margins of the report (OHCHR Report, Sec VI).

This truncated scope maximizes attribution of responsibility to the ousted Government while minimizing scrutiny of the Interim Government and opposition forces. In contrast, comparable international inquiries, such as the Sri Lanka OISL (A/HRC/30/CRP.2, 2015), employed broad temporal mandates to capture both causes and consequences of unrest. The selective timeframe adopted in Bangladesh appears politically convenient rather than methodologically neutral.

8. Methodological Weaknesses in Data and Attribution

The credibility of a fact-finding report depends on transparent and rigorous methodology. The OHCHR report falls short.

It cites 230 interviews and site visits but provides no methodological annex explaining its sampling criteria, verification techniques, or error margins (OHCHR Report, Methodology). Without disclosure of these parameters, sweeping conclusions of “systematic” killings lack verifiability and cannot be independently assessed.

Casualty estimates are applied asymmetrically. Deaths allegedly caused by state forces are estimated at “as many as 1,400” (OHCHR Report, para 56), even though not all could be verified. By contrast, deaths of police officers, minority citizens, and Awami League supporters after 5 August are dismissed as “unverified” (OHCHR Report, para 222) with no quantitative

analysis. This selective quantification exaggerates one side's responsibility while minimizing the other's.

Moreover, the report imputes responsibility to political leadership on the basis of patterns of conduct (OHCHR Report, Exec Summary), without documentary or testimonial proof of orders. Yet when assessing allegations against opposition leaders, it demands direct evidence and concludes that "no evidence" was found (OHCHR Report, Sec VI para 301). Such inconsistency reflects a double standard in the assessment of evidence. Unlike inquiries such as the Darfur COI (UNSC Res 1564, 2004), which published detailed methodological annexes, the Bangladesh report is opaque, inconsistent, and ultimately unreliable as a professional fact-finding exercise.

9. Mandate Overreach: From Rights Monitoring to International Crimes

Perhaps the most problematic dimension of the OHCHR report is its foray into international criminal law. Although its mandate was to document human rights violations, the report repeatedly suggests that state conduct may amount to crimes against humanity under the Rome Statute (OHCHR Report, Sec V).

This is an overreach on two levels. First, fact-finding bodies are not judicial tribunals. Their findings are supposed to highlight patterns of abuse, not to issue determinations on international crimes (Alston and Knuckey 2016). Second, the report itself admits that it applies a "reasonable grounds to believe" standard (OHCHR Report, Methodology), far below the "beyond a reasonable doubt" threshold required for criminal liability.

The problem was exacerbated when the High Commissioner himself declared publicly that Sheikh Hasina and senior officials had committed crimes against humanity and might face ICC proceedings (Scroll.in, 12 February 2025). This leap from tentative fact-finding to categorical legal accusation illustrates how provisional observations were transformed into political indictments. Such conflation of monitoring with adjudication risks prejudicing domestic proceedings, supplying partisan actors with prosecutorial ammunition, and undermining the credibility of the UN human rights system. A professional inquiry would have confined itself to recommending further investigation, leaving determinations of international crimes to competent judicial bodies.

REBUTTAL TO ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ABUSES

In the following sections, we analyze most of the relevant points (1-377) directly or section-wise to highlight the weaknesses, fundamental flaws, legal and methodological limitations, selected and biased background descriptions, and political framing in the report. We systematically pick the statements, briefly analyze and comment on them, supported by documentary evidence and references.

Para 1. “The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, first proposed a fact-finding mission in a letter sent on 23 July to then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the height of the crisis, but received no positive response to that invitation.” It is not true that a fact-finding mission was proposed to the Prime Minister through a letter on July 23, to which no positive response was given. A three-page reply was sent through Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen on July 29 (The Prothom Alo English version published a news titled “Govt’s response to UNHRC chief’s letter” on 01 Aug 2024, (<<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/e3a2ms80kx>> accessed on 29 September 2025; see also Appendix 1). It is a standard state protocol to reply to such an approach via the Foreign Ministry Office (on behalf of the Prime Minister). In his letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on 23 July, Mr Volker Türk remarked, “The United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) is deeply concerned over the reports of excessive use of force to contain the quota protesters, subsequent casualties, arbitrary arrest and torture. A reform of the overall system is required to uphold freedom of speech and rights to hold rallies and meetings, and prevent such incidents of torture in the future.” In that reply letter, Foreign Secretary Mr. Masun Bin Momen writes, “Excellency, I write in response to your letter dated 23 July 2024 addressed to our Hon’ble Prime Minister. We share and appreciate your concerns over the recent events in Bangladesh, and would like to assure you that normalcy is being quickly restored through the collective efforts of the government and people.” Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen further wrote, “The movement waged by students of certain public universities seeking reforms of the public service quota system was carried out peacefully without any disruption or impediment for three weeks at a stretch. During this time, the government made efforts to engage with the self-assigned coordinators of the movement and called upon students to wait for the judicial process before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court to be exhausted so that the quota reform issue could be resolved without the need for interference by the Executive. In parallel, the government and law enforcement agencies ensured that all protests, sit-ins, rallies and so on staged by the students could take place in a safe and secure environment.” Clearly, this is

the reply to his letter to the PM. At the very start of the report, with such an untrue statement, the OHCHR has compromised the reputation of its office of such high caliber and raised serious questions about the credibility of the report.

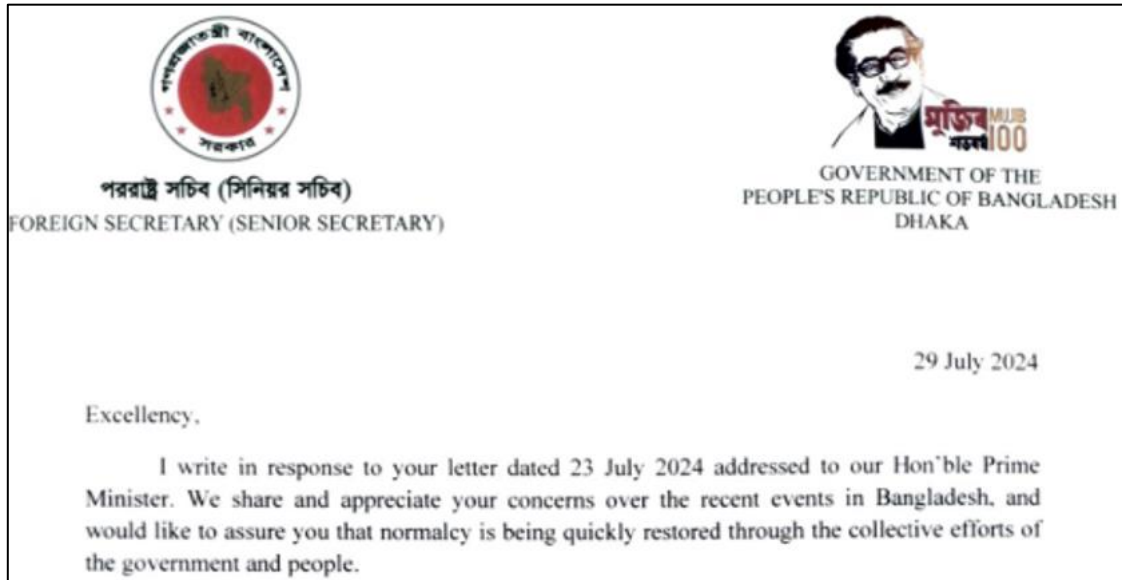


Exhibit 1: Initial part of the reply letter from Foreign Secretary Maud Bin Momen

Chief Advisor of the Interim Government, Dr Muhammad Yunus, requested OHCHR on 14 August 2024 to conduct a fact-finding in a call with the High Commissioner, and thereupon extended a formal invitation by letter dated 28 August 2024. Clearly, Dr Yunus has utilized his “good friend” to help him frame Sheikh Hasina, his staunch rival. The question arises why there was a two-week delay before the formal invitation. Phone conversation with and utilization of a “good friend” for such a fact-finding mission is ethically and morally an unfair approach that compromises neutrality. Dr. Yunus met with Mr. Volker Turk during the World Economic Forum summit in Davos, Switzerland, on January 22, 2025 (Exhibit 2), prior to the publication of the report on February 12, 2025. Given Mr. Turk’s assignment, this was an illegal move by Dr Yunus. In the report, it is also disclosed that prior to final publication, the report was sent to Dr Yunus’ office for comments. These steps amount to serious violations of ethics and neutrality demanded internationally from such high-caliber offices and thus lose credibility.

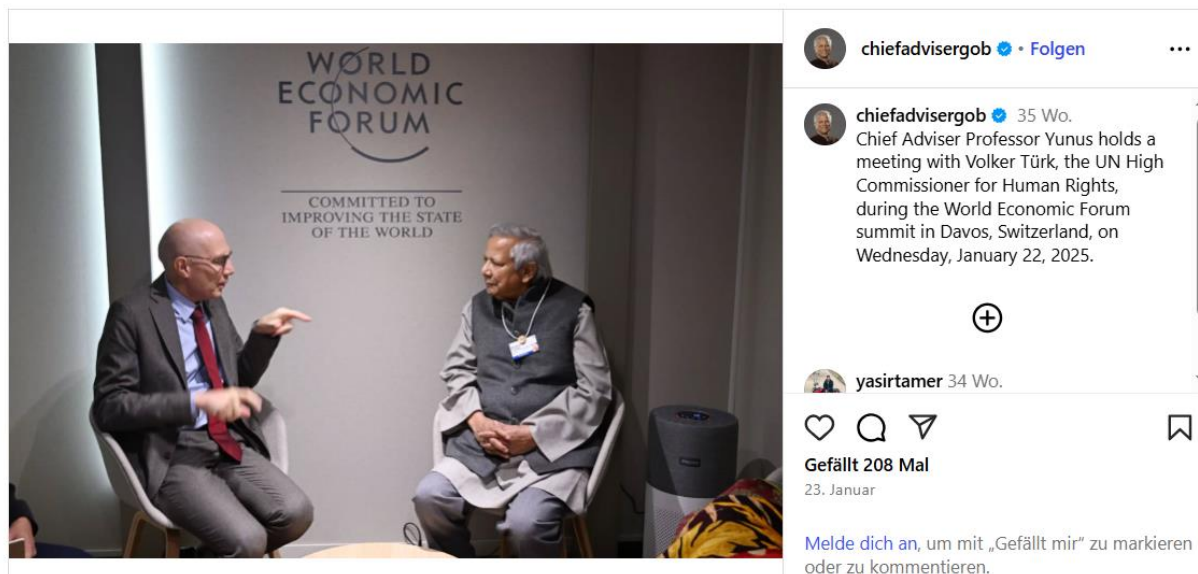


Exhibit 2. Dr Yunus met with Mr Volker Turk during the World Economic Forum summit in Davos, Switzerland, on January 22, 2025

On July 16, six people were killed in Dhaka and Chittagong. On July 18, the government formed a commission of inquiry headed by Justice Khandakar Diliruzzaman of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court to submit a report within 30 working days. The OHCHR report omitted these important details.

Para 2. Although the report covered the period from July 1 to August 15, nothing significant happened from July 1 to July 14. At that time, the police and the government-backed student organization Chhatra League cooperated with the protesters and supported the quota movement. The events took a turn when the quota-supporting students gathered in front of the Raju Statue of Dhaka University at midnight on the 14th and insulted the spirit of the Liberation War by raising slogans such as "Who are you, Who am I", "Razakar Razakar". This slogan was an insult to the independence of Bangladesh, which was achieved at the cost of 3 million martyrs and the dignity of more than 200,000 women. Then the pro-government student organization Chhatra League and its affiliated organizations erupted in protest. The movement took a face-to-face stage.

Para 7. After August 5, high-ranking employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been changed, including Foreign Secretary Momen; the heads of RAB and Ansar VDP have also been changed according to the wishes of the interim government. None of them were in these

positions during the movement. Naturally, they will speak for the government. Their statements will undoubtedly be biased and reflect the government's perspective.

Para 9. The former IGP was not allowed to speak. The report says that the government did not allow him to speak.

Para 10. The OHCHR Team spoke to which four ministers of the Awami League, and did not name or identify the leaders of the Chhatra League and other levels of the Awami League. It is said that the team has shown interest in talking to the four ministers, but it is not mentioned whether the team spoke at all; probably not.

Para 11. The report did not specifically say which senior leaders of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party and the Jatiya Party it spoke to. It did not clarify why it could not speak to the leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and Chhatra Shibir. However, during the movement, Jamaat-e-Islami and its affiliate Chhatra Shibir have publicly admitted that they used force in the movement from behind the scenes, burned down government KPI installations such as Metrorail, Setu Bhaban, BTV, and killed police. The interviews with the top leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and its affiliate Chhatra Shibir, who were associated with the militant activities of the movement, were very important to uncover the root cause of the incident and the atrocities.

Para 12. The interim government is a party or beneficiary of this movement. Naturally, written information from institutions of this government will be biased. It is understandable that the report may be based on these written statements.

Para 13. In a country of 170 million people, only 959 responses out of the parties' millions of supporters is a very small number. It is not difficult to understand that not enough people expressed their opinions, given the extreme threat to press freedom and freedom of expression under the caretaker government.

Para 14. Although forensic analysis was mentioned, the protest leaders publicly declared that no victim's fingerprints could be checked, nor could forensic reports be collected. It is therefore incomprehensible that the OHCHR is discussing any forensic analysis.

Para 15. The OHCHR acknowledges that the manner in which they have established the facts is not sufficient to convict or convict anyone. Their findings may warrant further investigation by the appropriate criminal justice authority in the future. "The manner in which they have established the facts is not sufficient" is itself a proof of the weakness of the report.

Para 16-17. Before publishing, the report was sent to the interim government for their comments. Those comments are added to this report. That is, it is natural that the interim government also has its opinions here, which will be in its interests.

Contextual Overview: An Escalation of Repression

Para 19. Should be 'war of liberation of 1971 (not 1970s). The quota system was not unconstitutional as this point mentioned.

Para 20. These jobs are competitive: Higher education degrees and passing 3 written and oral exams are required before the quota is applied (although the rule says 30%, practically available up to 7% only for the last many years).

Para 21. Nothing else was demanded in the quota movement by the Anti-discrimination movement. What the OHCHR states here is spread after 5th August 2024, when the AL government was ousted by force.

Binary politics, corruption, and economic inequalities

Para 24. AL did not abolish the Care Taker Government system; rather, the Supreme Court found the system against the spirit of elected government rule according to the constitution and abolished the system. AL obeyed the Supreme Court decision, and the parliament abolished the system accordingly. The High Court cancelled the registration of Jamate-e-Islam on 1 August 1913, making it unfit for election. The election was in January 2024, JI was banned on Aug 1, 2024 (about 7 months after the election) because of the killings and destruction of public properties by their supporters during the July movement.

Para 33-35. Without knowing the historical basis of the term Razakar, such a report cannot explain the context with these two or four quotations and sentences. This is a misreading attempt to create a negative perception for the sake of the report.

Mobilization of Chhatra League, Police and paramilitary forces

Para 36. The mainstream newspapers and live TV channels did not mention such a directive given by senior AL and SL leaders "to carry out armed attacks" on the protesters.

Para 37. The killing of Abu Sayed and Mughdho was committed by 3rd party snipers, as contested by circulating video clips and later statements of their parents, including controversial post-mortem reports.

Para 39. “On 17 July, for example, RAB and BGB supported the Police in its violent suppression of a large, peaceful protest at Dhaka University (see Case 2). Far from dissuading the protesters, this only bolstered the protests’ momentum.” The report states further regarding Case 2, “former senior officials indicated to OHCHR that orders to forcibly disperse the protesters before reaching the Raju Memorial were also given with the intention of preventing the overall protests from gaining larger political momentum”. The Shibir and Left-oriented communist party affiliate student leaders were trying to hijack the quota movement of the innocent students and diverting the movement towards a violent political direction. An elected popular government would react and apply measured force to prevent the protests from gaining political momentum, which is legal and required for the stability and progress of the country. We can’t understand what is wrong with doing so?

Para 40. PM and other Leaders acted according to their responsibilities to protect public safety and public property lawfully. There is nothing wrong. People in similar positions in Western and other countries do the same. Why does OHCHR bring the names of the PM and the Home Minister? Is it because the Interim Government/ICC of Bangladesh, controlled by the anti-liberation forces (protectors of razakars), plan to hang the PM and senior ministers as revenge for the War crimes trials and legal conviction of Mr Yunus for millions of Taka tax evasion from his Grameen Bank-related company activities?

Para 43-44. Snipers appeared (Refer to Brig Shakhawat Hossain’s video clips, etc. The protest movement was hijacked by hidden militant groups. Militants hiding within the general student protesters started using lethal weapons to kill, targeting innocent students, children in balconies, public workers, to shift public sentiments against the government, spreading rumors on social media and by trained journalists that the AL government is killing innocent students and the public. The govt tried to avoid this situation (refer to the remarks of Ministers, leaders, SL leaders, etc. in mainstream newspapers and TV channels available on YouTube and the Internet).

There are many positive statements by the government Ministers, political leaders, and SL leaders in the same statement that are used in quotations 41 to 44 and elsewhere. These should also be quoted side by side so that a one-sided view is avoided for neutrality.

Para 45-48. Student leaders were not arrested, but rather arranged meetings with government high officials to negotiate amicable solutions. This is a normal technique without arrest and using force. The government knew that the more deaths in the protest, the more public sentiment would be created against the government. This is the ruling party that knew better than others, as the 76-year-old masses supported a popular Westminster-type democratic party.

The PM "publicly blamed" as video footage and later self-confessed militant Jamat and BNP supporters claimed that they burned the metro rail stations, shetu bhabon, expressway toll plazas, KPI installation like the national TV broadcasting building, etc. The militants were clearly seen in live TV and social media videos carrying lethal weapons, brutally killing police personnel, pro-government supporters, etc.

The OHCHR report failed to highlight the other side of the stories, atrocities by hidden militants hiding with the innocent students and the general public. The PM's kindness to students and victims is time and again proved when she spoke over the national television, visited the wounded and burnt students in the hospital (ref TV speech of ... comforting Abu Sayeed and Mughdho's parents and Hospital visits).

Jamat Islam was banned on 1 August 2024 (ref Govt Notification). Explain why?

Remember, Dr Yunus claimed a "Meticulously designed" protest on Tuesday, 24 Sept 2024, at the Clinton Global Initiative's annual meeting in Washington.

Para 52. The report failed to describe the brutal killings of Police personnel by the militants at various locations of Dhaka, including the killing and hanging of several police personnel at Jatrabari, Rampura, Uttora, etc. (ref to pics, video clips, newspaper reports. This is proof that the report is biased, one-sided, and hides the truth.

Para 65-75. The report has deliberately omitted what happened from July 1 to July 14. Because during that time, the Awami League's affiliate organizations, especially the Chhatra League and the Awami League leadership, agreed with the demands of the protesting students and assured them that it would be resolved peacefully, and cooperated with the protesters. During this time, the entire environment was peaceful. No arguments or fights took place. The police and the protesters cooperated; this can be found by looking at the news reports of that time.

The OHCHR is creating a narrative that from July 15 to August 5, the ruling party and law enforcement agencies have committed extrajudicial killings in violation of human rights, while the killings committed by supporters of the quota movement and the Jamaat Shibir BNP

militant group, hiding with the protesters and the third parties using 7.62 bore rifles, are not mentioned anywhere. For example, the first six killings took place on the 16th. An Awami League supporter student of Dhaka College named Sabuj Ali was beaten to death by a group of protesters in front of Dhaka College, as is in this OHCHR report (pt88). That evening, a paposh seller named Mohammad Shajahan was beaten to death in front of City College. Those killed in Chittagong that day were two students and a pedestrian, Md. Faruk. They also died in fights between the students' opponents. An attempt to hold the law enforcement agencies, supporters of the ruling party, and the senior leadership of the ruling party responsible for all the deaths is noticeable in the report. The security forces repeatedly mention the names of RAB and BGB in pt65, pt66, pt67, that they committed extrajudicial killings, but on the contrary, they do not mention anything about the third parties who were hiding with the protesters and intentionally killing innocent students, traders, and bystanders. However, there are enough video clips and descriptions of these killings committed by the protesters and their associates in the mainstream newspapers.

Similar one-sided statements have been made about the deceased student of Rangpur Rokia University, Abu Sayeed. However, various video clips show a bloody wound mark on Abu Sayeed's neck. The police used rubber bullets from the front. When Abu Sayeed was taken to the hospital 3/4 hours after the incident, the doctor declared him dead. The forensic report was changed several times under pressure. There is no explanation as to who shot Abu Sayeed from behind or caused that fatal wound on his neck, and why he was taken to the hospital 3-4 hours later. The OHCHR report should have highlighted this evidence and suspicions. Because Abu Sayeed's death was later spread across the country through social media, many believe it was done intentionally. Even the social media status given by Abu Sayeed the day before Abu Sayeed's death raises doubts as to whether Abu Sayeed had taken a pledge for a planned suicide mission while being associated with a secret organization.

Para 69. The report mentions attacks by the Chhatra League and other organizations of the Awami League on the workers with weapons, but there is no mention of similar attacks by the protesters and their collaborators. The protesters and their collaborators, armed with deadly domestic and pistols, rifles and other firearms, killed Chhatra League members (41 SL supporters, Bangla Tribune reported) and innocent children, teenagers and working people from the procession, increasing the number of deaths and gaining sympathy from ordinary students and the public. (Reference with photo).

It is the responsibility of the law enforcement agencies of the state to protect the lives and property of the people, protect the state's assets, and protect KPI installations such as Metrorail, expressways, bridge buildings, BTV buildings, etc. They are committed to fulfilling this responsibility in accordance with the constitution of the state and the applicable police law (section 153). And they have done that. Arresting those involved in the destruction or killing in such mob violence is a normal task. OHCHR has not conducted any investigation and has not provided any information about who was arrested and why. As a result, PT70, PT71 can be considered one-sided and fulfilling vested interests.

Para 72. mentions a ministerial order to shut down the internet, but does not mention the fact that the central communication hub was burnt by the protesters, and the fiber optic cables were severed. Video clips of TV channels and newspapers of the time describe this incident.

It is mentioned that 6 journalists were suddenly killed, but it is not mentioned who killed them and under what circumstances. There were reports in the newspapers that some journalists were killed or injured by the protesters because they were angry at them for taking their pictures. It is mentioned that the law enforcement agencies committed extrajudicial killings of children. There is a rumor that children were targeted and killed by a group under the umbrella of the protesters during the protests because no government force would want to increase public sympathy for the protesters by killing innocent children. This does not stand up to any logic.

Therefore, the report from pt65 to pt75 is biased, malicious, and purposefully motivated. It appears that Yunus' friend, Mr. Volker Turk, has prepared this report at the request of the interim government and its allies.

Para 76-97. In sections from Pt76 to Pt97, the report describes the killing of a large number of protesting people by Awami League affiliates such as Chhatra League, Jubo League, and other organizations. As before, there is bias here, calling the armed procession of the opponent a peaceful procession. If they were peaceful, how were so many Chhatra League and the police personnel killed? A newspaper called Bangla Tribune analyzed the news published in the mainstream newspapers at that time and published a detailed casualty count on 5/9/2024. It gave very reliable information. According to that report, from July 15 to August 31, 50 Awami League workers and 47 members of the law and order force, 41 students, 83 ordinary people, 11 BNP workers were killed according to the report. So who killed these Chhatra League and law and order force members? There is no mention of this in the OHCHR report published on February 12, 2025. How did these killings happen if the protesters were unarmed and peaceful?

These facts were also mentioned in the letter of the Foreign Secretary to Volker Turk on 29-07-24. He wrote:

“It, however, appear that the briefs and information you have received about the recent events conflated a number of facts and issues. The movement waged by the students of certain public universities seeking reforms of the public service of quota system was carried out peacefully without any disruption or impediment for three weeks at a stretch. During this time, the government made efforts to engage with the self-assigned coordinators of the movement and called upon students to wait for the judicial process before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court to be exhausted so that the quota reform issue could be resolved without the need for interference by the Executive. In parallel, the government and the enforcement agencies ensured that all protests, sit-ins, rallies, etc. staged by the students could take place in a safe and secure environment, including during their submission of a petition to the Hon’ble President.”

From the beginning of July to July 14, the Chhatra League and the government's law enforcement forces cooperated with the students' orderly movement without obstructing it. There was no tension anywhere. No one beat anyone up. Rather, they cooperated. They played an active role in supporting the quota reform movement. The report makes many negative comments about the Chhatra League, but those who protested also participated in chases and fights with the Chhatra League using similar domestic weapons. However, the OHPHR report does not mention any similar behavior by the leaders or supporters of the anti-discrimination student movement.

Late at night on July 14, the hidden leadership of the leftist student organization and Shibir distorted a statement made by the Prime Minister at the press conference. During the Bangladesh Liberation War, the Razakars, in collaboration with the army in Pakistan, killed 3 million people, raped 200,000 women and burned down the houses of millions of people. That is why the people of Bangladesh always look at the Razakars with hatred. Sheikh Hasina did not call the students of the movement Razakars in the press conference, but they distorted the statement of the press conference and created a slogan by calling themselves Razakars and saying, "Who are you, who am I? “Razakars Razakars?”

After Sheikh Hasina returned from China, at a press conference at 4 pm on July 14, the Prime Minister said in response to a journalist's question regarding the quota movement.

"Why is there so much anger against the Liberation War and against the freedom fighters? If the grandchildren of the freedom fighters won't get it, will the grandchildren of the Razakars understand? That is my question, and a question for the countrymen as well. The grandchildren of the Razakars will get everything; the freedom fighters won't get it. What is the crime? Those who participated in the Liberation War, risking their lives, abandoning their families and everything, breaking the mud and soil day and night, fighting against the sun, rain, and storm, brought victory to this country. And it is not because they brought victory that everyone has come to high positions today. Today, they can speak with their voices raised. Otherwise, they would have had to get kicked by the Pakistanis."

Nowhere here did she call the protesters Razakars. Then why did the protesters raise the slogan "Who are you, who am I, Razakars?" in front of the Raju sculpture of Dhaka University on the night of April 14? Someone or the other incited them to raise this slogan with the intention of worsening the situation. No tender-minded student can raise such slogans standing in the heart of Dhaka University, the cradle of the Liberation War. They did not stop there, but the next day they added to this slogan, "Who said, who said, autocrat, autocrat." Former President Ershad was called an autocrat. The leaders of BNP and small political parties of the BNP family, the leader of Nagorik Oikya Mahmudur Rahman Manna and the leader of the Mass Solidarity Movement Junaid Saki, uttered the word autocrat in their speeches. Do we need to study rocket science to understand why this political word "autocrat" would come to the lips of ordinary students protesting for quota reform and who is fueling it? The activists of the extreme leftist and Islamist militant student organizations, hiding behind the ordinary students, are infuriating the protesters by distorting Sheikh Hasina's statement to implement their interests and the agenda of overthrowing the government.

In this part of the report, Minister Obaidul Quader and other senior leaders of the Awami League are mentioned for inciting violence. However, the news of the mainstream newspapers and television channels of that time is still available on the Internet or YouTube. If we analyze them, there is reason to believe that this description of the report is one-sided, biased and with a bad purpose. In this part of the report, it was also necessary to highlight the government's statements, the statements of the Awami League and its affiliates. In this case, the report has completely failed. For example, the statements of Minister Obaidul Quader, Law Minister Anisul Haque and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina need to be mentioned here.

With reasonable grounds, the Chhatra League and the pro-liberation war student organizations reacted to this audacity and called a protest meeting in front of Raju Bhaskar of Dhaka University on July 15. The quota movement students occupied the meeting place, and a face-to-face clash ensued. According to the news of the Prothom Alo newspaper, after meeting at TSC, the anti-quota movement students divided into two groups and started attacking the halls. First, they marched to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall and later to Ziaur Rahman Hall, made provocative speeches, threw stones, and chased the SL supporters. Then, while using a mike, they went to Ekushey Hall and attacked and beat up the Chhatra League leaders and activists (Ref. Photo of the attack on Ekushey Hall). This was largely intentional so that the Chhatra League would get involved in the clash.

At 3 pm on July 14, 12 leaders of the protesters submitted a memorandum to the President with the help of the police. With this memorandum, they said that Parliament should be summoned within 24 hours and a law on quota reform should be passed. Giving a President a 24-hour ultimatum cannot be considered prudent. Is it so easy to summon a Parliament session in 24 hours? Is the matter so important when it is facing a court trial? Those who gave this bad advice to the protesters knew that this would lead to a drastic deterioration of the situation, and that was their intention. And so it happened.

The videos of the live TV programs of July 15-16 can still be found on YouTube where the truth can be found. The newspapers of July 16 also have detailed reports about the events of July 15. OHCHR could have verified the truth by searching for those reports. Instead, they talked to people they liked and spoke to people supplied by the Yunus government who were opposed to the Sheikh Hasina government. To prepare a neutral report, all parties should have been talked to. Unfortunately, this was not done.

আপডেট: ১৬ জুলাই ২০২৪, ০৬: ২৯



ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বিজয় একান্তর হলের বাইরে থেকে টিল ছুড়ছেন কোটা সংস্কারের দাবিতে আন্দোলনে যুক্ত শিক্ষার্থীরা। আজ সোমবার বিকেলে ছবি: আশরাফুল আলম

In this context, on July 16, Prothom Alo published a statement by Chhatra League President Saddam Hossain. Prothom Alo has always been an anti-government, especially anti-Hasina government newspaper. There is no such day that the newspaper publishes negative news about Chhatra League. Even then, the way Saddam Hossain's statement was published in the newspaper on July 16 is attached here as a case. If you read this case, it will be clear that Chhatra League took a stand in favor of the quota reform movement and extended its hand of cooperation without using force.

Case: Statement by Chhatra League President Saddam Hossain in Prothom Alo newspaper on July 16, 2024.

Not a single incident will go unanswered: Chhatra League president warns | Prothom Alo

Reporter

Dhaka University

Published: 17 July 2024, 04:13

The Central President of Chhatra League, Saddam Hossain, has commented that there are no ordinary students in the anti-quota movement of anti-quota students, but the ghosts of Razakars. He claimed that more than five hundred leaders and activists of the Chhatra League were injured in the 'brutal and demonic' attack by the protesters.

Saddam Hossain said, 'The movement will go, the movement will come. But the Chhatra League will remain. Everything will be remembered and answered. Not a single incident will go unanswered. If we fall into the trap of Razakars and try to divert the issue-based movement to different sectors, we will see in the future how much rice is produced by how much.

Saddam made these remarks in his closing speech at a rally at the foot of the Raju statue of TSC on Tuesday afternoon. The title of the Chhatra League's program was 'A mockery of the great independence of Bengalis, a clean-up of the hated Razakars of 1971, a protest rally in protest against the barbaric attacks on ordinary students and leaders and activists, creating instability in the name of the movement'.

Saddam Hossain said, 'Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's speech has been distorted. Where do we put this shame? We condemn the distortion and propaganda. We want to say, do not forget the history of the steel-strong struggle of the Chhatra League. We are showing a lot of humility, you are crossing the line.' He also warned that no one will be spared if attempts are made to create confusion about Sheikh Hasina.

Who shot Chhatra League leaders?

Saddam Hossain said several Chhatra League leaders were shot. Who fired these shots? They were fired from the roof of Shahidullah Hall of Dhaka University. Even after more than five hundred Chhatra League leaders and activists were injured, Chhatra League behaved

responsibly in the interest of the country by avoiding provocations. There were protests in different places for 8-9 days. Not a single unpleasant incident took place anywhere. Chhatra League has said that the quota issue should be rationally reformed through a legal and peaceful process. The government has said that they are sincere. Still, why are unbridled activities being carried out? An attempt is being made to capitalize on the emotions of the students. He called on the leaders and activists to give a befitting reply if they try to create any anarchy.

There are no ordinary students in the movement.

Regarding Monday's clash, the Chhatra League president said, "Yesterday at 3 pm, they had a program at Raju Bhaskarya. But in the morning, one of the anti-discrimination student movements held a program here at 12 noon. Chhatra League waited for their program to end at Madhur Canteen. But they did not leave Raju Bhaskarya. Later, they attacked Chhatra League leaders and activists with domestic weapons. The hall room of Chhatra League leaders was vandalized. Even then, Chhatra League wanted to avoid unpleasant incidents and wanted to prevent the issue politically. There are no ordinary students on the movement platform anymore. They said, 'I am the ghost of the Razakar.'"

Before Saddam, Chhatra League Central General Secretary Sheikh Wali Asif, Dhaka University branch president Mazharul Kabir and General Secretary Tanvir Hasan spoke at the rally. Chhatra League metropolitan leaders also spoke. Even after the speech part of the rally, Chhatra League is still standing in front of the Raju sculpture. The leaders and activists are holding sticks, hockey sticks and iron pipes. Many are also wearing helmets.

<https://www.prothomalo.com/politics/cwkdo522h7>

Para 88. The report details the use of indigenous weapons by the Chhatra League, despite the fact that the protesters had similar weapons, but considers them unimportant. However, at the end of this point, it mentions that a 25-year-old Awami League supporter was killed. On July 16, pro-government activists attacked the protesting students in front of Dhaka College. At that time, Md. Shahjahan (24) and Sabuj Ali (25) were killed. Shahjahan was a hawker who used to hawk in front of Balaka Cinema Hall. Sabuj Ali was a student of the 18-19 session of the Statistics Department of Dhaka College. Later, it was learned that Sabuj Ali was a Chhatra League activist (Bangla Tribune: <https://www.banglatribune.com/others/855289/%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B9>

%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%9B%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%A4%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%B0%
E0%A6%B2%E0%A7%80%E0%A6%97-
%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%A6%E0%A6%B8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%AF-%
E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%AC%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%9C%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0-
%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9A%E0%A7%9F-
%E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B2%E0%A6%B2%E0%A7%8B-
%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%99%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B2%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0).

Surely the Awami League supporters were not killed by the Awami League's Chhatra League. The protesters killed them. If the protesters did not have similar domestic weapons, then what did they use to kill them? Why was this information not included in the report? It proves that the report is one-sided, biased, malicious, and purposeful.

Para 101-103

Para 101. The OHCHR report itself makes contradictory statements.

“According to the Police’s own report to OHCHR, clashes broke out between Chhatra League supporters and protesters when the protesters tried to forcefully enter through the gate of the university, and police started firing gas shells and blank bullets to disperse the students and crowd.” The Police further stated, with respect to Abu Sayed specifically, that he was grievously injured and later died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital, with his cause of death reported as “head injury and gunshot injury.”¹²⁰

Controversy about forensic reports (several times changed). TO be confirmed why OHCHR failed to make a forensic report on the body exhumed.? The protesters widely used Abu Sayeed’s case as propaganda to increase public sympathy and create justification for further violence.

“Abu Sayed was among those beaten, according to witnesses. The police also fired tear gas and shotguns loaded with lethal metal pellets at the protesters. Several students were injured by the shooting, including one protester who was partially blinded.”¹²¹

The mainstream newspapers widely report that the police used rubber bullets, not “lethal metal pellets” (ref Pa and others papers)..

Other video clips show the rubber pallets falling behind and to the left and right sides. Other videos show a big, bloody wound on the back of the neck , which is probably the main cause

of his death. The image 8 referred to by the OHCHR report does not show the real wound (why?).



(Father's statement in Abu Sayeed murder case: Blood was flowing from the back of his head during burial and bathing a day after the incident)

<https://en.bddigest.com/fathers-statement-in-abu-sayeed-murder-case-blood-was-flowing-from-the-back-of-his-head-during-burial-and-bathing-a-day-after-the-incident/>

“After seeing the body, Arifuzzaman told SI Tariqul in his statement that Abu Saeed had numerous shrapnel wounds on his body and a wound on the back of his head.”

“Shrapnel wound” means a “shrapnel wound” or “pellet wound”. “Shrapnel” means small bullets or balls (such as shotgun pellets), and “aghat” means wound/injury. Therefore, a shrapnel wound refers to a wound caused by small bullets or pellets.

Therefore, “Abu Sayed was killed by lethal metal pellets resulting from **at least two shots,**” while elsewhere the report refers to **Abu Sayeed being shot with shotguns, finding 90 such metal pellets** is inconsistent.

Injured Abu Sayedd was picked up and seen walking with his friends from the scene. He was injured at about 2 pm but taken to the hospital after about 3/4 hours, while the hospital was just half an hour's distance from the spot. If he were severely metal bullet-wounded, then why was there so much delay? What did his friends try to hide? Did they wrongly handle such an injured person and thus are responsible for his death? The OHCHR failed to consider and report these other truths, which raises a serious question regarding their thesis on the acquisition of the Police force.

Case 2: The report describes Police, RAB, and BGB actions on DU students (protesters) on 17 July as an example of the use of force. The report is silent about another incident that happened in Chittagong on 17 July, when the protesters and their supporters (Islami Chatra Shibir and Chatradal cadres) attacked SL students with lethal weapons and surrounded them on the roof of a building. They had beaten them, seriously injured them, thrown them to the ground from the roof of the multi-storied building, cut the veins of their legs, making them lifelong invalids (ref <https://ekattor.tv/national/67155/>)

সর্বশেষ রাজনীতি নির্বাচিত সংবাদ দেশযোগ অর্থযোগ খেলা আনন্দযোগ বিশ্বযোগ জীবন-যাপন প্রযুক্তিযোগ আরও

🏠 / জাতীয়

‘ছাত্রলীগ করে, ওকে মেরে ফেল’ বলেই ভবন থেকে ফেলে দেওয়া হয়

নিজস্ব প্রতিবেদক, একাত্তর

প্রকাশ : ১৭ জুলাই ২০১৪, ১০:০০ পি.এম | আপডেট : ১৭ জুলাই ২০১৪, ১০:০০ পি.এম

চট্টগ্রামের মুরাদপুরে মঙ্গলবার কোটা আন্দোলনকারীদের সাথে ছাত্রলীগ-যুবলীগের সংঘর্ষ চলার সময় একটি ভবনের ছাদ থেকে ছাত্রলীগের নেতাকর্মীদের ফেলে দেওয়া হয়। ছাদ থেকে মাটিতে পড়ে যাওয়ার পরেও তাদের নির্মমভাবে পেটানো হয়। ছাদে আটকে পড়া ছাত্রলীগ নেতাকর্মীদের ধারালো অস্ত্র দিয়ে কোপানো হয়।

মুরাদপুরের বেলাল মসজিদের পাশে পাঁচ তলা ওই ভবনের ছাদ থেকে ছাত্রলীগ নেতাকর্মীদের ফেলে দেওয়ার ভিডিও ফেসবুকে ভাইরাল হয়েছে। যা নিয়ে খবরও প্রকাশিত হয় গণমাধ্যমে।

On Tuesday, during a clash between Chhatra League and Jubilee League protesters in Muradpur, Chittagong, Chhatra League leaders and activists were thrown from the roof of a building. They were brutally beaten even after falling from the roof to the ground. Chhatra League leaders and activists who were trapped on the roof were hacked to death with sharp weapons.

A video of Chhatra League leaders and activists being thrown from the roof of a five-story building next to Belal Mosque in Muradpur has gone viral on Facebook. The news was also published in the media.

<https://www.prothomalo.com/photo/bangladesh/1kt3h3qbuu>



During the clashes between the Chhatra League and Jubo League and the quota protesters, Chhatra League leaders and activists were thrown from the roof of a building. They were brutally beaten even after falling from the roof to the ground. The Chhatra League leaders and activists who were trapped on the roof were hacked with sharp weapons.

<https://www.prothomalo.com/photo/bangladesh/1kt3h3qbuu>

Para 103. OHCHR report documents the killing of Mir Mughdo and others in Uttara as Case 3. “Among those killed was Mir Mughdo, a 25-year-old student who had been distributing water to the protesters. He was shot in the head with lethal ammunition from a rifle towards the end of the afternoon. A video authenticated by OHCHR captured the time and location that Mir Mughdo was shot as approximately 17:50 on Rabindra Sarani Street.” A few days before his death, Mughdo posted a post on his Facebook page blaming Shibir for turning the movement violent. He died a few days later. According to information provided in Prothom Alo, Mughdo's friends stated that they were running backwards after resting on the road divider, indicating that the police were far behind them. At that time, Mughdo was shot from the front, and that bullet hit him in the forehead, exiting obliquely behind his right ear. So if the police were behind him, who shot him from the front? This information was published in newspapers long before the OHCHR report was published. However, the report does not mention these incidents. Of course, they were not committed by the police. Is any third party responsible for these deaths hiding behind and within the agitators? The purpose of these killings was to accelerate the movement by causing many deaths and increasing public sympathy. The report seriously and purposefully failed to highlight the other side of the stories available in the local mainstream electronic and TV media.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx1z5xijeL8&rco=1>

Para 104-109

Para 104-109. The descriptions and accusations against the Police, RAB, BGB, and pro-govt students are just one side of the stories. The OHCHR mentions international human rights laws but fails to state that the laws are equally applicable to the protesters, the militant groups of the other political parties, such as JIB, BNP, Hijbut-Tahir, etc. Atrocities are committed from both sides. The law-enforcing agencies followed the country's own well-established Police laws to protect public life, public properties and their own lives threatened by the hidden third parties behind the apparently innocent student protesters. An example is the one-sided view expressed about the Narshingdi Jail attack described in Pt 109. Let us take the Narsigdi Jail incident as a case study to prove that the report is biased and prepared as a weapon for the Interim Government of Yunus to prosecute the AL government using the OHCHR report.

Case: Narsingdi Jail Attack by the protesters and embedded armed militants on July 19, 2024

“Thousands of attackers swooped in, set fire, and broke the padlocks on prison cells enabling 826 inmates, including ‘militants’, to flee the prison”. The newspaper writes, “As student protesters were staging movements demanding reforms to the quota system in government jobs, thousands of people marched on Narsingdi Central Jail, set fires, and broke the padlocks on prison cells, allowing 826 inmates, including nine ‘militants’, to flee the prison. The attackers looted arms, ammunition, and food items and also vandalized the prison on Friday. On Friday, thousands of people were staging protests in the area. However, few of them appeared to be students. Around 4:30 pm, that massive group began to march towards the prison. The attackers then broke through the gates at both ends of the prison and set fires. At least four prison guards were severely injured at the time. The guards had little choice but to take refuge inside the prison to save themselves. Although the jail code allows them to open fire if necessary, they did not.

Witnesses said that attackers used spades and other metal instruments to break open the cells and free the inmates. Some of them snatched keys from the guards and unlocked the cells. “(*ref <https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/6e12f6a606b7>)*



Image shows the state of Narsingdi District Jail. Photo: Bangla Tribune

“For days, students had been protesting nearby for quota reforms. On July 19, thousands gathered, but few were regular students. At around 4:30 pm, the crowd moved towards the jail, throwing brickbats and petrol bombs, before attacking the main gate.

Multiple guards and eyewitnesses described how the assailants had broken through the gates and stormed the prison, wielding sticks, locally made weapons, firearms, and tools like crowbars and axes.

They overwhelmed the guards, stole their keys, and unlocked several cells, breaking others open.

In the chaos, the prison was filled with smoke, and 826 inmates, including members of the banned militant groups JMB and Ansarullah Bangla Team, escaped.

The attackers also snatched and looted 85 weapons and 8,150 rounds of ammunition from the armory and the guards.

Two witnesses said the attackers had broken open the prison gates with tools such as crowbars and machetes.

They set fire to the entrance to the main cell and freed the inmates by breaking open the locks. They then set fire to the prison hospital.

The situation remained tense from the afternoon until 8:30 pm that day.

Guards said the prisoners had managed to escape in a very short time. Among them were nine members of the banned militant groups JMB and Ansarullah Bangla Team, including two women.

They added that some prisoners, reluctant to escape, had been beaten and forced out of the jail.

Convicted prisoners fled in their prison uniforms. After the guards withdrew, the attackers broke into the armory and stole weapons and ammunition.” (Ref <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/nation/352682/how-the-prison-break-in-narsingdi-unfolded>)

Rampura Case

This section talks about the clashes between the police, Chhatra League and other law enforcement agencies with the protesters in Rampura. Even the topic of RAB's helicopter is brought. According to the newspaper report, the helicopter was brought to understand the situation of the fire from above. Someone will take shelter on the roof to escape the fire burning

inside, so that they can also find a way to save themselves. If the protesters are peacefully protesting, why did they have to burn down a very important and sensitive KPI institution like BTV? Bangladesh Television (BTV) is 61 years old, having been founded in 1964. This 61-year-old traditional institution is also an archive institution in the cultural arena. It houses rare collections, computers, program production studios, and equipment worth crores of taka. There is no mention of this heinous act of burning all these by fire in the HC HR report. However, this incident has been broadcast with great importance in all the important print and electronic media and other television channels of the country. If this important establishment of the state is burned down by fire, the state's wealth is destroyed. So in that case, it is the responsibility of the police and other law enforcement agencies to take all measures according to the police law to protect these, using force if necessary. That incident happened in Rampura that day, but there is no mention of it in the report. There is only talk of the use of force by the police forces. However, the report says, "Police fired at the crowd with military rifles and shotguns loaded with lethal ammunition". It is a known fact that the Bangladesh police do not use military rifles. The news that armed terrorist militants have freed their convicted militants from Narsingdi jail under the guise of a peaceful movement has been published in major newspapers with pictures. Is this what OHCHR expected?

Conclusions

In summary, it appears that the OHCHR fact-finding report on the July-August agitation in Bangladesh was not actually based on facts but on biased information provided by the so-called victims, few witnesses, the interim government and its individual and political partners or alliances. Most information from security services was obtained from individuals who were not directly involved or familiar with the incidents. For example, paragraph 7 of the OHCHR report mentioned that none of the interviewed officials of the Government's security services, except for the BGB chief, were in their posts at the time of the protests. The officials they interviewed were recruited or promoted (the so-called reward promotion) by the Interim Government from the supporters of either Prof. Yunus or the two major political parties of Bangladesh, BNP or Jamat-e-Islam, who were partners with Prof. Yunus in ousting the former Hasina Government. Thus, any information from them was biased and favorable to Prof. Yunus or the Interim Govt and demonizing or discrediting the former ousted Govt and Bangladesh

Awami League. Additionally, none of the officials from the Bangladesh Army were interviewed, suggesting that the report is defective and biased, since the Bangladesh Army was the most important stakeholder in the management of the July agitation. Furthermore, the Bangladesh army is the only entity sufficiently independent and that can provide unbiased information without fear of government reprisal. This was the main reason Prof Yunus and his government did not allow the fact-finding team any access to the Army officials. OHCHR tacitly confessed that the Interim government did not cooperate with the OHCHR committee for any information flow from the Army (See paragraphs 7 and 12 of the OHCHR Report). Most importantly, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Turk, along with Yunus's long-term friend Hilary Clinton, was a strong partner of Prof. Yunus in ousting the Hasina Govt. Thus, this OHCHR report may be considered as the ordered product, ordered by Prof. Yunus and manufactured by his collaborator friends, which can be labelled as a sister company in the guise of OHCHR. People of Bangladesh, except Dr Yunus and his collaborators, consider the OHCHR report as a polished septic tank, covered with perceived gold, the UN seal. The report may also exacerbate subsequent governments' defensiveness, further shrinking civic space, and intensifying polarization in Bangladesh.

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Appendix 1: Govt's response to UNHRC chief's letter.



পররাষ্ট্র সচিব (সিনিয়র সচিব)
FOREIGN SECRETARY (SENIOR SECRETARY)



GOVERNMENT OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA

29 July 2024

Excellency,

I write in response to your letter dated 23 July 2024 addressed to our Hon'ble Prime Minister. We share and appreciate your concerns over the recent events in Bangladesh, and would like to assure you that normalcy is being quickly restored through the collective efforts of the government and people.

2. It, however, appears that the briefs and information you have received about the recent events conflated a number of facts and issues. The movement waged by students of certain public Universities seeking reforms of the public service quota system¹ was carried out peacefully without any disruption or impediment for three weeks at a stretch. During this time, the government made efforts to engage with the self-assigned coordinators of the movement, and called upon students to wait for the judicial process before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court to be exhausted so that the quota reform issue could be resolved without the need for interference by the Executive. In parallel, the government and law enforcement agencies ensured that all protests, sits-in, rallies etc. staged by the students could take place in a safe and secure environment, including during their submission of a petition to the Hon'ble President.

3. Nevertheless, the movement was eventually infiltrated by 'third forces' comprising elements from some opposition political parties, religious extremist groups, and banned terrorist outfits. The third forces were led once again² by the BNP-Jamaat (Bangladesh Nationalist Party and Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami) alliance, along with their respective students' wings. These forces seized the opportunity to misguide the protesting students by spreading misinformation, fanning provocative slogans and rhetoric, and inciting sporadic clashes and violence in certain University campuses. The situation soon exacerbated to the extent that some lives were unfortunately lost and certain egregious brutalities occurred under the cover of the students' movement. From this point onwards, the situation went outside the control of the protesting

¹ In the wake of a Judgment of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court annulling the Circular issued by the Government itself in 2018 abolishing the quota system in response to a previous students' movement.

² The BNP-Jamaat coalition decided to stay away from the 12th Parliamentary Election and resorted to violence, arson and anarchy to foil the elections all through last year, especially in October-November 2023.

মুজিববর্ষের কৃতিত্ব: }} প্রগতি ও সমপ্রীতি

students and was effectively taken over by the aforementioned third forces to unleash a reign of terror, mayhem and anarchy.

4. Meanwhile, at the behest of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, designated members of the Cabinet met with the coordinators of the students' movement to share with them the government's plans with regard to the judicial process concerning the quota issue. In a televised address to the nation, the Hon'ble Prime Minister also assured of conducting investigations into the reported fatalities to hold those accountable irrespective of their affiliation. Accordingly, the government formed an Inquiry Commission comprising a Justice of the High Court Division to investigate into the killings that occurred on 16 July 2024 and the subsequent acts of terror and violence. The Hon'ble Prime Minister voiced the nation's deep condolences at the tragic deaths and committed to look after the well-being and livelihoods of the families of the deceased. In response to such measures and announcements, the protesting students agreed to cooperate with the judicial process which culminated in a reasonable outcome through the judgment given by the Appellate Division on 21 July 2024. They were also given assurance from the Government that the protesting students would not be subjected to any undue harassment or reprisals. However, the third forces involved took it upon themselves to divert the entire course of the students' movement and continued with their terrorist activities that the coordinators of the movement had to publicly dissociate with.

5. These opposing political and extremist forces managed to launch orchestrated attacks against some Key Point Installations including the sole public television headquarters; the internet data centre at the heart of the capital; the offices of Bridges Division, Health Services and Disaster Management; a district jail outside Dhaka³; around 300 fire-fighting and other public vehicles; power transmission systems; and newly-built infrastructures at metro-rail stations and elevated expressways, among others. In the face of the combined terror attacks, the government had to suspend an ongoing nation-wide public examination; declare all offices, business and educational institutions closed; and temporarily halt regular movements at ports (while maintaining scheduled air flight operations). With a view to supporting the overwhelmed law enforcement agencies, the government had no option but to deploy armed forces in aid of civil power and impose curfew for specified hours to put an end to the aggravating threats to people's lives, wanton destruction of public properties, targeted and inhuman attacks against law enforcement personnel, and blockade of some of the major entry-points into the capital Dhaka.

6. The extent and magnitude of the damage and destructions caused in different parts of the country, especially in Dhaka and its surrounding districts, are still coming to light. The Ministry

³ 826 inmates, including nine convicted terrorists, were allowed to escape and 85 arms were looted (among which many inmates have so far returned and a number of arms recovered, while operations are ongoing to arrest/ recover the rest.)



of Home Affairs has confirmed⁴ that 147 valuable lives were lost, including those of students, police personnel and working people, mostly during the terrorist activities. The concerned Government authorities have formed separate inquiry committees to unearth the facts behind the incidents of killings, violence, arson and vandalism, and to identify those responsible. In this connection, as part of the ongoing law and order drive, a number of suspect individuals across the country have been arrested and taken into custody. As in the past, some of the opposition political figures have been taken to remand upon court orders on the basis of information of their alleged involvement with inciting and supporting the indiscriminate terror attacks. The government has given assurance to the people that those found to be involved in the terror attacks would be brought to justice through the due process of law.

7. The overall investigation process has been made somewhat challenging due to the wide circulation of rumours, disinformation and unauthenticated images and videos on the social media, including from abroad. The arson attack on the data centre resulted in internet breakdown, which took time to restore in phases. The government also had to restrict internet use in order to minimize the well-coordinated incitement to violence and propagation of misinformation. The internet connectivity has now been fully restored, barring select social media platforms that continue to ignore their own guidelines concerning hate speech, violence and disinformation despite overtures from the government. It is to be flagged that the print and electronic media continued to function through the entire period of unrest, and all accredited media personnel were kept outside the purview of the curfew along with emergency service providers. The leaders of the print and electronic media also assured the people that they would continue to work towards providing authenticated news and counter propaganda/misinformation.

8. Under the circumstances, the foremost priority for the Government is to restore the overall situation back to normalcy, including in public service, business and academic sectors. Meanwhile, the curfew has been lifted from most parts of the country and law and order operations are being carried out on the basis of evidentiary proof of involvement in terrorist activities. In a positive development, the coordinators of the students' movement have declared the end of their protests and withdrawn all programmes.

9. At this stage, on behalf of the Government, we would like to make the following submissions to you for due consideration by your Office and related UN Human Rights mechanisms:

First, there needs to be clear distinction made between the weeks-long students' movement and the terrorist activities that were perpetrated by the said third forces taking advantage of the situation. It is evident that those responsible for the terror attacks would continue to take cover

⁴ On Sunday, 28 July 2024



under the students' movement to justify their activities which the students themselves have categorically distanced themselves from.

Second, in the interest of conducting the ongoing judicial and administrative investigation/ inquiry processes, it would be appreciated if the Office and the related UN Human Rights mechanisms could refrain from making any conclusive statements that may otherwise influence or shape public perception, including in the international media. It would be advisable not to resort to sensational public statements based on one-sided reports before allowing the real picture to emerge through the well-established investigation/ inquiry procedures in the country.

Third, it would be expected of the Office not to make sweeping comments about the independent judiciary and professional security sector in the country by way of joining certain local and international entities to malign and weaken these critical State institutions. It would be regrettable if OHCHR were to be considered to be aligning with the internationally financed and mobilized smear campaign being conducted against Bangladesh's security and law enforcement agencies with the ulterior motive of creating political and social upheaval in the country.

10. To conclude, the Government of Bangladesh acknowledges your personal interest in supporting its efforts at promoting and protecting human rights in a sustained and forward-looking manner. We remain open to meaningful engagements with you and your colleagues within and beyond the Office, as we have demonstrated over the past years. In a similar spirit, our political leadership would be happy to meet with you in person either in Geneva or New York at any time of mutual convenience.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


(Masud Bin Momen)

His Excellency
Mr. Volker Turk
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