

1.2. Overview of events in July-August 2024

On 1 July 2024, students started to protest the reinstatement of a quota system for civil service jobs²⁷ under the banner 'Anti-Discrimination Student Movement'.²⁸ The protests grew day by day,²⁹ and intensified after the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina referred to the students as razakars³⁰ (a 'highly offensive term'³¹ referring to collaborators of Pakistani occupying forces during the 1971 war of independence³²). The authorities' tolerance for the mobilisation decreased,³³ and the situation 'descended into violence'.³⁴ The protesters shifted from only addressing the need of a quota reform to also calling for democracy and to protesting against what they perceived as an autocratic rule under Hasina.³⁵ By mid-July 2024,³⁶ state authorities attempted to quell protests by force,³⁷ resulting in what some sources describe as 'mass killings'³⁸ or the 'July massacre'.³⁹ Security forces targeted peaceful protests,⁴⁰ made use of teargas, rubber bullets,⁴¹ and lethal weapons.⁴² Ruling party supporters also carried out attacks, sometimes side-by-side with the police.⁴³ Protesters were shot dead or injured,⁴⁴ which in turn ignited violence from the protesters' side.⁴⁵ The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR) estimated that about 1 400 people may have been killed during the protests – the vast majority by military rifles and ammunition commonly used by security forces.⁴⁶ Thousands more were wounded, incapacitated, or disabled, including hundreds who lost their sight on one or both eyes⁴⁷ after being shot in the face.⁴⁸ Women protesters also faced physical violence, threats of rape, and sexual assaults by ruling party supporters.⁴⁹

To curb protests, the government closed schools and universities,⁵⁰ introduced internet bans⁵¹ as well as curfews⁵² with 'shoot-on-sight' orders authorising security forces to shoot anyone breaching the curfews,⁵³ and arrested over 10 000 people.⁵⁴ In early August 2024, the protest movement became non-cooperative,⁵⁵ rejected Hasina's requests for dialogue,⁵⁶ and demanded her resignation.⁵⁷ Hasina lost the military's support, as it refused orders to open fire against civilians.⁵⁸ As crowds approached her official residence in Dhaka on 5 August 2024, Hasina boarded a military helicopter and escaped to India. Within a few hours the army chief announced that an interim government would lead Bangladesh.⁵⁹

In response to the students' request, and after consultations with 'military chiefs, political parties, business leaders, and civil society members', the president appointed Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mohammad Yunus as interim prime minister.⁶⁰ The interim government took office on 8 August 2024 and soon announced several commissions,⁶¹ tasked with bringing forward reform proposals⁶² to restore democratic institutions.⁶³ The caretaker government is to lead

the country until the next election,⁶⁴ which is foreseen to take place in April 2026.⁶⁵ For a timeline of the protests in July–August 2024, see Annex 1: Timeline of the protests in July–August 2024.

- [27](#)

Al Jazeera, What's behind Bangladesh's violent quota protests?, 16 July 2024, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Bangladesh on Edge after Crushing Quota Protests, 25 July 2024, [url](#)

- [28](#)

Dhaka Tribune, Public univ students hold protest rallies demanding abolition of quota, 1 July 2024, [url](#); Bdnews24.com, Bangladesh university students launch protests against quotas in jobs again after High Court verdict, 1 July 2024, [url](#); Dhaka Tribune, Public univ students hold protest rallies demanding abolition of quota, 1 July 2024, [url](#)

- [29](#)

International Crisis Group, Bangladesh on Edge after Crushing Quota Protests, 25 July 2024, [url](#)

- [30](#)

Huq, C. in LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#); International Crisis Group, Bangladesh on Edge after Crushing Quota Protests, 25 July 2024, [url](#); Daily Star (The), The 'Razakar' back and forth: Who said what?, 15 July 2024, [url](#)

- [31](#)

Al Jazeera, Sheikh Hasina: A critical misstep and the end of 15 years ruling Bangladesh, 5 August 2024, [url](#)

- [32](#)

Al Jazeera, Sheikh Hasina: A critical misstep and the end of 15 years ruling Bangladesh, 5 August 2024, [url](#); Daily Star (The), Who said what?, 16 July 2024, [url](#)

- [33](#)

Huq, C. in LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#)

- [34](#)

ACLED, Bangladesh's July demonstrations are much larger and more violent than in 2018, 26 July 2024, [url](#)

- [35](#)

Huq, C. in LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#)

- [36](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), para. 36

- [37](#)

EAF, What will come after the July massacre in Bangladesh?, 22 August 2024, [url](#); Diplomat (The), A Majority of Bangladeshi Netizens Show Red Card to Government's Mourning Decision, 31 July 2024, [url](#); Firstpost, Bangladesh issues arrest warrant for Sheikh Hasina over mass killings of students protests, 17 October 2024, [url](#)

- [38](#)

EAF, What will come after the July massacre in Bangladesh?, 22 August 2024, [url](#); Diplomat (The), A Majority of Bangladeshi Netizens Show Red Card to Government's Mourning Decision, 31 July 2024, [url](#); Firstpost, Bangladesh issues arrest warrant for Sheikh Hasina over mass killings of students protests, 17 October 2024, [url](#)

- [39](#)

New Age, Justice, legal accountability needed for July massacre, 6 August 2024, [url](#); Business Post (The), Teachers for terming killings 'July Massacre', 29 July 2024, [url](#); Prothom Alo, 66 children, teenagers among killed, 17 August 2024, [url](#)

- [40](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), paras. 36, 42, 66; BBC News, Drenched in blood – how Bangladesh protests turned deadly, 24 July 2024, [url](#)

- [41](#)

Al Jazeera, Police fire tear gas as Bangladesh protests against job quotas rage, 17 July 2024, [url](#); BBC News, Videos reveal brutality that left scores dead in Bangladesh protests, 30 July 2024, [url](#)

- [42](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), paras. 43, 66; Daily Star (The), BCL unleashes fury on quota protesters, 16 July 2024, [url](#)

- [43](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), paras 69, 83-85; Guardian (The), Bangladesh

students protests turn into 'mass movement against a dictator', 26 July 2024, [url](#)

- [44](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), paras 43, 66

- [45](#)

AP, Protests and violence break out again in Bangladesh amid calls for the government's resignation, 3 August 2024, [url](#)

- [46](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), pp. iii-iv

- [47](#)

HRSS, Annual Human Rights Situation In Bangladesh 2024, 31 December 2024, [url](#); Daily Star (The), Shot during protest: Many barely hanging on to life, 5 September 2024, [url](#)

- [48](#)

New York Times (The), An Unbending Leader's Crackdown Rains Carnage on Bangladesh, 23 July 2024, [url](#)

- [49](#)

UN OHCHR, Human Rights Violations and Abuses Related to the Protests of July and August 2024 in Bangladesh, 12 February 2025, [url](#), p. iv

- [50](#)

AP, Protests and violence break out again in Bangladesh amid calls for the government's resignation, 3 August 2024, [url](#); Al Jazeera, Bangladesh shuts schools and universities after six killed in protests, 17 July 2024, [url](#)

- [51](#)

Huq, C. in: LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#)

- [52](#)

BBC News, Bangladesh imposes curfew as protests continue, 19 July 2024, [url](#); Huq, C. in LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#)

- [53](#)

AP, Bangladesh imposes strict curfew with a 'shoot-on-sight-order' following deadly protests, 20 July 2024, [url](#)

- [54](#)

AI, Bangladesh: End punitive mass arrests and arbitrary detention of student leaders and protesters, 29 July 2024, [url](#); Guardian (The), Bangladesh arrests more than 10,000 in crackdown on protests, 1 August 2024, [url](#)

- [55](#)

Dhaka Tribune, Protesters declare 'Total non-cooperation movement' from Sunday, 2 August 2024, [url](#)

- [56](#)

EEF, Protesting students reject Bangladesh PM's dialogue offer, demand her resignation, 3 August 2024, [url](#)

- [57](#)

Huq, C. in LPE Project, The Bangladesh Student Movement that Transformed a Nation, 10 September 2024, [url](#)

- [58](#)

Reuters, Exclusive: Bangladesh army refused to suppress protest, sealing Hasina's fate, 7 August 2024, [url](#); BBC News, Sheikh Hasina's final hours as a hated autocrat, 7 August 2024, [url](#)

- [59](#)

Al Jazeera, Bangladesh army announces interim government after PM Sheikh Hasina flees, 5 August 2024, [url](#)

- [60](#)

Independent (The), Who is Muhammad Yunus, rural microlending pioneer chosen to lead Bangladesh?, 8 August 2024, [url](#)

- [61](#)

HRW, After the Monsoon Revolution, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

- [62](#)

ConstitutionNet, Interim government of Bangladesh extends deadline for constitution reform commission, 6 January 2025, [url](#)

- [63](#)

Al Jazeera, Bangladesh plans to hold elections in late 2025 or early 2026, 16 December 2024, [url](#)

- [64](#)

DW, Bangladesh: Is the interim government delaying elections?, 27 August 2024, [url](#)

- [65](#)

AFP, Bangladesh's Yunus announces elections in April 2026, 6 June 2025, [url](#)

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu