

SUMMARY of the Article **“Bangladesh Chaos,” Editorial,** **Dawn, July 20th, 2024**

Chaos has gripped Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh following escalating anti-government protests, which intensified after several demonstrators were killed in clashes with security forces and government supporters. The unrest has led to the closure of educational institutions, media blackouts, and widespread internet disruptions. Approximately 40 people have died, and hundreds have been injured in the violence. The protests were initially sparked by the reinstatement of quotas in government jobs for the descendants of ‘freedom fighters’ from the 1971 war of independence, a decision that angered many young people, particularly students, who have been at the forefront of the demonstrations. The job quotas, which reserve nearly half of public sector employment, have become a contentious issue amid economic stagnation and high unemployment rates in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina Wajed, who secured a fourth term in elections earlier this year amid opposition boycotts and questions of legitimacy, has faced criticism for her heavy-handed approach to opposition forces and economic mismanagement. The current protests are a reflection of broader discontent with political disenfranchisement and economic hardship. The government is urged to address the protesters’ legitimate demands, investigate the deaths transparently, and handle the situation with care to prevent further escalation. The editorial also suggests that other South Asian nations should learn from Bangladesh’s turmoil, warning that political repression, economic stagnation, and harsh state responses can lead to disaster, emphasizing the need for democratic norms and compassionate governance.

Easy/Short SUMMARY:

Chaos has erupted in Dhaka and other parts of Bangladesh due to anti-government protests that intensified after several demonstrators were killed. The protests, led mainly by students, started over job quotas for descendants of 'freedom fighters,' causing anger due to high unemployment and economic problems. Around 40 people have died, and hundreds are injured. Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina Wajed, criticized for her handling of the opposition and economic issues, faces calls to address the protesters' demands and investigate the deaths. The editorial warns other South Asian countries about the dangers of political repression and economic stagnation.

SOLUTIONS to The Problem:

Educational Programs on Civic Rights

Implement educational programs to inform citizens, especially youth, about their civic rights and peaceful ways to advocate for change.

Economic Reforms

Initiate comprehensive economic reforms to create more job opportunities and address economic stagnation, reducing the reliance on government jobs.

Dialogue and Mediation

Establish a dialogue between the government and protest leaders to address grievances and find mutually acceptable solutions.

Transparent Investigations

Conduct transparent investigations into the deaths and violence during protests to hold accountable those responsible and restore public trust.

Reform Job Quota System

Review and reform the job quota system to ensure fairness and meritocracy, considering the current economic conditions and public sentiment.

Strengthening Democratic Institutions

Strengthen democratic institutions and ensure fair and free elections to prevent political disenfranchisement and increase public confidence in governance.

Mental Health Support

Provide mental health support and counseling for individuals affected by the violence and unrest to help them cope with trauma and stress.

Empowerment Programs for Youth

Develop empowerment programs that focus on skill-building, entrepreneurship, and leadership for youth to engage them constructively in nation-building.

Media Freedom

Restore media freedom and lift internet blackouts to ensure transparency and allow citizens to stay informed and express their views freely.

Promote Non-Violent Protests

Encourage and facilitate non-violent methods of protest and conflict resolution through public campaigns and training programs.

IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the Article:

- Around 40 people have died, and hundreds are injured due to the protests.
- The protests were triggered by the reinstatement of job quotas for



descendants of 'freedom fighters.'

- Nearly half of public sector jobs in Bangladesh are reserved under various quotas.
- Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina Wajed secured a record fourth term amid questions of election legitimacy.

MCQs from the Article:

1. What sparked the recent protests in Bangladesh?

- A. Economic reforms
- B. Media blackouts
- C. *Reinstatement of job quotas for descendants of 'freedom fighters'*
- D. New educational policies

2. How many people have died in the recent violence in Bangladesh?

- A. 20
- B. 30
- C. 40
- D. 50

3. Who is the Prime Minister of Bangladesh mentioned in the article?

- A. Khaleda Zia
- B. *Shaikh Hasina Wajed*
- C. Abdul Hamid
- D. Muhammad Yunus

4. What percentage of public sector jobs in Bangladesh are reserved under various quotas?

- A. 25%
- B. 35%
- C. *Nearly 50%*

D. 60%

5. What does the editorial suggest as a warning for other South Asian states?

A. Political stability

B. Political repression, economic stagnation, and harsh state responses lead to disaster

C. Economic growth

D. Increased media censorship

VOCABULARY:

1. *Chaos* (□□□□□□): Complete disorder and confusion.
2. *Engulfed* (□□□□□□□□): Surrounded or covered completely.
3. *Momentum* (□□□□□□): The force or speed with which something moves.
4. *Outrage* (□□□): An extremely strong reaction of anger, shock, or indignation.
5. *Confrontations* (□□□□□□□□): Hostile or argumentative meetings or situations.
6. *Blackout* (□□□□□): A temporary loss of signal or power.
7. *Pent-up* (□□□□ □□□□): Held back; not expressed or released.
8. *Disenfranchisement* (□□□□□ □□□□□□ □□ □□□□ □□□□ □□): The state of being deprived of a right, especially the right to vote.
9. *Legitimacy* (□□□□□□□□): Conformity to the law or to rules.
10. *Polarised* (□□□□ □□□□): Divided into two sharply contrasting groups or sets of opinions or beliefs.
11. *Escalation* (□□□□□□□□): A rapid increase or rise.
12. *Transparent* (□□□□□□□□): Easy to perceive or detect; open to public scrutiny.
13. *Compassion* (□□□□□□□□□□): Sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.
14. *Governance* (□□□□□□□□): The action or manner of governing.
15. *Restored* (□□□□□ □□□□□): Brought back to a former position or condition.
16. *Stagnation* (□□□□□□□□): Lack of activity, growth, or development.
17. *Crackdown* (□□□□□ □□□□□): Severe measures to restrict or discourage undesirable or illegal activities.
18. *Quotas* (□□□□): Fixed shares of something that a person or group is entitled to receive or is bound to contribute.
19. *Legitimate* (□□□□□□): Conforming to the law or to rules.



20. *Enfranchisement* (ভাড়া ভাড়া ভাড়া ভাড়া): The giving of a right or privilege, especially the right to vote.

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Bangladesh chaos

Editorial

CHAOS has engulfed Dhaka, as well as other parts of Bangladesh, over the past few days. Anti-government protests had been gaining momentum for several weeks, yet popular outrage exploded after several demonstrators were killed in confrontations with security forces and government supporters. Educational institutions have been shut, many media outlets are off air, while a widespread internet blackout has been reported from the country. According to one count, around 40 people have died in the violence, while hundreds are injured. Students have been at the forefront of the protests. Many young people took to the streets after a court reinstated quotas for the children and grandchildren of 'freedom fighters' — those who participated in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 — in



government jobs. Public sector employment is a popular option for many in Bangladesh, yet nearly half the jobs are reserved under various quotas. With the economy stagnating and millions of Bangladeshis out of work, the court decision has unleashed much pent-up anger. The situation remained tense on Friday, with sporadic protests reported from the country.

The demonstrations over job quotas cannot be seen in isolation, as an economic slowdown, as well as a sense of political disenfranchisement, has created an explosive situation in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina Wajed secured a record fourth term in elections held earlier this year. Boycotted by the opposition, they had raised questions of legitimacy. Earlier, Shaikh Hasina had overseen a crackdown against opposition forces, including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. In such a politically polarised atmosphere, with economic growth not meeting the expectations of many Bangladeshis, such mass protests were only a matter of time. Thousands of garment workers had also taken to the streets last year demanding higher wages. The Bangladesh government should deal with the situation carefully lest the protests spiral out of control. The demonstrators' legitimate demands should be met, while the deaths of protesters should be investigated in a transparent manner. Moreover, the unfortunate events playing out in Bangladesh should serve as a warning sign for other South Asian states. Political victimisation coupled with economic stagnation and heavy-handed state reaction is a recipe for disaster. All political forces should be allowed to freely operate as per democratic norms, while the state needs to act with compassion and transparency in times of economic distress.

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