



Students of Pabna University of Science and Technology besieged the vice chancellor's residence yesterday morning, demanding removal of the VC, proctor and student adviser for their alleged involvement in corruption.

PHOTO: STAR

PABNA UNIV OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY Students besiege VC's residence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Students of Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST) besieged the vice chancellor's residence yesterday morning, demanding removal of the VC, proctor and student adviser bringing allegation of corruption and irregularities against them.

Students have been demonstrating since Tuesday to press home their 12-point demand, after the authorities issued show-cause notices to three teachers for "raising voice against corruption and irregularities by the authorities".

They, however, started demanding removal of VC Dr Rostom Ali, proctor and student adviser since Wednesday.

Students' demands include: proper investigation into issuing the show-cause notices and resolving their longstanding problems such as forming an alumni association, holding a convocation, scholarships for impoverished students and allocating funds for research.

"The authorities are reluctant to meet our demands, that's why we are demonstrating,"

said Mahmud Kamal Tuhin, vice president of Chhatra League unit of PUST.

On Saturday, university authorities issued the notices, bringing allegation that the teachers' comments on Facebook had defamed the VC.

The teachers -- Kamrul Hasan of urban and regional planning department, Kamal Hossain of BBA faculty and Yeahia Bepari of economics -- recently commented on Facebook about a job aspirant at the university's history department.

On October 24, a conversation allegedly between the VC and job aspirant went viral, where the aspirant was heard asking back Tk 8 lakh from the VC as he did not pass the recruitment test.

Rejecting the allegations, the VC said, "It's a pre-planned conspiracy to tarnish my image."

The university authorities held a meeting in the VC's residence in the afternoon. Contacted, Proctor Dr Pritam Kumar said, "We're trying to come up with a solution soon."

Residential

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The hospital authorities had their ICU prepared and tried their level best to save him, he said.

He said they would offer full assistance to the three-member probe body formed following the incident. Steps will be taken if anyone is found negligent.

A doa mahfil will be held after Asr prayers tomorrow at the central mosque of the college.

While protesting in front of the west gate of Residential Model College, students placed a four-point demand that includes release of the CCTV footage; handover of the investigation report to the students within 72 hours and giving an explanation on taking him to a hospital in Mohakhali.

Besides, some youths yesterday formed a human chain at Karwan Bazar last evening.

IMPROVING DIVISIONAL ROAD NETWORK

Tk 2,136cr projects underway in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

The Roads and Highway Department (RHD) has been implementing seven development projects in Rajshahi division to improve the existing road network.

The projects are being implemented in Rajshahi, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj, Natore, Pabna and Sirajganj districts at a cost of around Tk 2,136.36 crore.

Habibur Rahman, additional chief engineer of RHD, told the news agency that a 6km pavement widening project (Tk 58.33 crore), including median construction works in Natore Main Road from Harishpur bypass crossing to Banbelghoria is almost completed.

Main goal of the project is to ensure smooth vehicular movement in Natore by this year. Under the project, footpaths and drains were constructed to ensure a proper drainage management system, which would help reduce waterlogging during monsoon.

Also, expansion work of a 74km regional highway at a cost of Tk 438.94 crore is also near completion.

The highway is being widened to 7.30 metres.

People of the surrounding Bogura, Naogaon, Joypurhat and Rajshahi districts will be benefitted from the improved regional connectivity by this year.

The 22km regional highway from Shaheed M Monsur Ali Medical College to Kata Wapda crossing of the Nalka-Sirajganj-Saidabad highway is being elevated to four-lane under a Tk 264.26 crore project.

The improved infrastructure will establish an effective, efficient and demand-driven road network within the country's eastern, southern and western regions. Upon successful implementation by June 2020, the project will enhance economic development through expansion and integration of markets and growth of international trade, said RHD officials.

A .27km railway overpass will be constructed at Ullapara under Sirajganj at a cost of around Tk 92.23 crore by June 2020 to improve the existing road network.

Under another Tk 201.30 crore project, the unfinished work of the 26km road from Naogaon to Natore highway via Atrai will be completed by this year.

Direct road link between Naogaon and Natore districts will be established upon implementation of the project.

Another 82km highway in Naogaon district is being elevated and widened under a Tk 314.70 crore project. It will help people in the project-related areas improve their socio-economic condition upon completion of the scheduled work by June 2020.

Meanwhile, implementation works of six other projects were completed at a cost of around Tk 456.24 crore during the last five fiscal years till June. Roadside tree plantation activities on the improved roads are progressing successfully that will help reduce carbon emissions, said the additional chief engineer.

He said implemented projects are contributing in enhancing the living standards of people and the ongoing schemes will supplement the process.

Country needs a political

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The book was published by Bengal Publications.

On the book, National Professor Anisuzzaman said its defining characteristics are pluralism and diversity.

Badruddin Umar and Rehman Sobhan's speeches are contrasting, while the thoughts of Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury and Rounaq Jahan offer differing views as well, he said.

"We could express our own thoughts [in different speeches] and that became the content of one book," said Prof Anisuzzaman, adding that, "Such initiative makes it clear that we have to give space to freedom of speech."

Addressing the ceremony, The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam said after the fall of autocracy in 1991, countymen had thought that democracy has been restored.

"Now in 2019, what is the fate of the country's democracy? Why is the National Parliament failing to take its institutional form?" he asked.

There are experts who have been working on these issues and of course there are university teachers and professors, he added.

However, alongside an institution

should be there to conduct research on such subjects, he said.

He lauded different initiatives taken by Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation.

Echoing Mahfuz Anam's views, renowned economist and scholar Dr Akbar Ali Khan, said if such an institution dedicates itself to do research on social issues then questions related to political issues will be answered as well.

Referring to initiatives of Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation which arranges programmes such as memorial lecture series and lectures on unpublished PhD dissertations, Akbar Ali Khan said if an institution like the foundation directly deals with political issues then there is a possibility that it will face controversy.

"In Bangladesh, wherever there is politics, there is division," he added.

Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury hoped that the foundation will dedicate itself to bring change in the society.

Bengal Foundation Chair Abul Khair, Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation Director General Prof Ahrar Ahmad, and Bengal Foundation Trustee Board Member Luva Naheed Choudhury also addressed the ceremony.

75 more migrant workers sent back from Saudi Arabia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 75 Bangladeshi migrant workers returned from Saudi Arabia on Friday night amid a deportation spree of undocumented migrant workers by the Gulf country.

Including them, some 332 workers have returned from Saudi Arabia since Wednesday.

The number of deported workers in October was 4,662, according to Brac Migration Programme.

A Saudi Airlines flight carrying Friday's deportees landed at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 11:20pm, said Shariful Hasan, head of Brac Migration Programme.

Officials of the migration programme

with the help of Prabashi Kalyan Desk set under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment provided them with initial assistance like food and drinking water.

They also helped deported workers reach their homes safely, he said.

Quoting workers, Shariful said following their arrests, the workers sought help from their respective sponsors, but they refused to provide any assistance.

Some workers had gone to the country a few months ago and they were sent back "empty handed", Shariful added.

He stressed for ensuring accountability of people responsible for such migration of workers.

Be smart

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economics, finance and geopolitics. With consolidation of the Red Dynasty, and given the scale and depth of China's power, existing global system dominated by West is coming to an end," he said.

Baaquie, who received training in theoretical physics at California Institute of Technology and Cornell University in New York, specialising in quantum field theory, said the last 20 years of China's rapid growth has led to modernisation of its economy, expansion of scientific and technological foundations and development of human capital.

"China has also consolidated and stabilised its political system -- emerging as one of the most powerful nations," said Baaquie, who was a professor of theoretical physics at National University of Singapore for 32 years.



In observance of National Cooperatives Day, the department of cooperatives in Barishal brought out a procession on Sadar Road in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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'We're with AL'

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ongoing anti-corruption drives.

Meanwhile in a press release issued yesterday, Iqbal Kabir Jahid, one of the dissident leaders, said they will hold a two-day rally in Jashore on November 29-30 to declare their next course of action.

"Due to ideological disagreement, a large number of representatives did not participate in the 10th congress in Dhaka like us, so we will hold a separate rally to give them a proper guideline," Jahid, coordinator of the coordination committee to protect party ideals, told The Daily Star.

On October 30, the party suspended six of its central committee leaders who had sought to refrain from joining the congress. The six leaders alleged that the party has deviated from its communist ideals by forming alliance with AL.

On October 26, party politburo member and former general secretary Bimal Biswas was also expelled on charge of indulging in anti-party activities.

Bimal himself withdrew his primary membership of the party on October 22, issuing a letter to the central committee. He said the party had deviated from its ideals of Marxism and Leninism.

Another politburo member Manoj Saha also expressed solidarity with the dissident leaders, according to the press release issued by Jahid.

However, pointing at the dissident leaders, party General Secretary Fazle Hossain Badsha while speaking at yesterday's congress said extreme leftist revolutionary ideology cannot be a good thing. He hoped that their party would move forward, gaining affection and support of people.

Among others, Minister Counselor at Chinese embassy Yan Hualong, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Sharif Nurul Ambia and Bangladesh Adivasi Forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong spoke at the inauguration of the four-day congress.

Region-based strategy

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remain in a risk of being displaced.

He also suggested to prepare separate action plans for six climate hotspots in the country and combine those with the national strategy.

Noted economist Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad said the government should identify priority areas for combating climate change and focus on those areas while finalising the strategy.

"If the government can prepare a proper strategy, I think it will help them during international negotiation on climate induced displacement issues," said Kholiquzzaman, chairman of Palli Karma-

Sahayak Foundation (PKSF).

Speaking as chief guest, Enamur Rahman, state minister for disaster management and relief, said they will consider the recommendations while finalising the strategy. He also assured of implementing it as soon as possible, without waiting for foreign fund.

Foreign Affairs Ministry Secretary Shahidul Haque, Disaster Management Ministry Additional Secretary Md Mohsin, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies Executive Director Atiq Rahman and COAST Trust Executive Director Rezaul Karim Chowdhury also spoke at the programme.

Case filed against

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of police in Narayanganj, disclosed the information at a press conference at his official conference room yesterday afternoon.

The SP said Russell was in the SUV, carrying a firearm, and managed to flee the

scene. Two cases were filed against Sumon and Russell on charge of possession of drugs and illegal firearms. Police were continuing drives to arrest Russell, said the SP.

The Daily Star tried to contact Russell over phone for his comments but his mobile phone was found switched off.

No foreign delegates

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the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, she said.

Politicians from different countries will be invited to attend the birth centenary celebration, she added.

To make the party's 20th national

council meaningful, veteran political leaders of different countries were invited to attend the council in October, 2016.

A number of political leaders from China, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Russia, Australia, the UK and Italy joined AL's triennial council.