

## February 13, 2019

### BCL targets development project

Two BCL groups get into a fight again. BCL leaders Rajib Ahmed and Abu Sufiyan bring out armed processions with their followers and assault each other's groups. The two groups of students open fire on each other and the campus turns into a battleground. 10 students are seriously injured during the clash. Although Rajib and Sufiyan claim that their fight broke out due to a "political dispute", their followers allege that they were competing to get the contract for constructing buildings under the new development project.

## July 3, 2019

### BCL hungry for illegal share

Another vicious infighting among BCL cadres who have been competing to get contracts under the new development project—two groups of BCL cadres launch violent assault on each other with firearms and different types of sharp weapons. At least 10 rounds of bullets are fired during the clash. 65 students are injured, 35 among them severely injured. Two policemen are also injured. Although BCL leaders claim that the fight broke out on a trivial issue of not maintaining seniority while serving sweets after lunch, reports suggest that the fight resulted from BCL's competition to get more construction contracts from the university administration.



PHOTO: STAR

## July 18, 2019

### Development at the cost of environment

Protesters bring out a procession contesting the uprooting of 1,132 trees for construction work threatening the biodiversity in the area. The megaproject is being implemented without carrying out any environmental impact assessment (EIA) even though the university has three large lakes, and multiple small ones, hosting migratory birds. At least 23 residential halls, administrative complexes, academic buildings, and teachers' residences are to be built as a part of the megaproject, while several other areas adjacent to migratory bird lakes are slated for construction. Research shows that migratory birds choose specific lakes to roost in

year after year because those spots have a specific ecosystem created from certain microbiological properties. The university did not identify how such mass-scale construction could upset the ecosystem.

*Our first objection was to the construction of three halls surrounding the Rabindranath Hall. In that location was a lake and countless trees of different species. We requested the VC not to fell those trees without our permission. But she suddenly chopped down a few hundred of them. The trees are still lying there like corpses. The lake is also a landmark spot that adds to the beauty of the campus, where different species of birds gather. Where will these things go? The master plan overlooks these observations.*  
Shamima Sultana, Professor, Department of Bangla

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An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is mandatory. Expansion can happen, but we have to determine the impacts on the environment.

**Professor Dr Md Khabir Uddin**  
Department of Environmental Sciences

## August 23, 2019:

### JU plunges into crisis

Protesting JU students demand a judicial enquiry into the vice chancellor's reported involvement in corruption and mismanagement of a Tk 1,445-crore campus development project. The VC has always claimed she is not involved in any corruption or irregularities. JU students start demonstrations on campus demanding the relocation of three male students' dormitories which the authorities planned to construct near Rabindranath Hall. They also demand judicial probe into allegations of corruption and irregularities that took place before the approval of these mega projects.

*The VC's corrupt activities must be investigated. She refused to comply with this request on the grounds that she cannot launch an investigation against herself. In a meeting with her—which was recorded in its entirety by the university authorities—we suggested that, if she cannot launch the investigation herself, then she can release an open letter to the authorities addressing the allegations cast against her and ask them to start an investigation so that she can prove herself innocent.*  
Mushfiq Us Salehin, Graduate Student, Department of Economics

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We have not done an Environmental Impact Assessment. Why would we need an EIA? We are not building a new university—we are only developing on an existing plan. The EIA was done in 1967 when the university was first being constructed. The university has to fulfil its function. It cannot be a sanctuary for birds.

**Mohammed Nasir Uddin**  
Director of planning and development office, JU



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## August 27, 2019

### BCL activists admit to having received shares of funds

At least 10 leaders and activists of JU BCL tell *The Daily Star* on condition of anonymity that they had received shares from Tk 1 crore handed over to three factions of the student body. They say top JU BCL leaders reached an understanding over the distribution of Tk 1 crore between them at a meeting allegedly held at the vice chancellor's residence on August 9.

In the subsequent days, phone recordings carrying proof of this negotiation surface, leading to the sacking of two BCL core leaders, Golam Rabbani and Rezwanaul Haque Chowdhury Shovon. At this point, the VC completely denies the allegation.

Protesters are also angered because the authorities continue to clear trees for the construction project amid allegations of corruption jeopardising the mega project.

## August 29, 2019

### TIB statement

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) side with the protesters and make a statement urging JU authorities to probe the "irregularities" centering its development work.

## September 3 and 4, 2019

### Demand of inquiry

Teachers and students of JU block the university's administration buildings until evening, demanding an inquiry into allegations of corruption.

## September 13, 2019

### VC speaks

*They insisted that I arrange the money from the companies that got the construction job. As I refused to entertain their demand, they misbehaved with me.*

*At one point, Rabbani said the days of one percent and two percent are long gone. Is it possible [to do such work] without paying less than four to six percent these days? ... It's a big project. If you help us, we will help you too," the VC says, quoting Rabbani as saying on August 8.*

*I told them how will we construct the buildings then? I also told them not to say such things ever again.... When I refused to cave in to their pressure, they shouted at me and then left.*  
JU VC Professor Farzana Islam



Shovon



Rabbani

## September 14, 2019

### "Demanded our fair share"

Rezwanaul Haque Chowdhury Shovon and Golam Rabbani are removed from the posts of Chhatra League president and general secretary for their involvement in extorting the JU VC. The decision is made by the PM and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

AL sources tell *The Daily Star* that JU VC Professor Farzana Islam informed the PM that Shovon and Rabbani demanded a cut between four to six percent from a Tk 1,445 crore mega project, and that she was furious.

"The BCL made a fabricated story to conceal their crimes and get rid of the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's annoyance," the vice chancellor says.

## September 17, 2019

### JU VC and family in a fix

A report is published on the front page of *The Daily Star* about JU vice chancellor and her family members' involvement, with a JU BCL faction publicly claiming it had received Tk 25 lakh as per a settlement reached at an August 9 meeting at the VC's residence. An audio leak that went viral following the ouster of central BCL president and secretary also indicates that an exchange of money involving the VC's family and JU BCL top brass took place.

Obaidul Quader, Awami League general secretary, says, "If she [VC] is involved in any unfair activities or if any link with the misdeed is proved, we will take measures."

## September 19, 2019

### Demo, counter demo in JU

At least 20 teachers and around 100 students bring out a procession demanding resignation of the VC. In another development, Bangabandhu Shikkhok Parishad, a teachers' platform also known as VC-backed teachers of the university, demand resignation of Pro-VC (admin) Professor Amir Hussain, saying that he was conspiring against the VC.

## September 28, 2019

### Sexual harassment complaint lodged

Jahangirnagar University students form a human chain in the campus demanding punishment of Sanwar Siraj, an assistant professor at the government and politics department, who allegedly sexually harassed a student. The victim, a student of the same department, had tried to commit suicide on September 23 by taking sleeping pills. She was hospitalised immediately, and released on September 26. On September 28, she lodged a complaint with the department head describing how her teacher kept pursuing her on Facebook Messenger, asking her to get intimate with him.

## September 30, 2019

### Section of JU teachers threaten strike

A faction of teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University continue their protests against the VC criticising her "role in corruption" and threaten to go on strike should she not resign.

## October 1, 2019

### VC expresses unwillingness to retire

VC Professor Farzana Islam refuses to resign from her post in the face of ongoing student movement protesting allegation of bribing Chhatra League men. "As the students' demand is void of logic and thus, I am not willing to resign," she says.

VC also calls students' demand for a judicial inquiry into the allegation "illogical". "It is an illogical demand. I can't do this. Even, I can't want this. The government will take the decision while the judiciary will think about it," she argues.



PHOTO: STAR

## October 10, 2019

### Teachers, students express frustration

A platform of teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University arrange a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity and express frustration over what it says is the government's indifference to allegations of corruption.



PHOTO: ASAD UZ ZAMAN