



Photos capture moments from yesterday’s clashes between quota reform demonstrators and members of law enforcement across the capital yesterday. *Clockwise:* Protesters assemble for a face-off with cops in Jatrabari. Fitted with riot gear, policemen shoot rubber bullets and lob teargas shells at protesters in Rampura. A toll plaza torched at the Jatrabari end of the Mayor Hanif Flyover. Agitators set fire to a police outpost in Rampura. A Rab chopper evacuates a group of stranded policemen from the campus building of Canadian International University in Badda. Police attack protesters for blocking the Mohakhali rail crossing. Quota reform demonstrators had called a “complete shutdown” across the country yesterday to protest the attacks on their fellows over the past few days along with their demand for reform to the quota system in government jobs.

PHOTO: STAR



Committee formed to probe Abu Sayed’s killing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinaipur

Rangpur police yesterday launched an investigation into the killing of Abu Sayed, of Begum Rokeya University, during a clash between cops and quota reform protesters on Tuesday.

In a video footage of the incident, Abu Sayed, 25, an unarmed protester and a student of the English department, was seen getting shot down by policemen in front of his university around 2:30pm.

The persons found responsible for the incident will be held accountable, said Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RMP) Commissioner Md Moniruzzaman.

The four-member probe body, led by RMP Additional Commissioner Saifuzzaman Faruki, has been asked to submit its report in two weeks, he added.

Meanwhile, a case has been filed with RMP’s Tajhat Police Station over Tuesday’s violence at BRUR.

Bhupoti Roy, sub-inspector of Tajhat Police Station, filed the case on charges of assaulting police, obstructing them from discharging their duties, and disregarding law and order.

So far, nine people have been arrested over Tuesday’s clashes.

Ukraine attacked Russian base on Crimea: Kyiv source

AFP, Kyiv

Ukrainian aerial and maritime drones struck Russian military targets on the annexed Crimean peninsula, a defence source in Kyiv told AFP Thursday, after Moscow reported an overnight drone assault.

Ukrainian forces have recently escalated drone and missile attacks on Russian military installations on the peninsula that was captured by Russian forces in 2014.

The source said an operation carried out by the navy and the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) had damaged or disabled a command centre and an ammo depot among other facilities at Lake Donuzlav in western Crimea.

At least 29 dead in daylong mayhem

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each in Dhanmondi and Savar lost their lives in the violence, police and hospital sources confirmed to The Daily Star.

Mizanur Rahman, superintendent of Bangladesh-Kuwait Friendship Hospital in Uttara, told The Daily Star around 11:30pm that eight victims were brought dead at their hospital. Six bodies were handed over to relatives, and the rest two were still at the hospital.

At the Crescent Hospital, also in Uttara, our correspondent saw relatives collect a body around 10:30pm.

At least six people were killed outside the capital – two each in Chattogram and Narsingdi and one each in Madaripur and Sylhet, police and hospital sources said.

Many of the victims were hit by shotgun pellets, as law enforcers fired indiscriminately.

Violent clashes between the demonstrators and law enforcers and AL activists took place in Dhaka’s Uttara, Jatrabari, Badda, Rampura, Dhanmondi, Mirpur and Science Laboratory Intersection.

Our district correspondents reported violence in at least 19 districts.

Along with police, Rab and Ansar members, 229 platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh personnel were deployed nationwide.

Many government and private offices were open yesterday in the capital. On the streets, there were very few three-wheelers, motorcycles, buses and private vehicles. The metro rail service from Uttara to Motijheel was partially halted.

Agitating students called the shutdown to protest the attacks by police, BGB, Rab and SWAI teams as well as ruling party activists, the deaths of fellow protesters, and also to demand punishment to the culprits, terror-free campuses and a logical reform to the quota system.

Violence erupted on Tuesday when at least six people, including three students, were killed and several hundred injured in clashes as the quota protests swelled after Chhatra League and AL activists attacked them at different universities on Monday.

The students continued their protest on Wednesday though it was a government holiday. They organised funeral and coffin processions and blocked roads and highways at different places. Chases and counter chases and running battles took place in different parts of the country, including the capital.

The authorities have since closed all public and private universities, colleges and primary and secondary schools. They also asked university students to leave their halls by Wednesday, and dispatched riot police and paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh members to the campuses.

In a press release last night, the home ministry issued a stern warning against violence.

“Law enforcers have been showing extreme patience so far. But if the miscreants continue to engage in destructive activities, law enforcement will be compelled to use the full force of the law to protect people’s lives and public properties,” said the release, signed by the senior public relations officer of

the ministry.

UTTARA

In Uttara, at least nine people were killed and more than 500 injured during daylong clashes between quota protesters and police.

The dead were taken to different local hospitals. Doctors said some bodies were taken away by students and families.

The violence broke out around 10:30am as police and Rab members tried to disperse students of different private universities, colleges and schools who blocked Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway near ABC Centre.

During the clashes, which continued till evening, law enforcers fired several hundred times from shotguns, over 100 tear shells and more than 100 sound grenades. The protesters hurled brick chips, said witnesses.

Around one kilometre stretch of the highway up to Rajlakshmi turned into a battlefield.

As students took many wounded protesters to local hospitals, doctors struggled to accommodate them all.

Doctors of three hospitals said they had to treat victims on the road in front of their hospitals as a large number of injured people were rushed there.

They said many of the dead were hit by shotgun pellets fired from close range.

In the evening, protesters gathered around Uttara Purba Police Station, and police fired from shotguns, leaving several of them injured, witnesses said.

Several establishments and a BGB vehicle were torched near the police station, according to witnesses.

JATRABARI

A clash between police and protesters erupted at Jatrabari intersection at 9:25am as police fired teargas shells.

The protesters regrouped at Shanir Akhra intersection and marched again towards Jatrabari where another clash took place at 11:00am.

Police fired teargas, rubber bullets, and sound grenades at the protesters. Activists from Chhatra League and Jubo League joined forces with police, throwing bricks at the protesters from the Mayor Hanif Flyover.

Around 1:30pm, the agitators reorganised and moved towards Jatrabari Police Station. They set fire to an abandoned private car next to the station. Police used water cannons to extinguish the fire and also to disperse the protesters.

Police and Rab fired several hundred rounds from shotguns and lobbed teargas shells.

Rab 10 Commander Mohammad Farid Uddin said they fired teargas, shotguns, and sound grenades to disperse the demonstrators.

DHANMONDI

A clash between quota protesters and police, who were joined by stick-wielding Jubo League men, ensued in Dhanmondi around 11:30am as police tried to disperse the students after they blocked the roads at Dhanmondi 27, witnesses said.

Farhan Faiyaz, 17, an HSC student of Residential Model College suffered injuries and was taken to City Hospital.

Osman Gani, assistant manager of the hospital, said Farhan was dead before he

was brought there.

About 200 injured people, mostly students, took treatment at the hospital.

Police fired teargas canisters to break off the agitating crowds, while Jubo League men chased the students.

The protesters later took position at different alleys, and violence spilled over to nearby areas.

Chased, students took shelters at different residential buildings where police lobbed teargas shells, creating panic, residents said.

BADDA

In Badda and Rampura, a man was killed and over 200 others, including students and police, were injured during a series of clashes.

Victim Dulal Matbor, a microbus driver, suffered serious wounds while crossing the area during the clashes. He was taken to a nearby hospital with a hole in his chest around 12:30pm where doctors declared him dead. Doctors could not immediately confirm whether the hole is from a bullet.

The protesters torched 12 motorcycles and the office of the assistant commissioner (traffic) of Rampura zone police box.

Police charged batons and fired teargas canisters at the students. They also lobbed teargas inside the campus of Canadian University of Bangladesh at Merul Badda, witnesses said. Both police and protesters also hurled brick chunks at each other.

Witnesses said several hundred students took to the street in front of the university campus around 10:30am. The clash began as police tried to bar them.

Later, students regrouped and chased away the police members. The clash spilled over to Rampura Bridge, where students of East West University joined the protest. The students allegedly vandalised a traffic police box and torched several motorcycles in Rampura.

At one point, policemen entered the Canadian University of Bangladesh and the demonstrators took position outside. Police fired from shotguns and lobbed teargas shells from inside the university, leaving many wounded. Several shops and establishments were vandalised by the protesters at the time.

Around 3:00pm, Rab helicopters airlifted 60 police personnel from the rooftop of a building.

The protesters also took position in Badda Link Road where some commoners also took part.

MIRPUR 10

Quota reform activists and police aided by Awami League men clashed at Mirpur 10 intersection. Police lobbed teargas shells and sound grenades, dispersing the protesters.

The protesters set fire to a footbridge at Mirpur 10.

Earlier, over 100 students chased AL leaders and activists who were holding a rally at the intersection. They also vandalised chairs brought for the rally and tore down banners.

Later, a chase and counter-chase between stick-wielding demonstrators and AL activists took place.

Govt for 80pc jobs on merit

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resist the creators of chaos, Quader said.

In a statement last night, the home ministry said law enforcers would be compelled to use the highest level of force according to the law if the destructive activities continue.

Meanwhile, four organisers of the quota reform protests yesterday on their Facebook pages said that it is the government that has to devise a solution to the prevailing crisis.

They rejected the law minister’s call for dialogue and vowed to continue their demonstrations.

“No dialogue will take place over the blood of martyrs. It is the government that has to devise a solution,” Nahid Islam, one of the key organisers, said in a Facebook post.

He said he feared that they might be arrested and may become victims of enforced disappearances. He urged others to continue with the demonstrations.

Protest organiser Asif Mahmud on his Facebook page said there can be no dialogue when shots are being fired. “I would rather die than betray the blood of martyrs.”

Sarjis Alam, another organiser, said, “How can there be dialogue over my brothers’ death?”

Hasnath Abdullah said it is not true that they made proposals for talks with the government.

The Daily Star could not reach the four protest organisers over the phone.

A life we will remember

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The woman in the video, his aunt Nazia Khan uttered, “He was more than a son to me... He is dead now....”

The video spread through the social media platform like fire, with people seeking justice for the young boy gone too soon.

His teachers lauded him as a bright and polite student.

“He was quiet and reserved. Everybody, including his classmates and teachers, used to love him... Even if we ever scolded him for anything, he never said a single word,” said DRMC Assistant Prof Md Nazrul Islam.

Nazrul, also a chemistry teacher of the college, said there were never any instances of him getting involved in any altercations with his classmate.

“Though he was not a regular student in my class due to an illness he had, I always found him to be gentle and humble whenever he attended.”

Faiyaz used to live with his grandmother in Mohammadpur’s

Their Facebook posts came hours after Law Minister Anisul Huq told media that following the offer of the protesters, the government agreed to hold discussions with them.

He also announced taking an initiative to hold the early hearing of the quota related case pending with the Supreme Court and forming a one-member judicial committee to investigate the killing of six people on Tuesday.

Afterwards, the Cabinet Division issued a circular forming a one-member inquiry committee led by High Court Justice Khandaker Diliruzzaman to investigate killings and other incidents.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim, chamber judge of the Supreme Court, following an appeal of the attorney general, fixed Sunday for a hearing on the quota-related case.

Anisul claimed that they learnt that the protesting students wanted talks. “We have welcomed their proposal. The prime minster also welcomed it.”

He said the prime minister assigned him and the education minister to talk to the students. “We will sit with them ...We are ready to sit with them anytime. We are ready to sit even today,” he told reporters at the Jatiya Sangsad complex.

“We think there is no need to continue with the protest anymore... I am requesting them to either call off the demonstrations or suspend it.”

Japan Garden City before moving in with his father in Kakrail a few months ago, he said.

Munzareen Shahid, a teacher of 10 Minute School, shared a photo of herself and Faiyaz on Facebook. Expressing disbelief at the loss of a beloved and bright student, she wrote, “He was my student ... He was not even 18! ... He has died!”

Mourning the loss of a bright student like Faiyaz, current and former students of Dhaka Residential Model College blackened their Facebook profile pictures, protesting his killing.

Using different hashtags, they demanded justice for the death of all the victims in the violence against quota reform protesters. They also demanded punishment to all those involved in the killings.

Some criticised the law enforcement’s actions on the protesters, stating the attacks were carried out to quell the movement.