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## PUBLIC MEDICAL COLLEGES 86 doctors, 136 students punished since August 5

AHMED DEEPTO

Over the last two months, at least 86 physicians and 136 students in eight public medical colleges and hospitals across the country have faced different punitive actions on various allegations, including "taking a stance against" the quota reform movement.

The physicians include five professors, three associate professors, two assistant professors and 41 interns, according to the office orders of these institutions.

They faced actions like suspension of internship and academic activities for various periods, expulsion from halls, and even recommendations for cancellation of medical certificates. Some have been declared "persona non grata" on campus for life.

General students from the respective campuses made the allegations, for which measures were taken against the 222 physicians and medical students between August 5 and October 2.

The allegations include opposing the quota reform movement; threatening students and doctors with an intent to sabotage the movement; participating in Awami League politics; and abusing students and doctors physically and mentally during the student-led mass uprising.

A number of these physicians and students also faced actions for alleged extortion on and around campus, violence, drug trade and use, threats on social media, ragging, and attacks on interns.

Of the 86 physicians, 36 are from MAG Osmani Medical College in Sylhet,

**“What is the benefit of expelling a student? Instead, they should be given a chance for correction. If there are serious allegations against anyone, the college authorities should file a case.”**

Prof Rashid-E-Mahbub,  
public health expert

17 from Sir Salimullah Medical College in Dhaka, 13 from Mymensingh Medical College, 12 from Sher-e-Bangla Medical College in Barishal, and eight from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College in Faridpur.

Of the 136 medical students, 39 are from M Abdur Rahman Medical College in Dinajpur, 28 from Mymensingh Medical College, 20 from Rajshahi Medical College, 19 from Osmani Medical College, 16 from Rangpur Medical College, 10 from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College, and four from Sir Salimullah Medical College.

The decisions come amid some level of unrest in the health sector after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government. After the August 5 political changeover, many heads and top officials of government healthcare facilities resigned or stopped coming to work, ultimately causing sufferings to patients.

The Daily Star has spoken to five directors and principals of as many medical colleges that have taken punitive actions. They said they made the decisions after investigations into the allegations either by the academic council or by the hospital management committee.

"We have taken the measures in response to the allegations of taking a direct stance against the anti discrimination student movement; providing a list of protesting doctors and students to government agencies; and issuing threats," said Dr HM Saiful Islam, director of Sher-e-Bangla Medical College.

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Thousands of devotees gathered at the Patenga sea beach in Chattogram to immerse the idol of Goddess Durga on Bijaya Dashami -- the final day of the Durga Puja festival -- yesterday. The custom of the immersion is symbolic of the departure of Durga to her home and to her husband Lord Shiva.

## REFORMS AHEAD OF POLLS BNP waits with cautious optimism

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Having weathered a very difficult 15 years as de facto opposition, the BNP now wants only the essential reforms done to ensure free and fair polls.

The party has reservations about sweeping reforms, which are likely to delay the holding of elections.

It fears the elaborate reforms, which seem to be on the interim government's agenda, may be a ploy to stretch this government's time in office.

Its leaders believe the incumbent administration still has remnants of the previous regime who could thwart the process of swift reforms.

The BNP is supporting the Yunus led government with cautious optimism since it has so far seen no evidence of any urgency to withdraw the thousands of cases against its activists and leaders, including those against

**“The prime mandate of this interim government is to restore democracy. But if they think they were given the mandate to reform everything under the sun, that would require them to stay in power for 100 years ...”**

Abdul Moyeen Khan, BNP standing committee member

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman.

"The interim government is somewhat confused as to how to address the challenge the nation is facing. They have a huge responsibility but they don't seem capable of delivering the

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## 2 tankers catch fire during LPG transfer in Bay Cause yet to be known

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two tankers caught fire during ship-to-ship transfer of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) at the anchorage off Kutubdia, Chattogram, early yesterday, in the third incident of vessels catching fire in two weeks.

The crew of the Captain Nikolas, a 230-metre Tanzania-flagged vessel, put out the flames around 3:00am, almost three hours after the ship caught fire, according to Chittagong Port Authority (CPA).

The fire at the B LPG Sophia, the smaller tanker, was not fully extinguished as of filing this report at 10:00pm yesterday.

CPA officials said firefighters were struggling to



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