



People gather at Shibbari Mor in Khulna, right, Raju Bhaskariya at Dhaka University, top left, and Chouhatta in Sylhet city, bottom left, to express solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza as the nation erupts in protests against Israeli brutalities yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh's relief team treats 619 in Myanmar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The rescue, medical, and humanitarian relief operations led by the Bangladesh Armed Forces in Myanmar after the devastating earthquake have entered their second week.



The special team, deployed under the directive of the Bangladesh government, remains actively engaged in supporting the quake-affected population.

The Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate disclosed the updates in separate press releases yesterday.

At the request of Myanmar's deputy prime minister, the Bangladeshi rescue team launched operations at the collapsed building of the

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Dhaka seeks 3-month pause on new tariffs

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requirements, rationalising packaging, labelling and certification requirements and undertaking trade facilitation measures such as simplifying customs procedures and standards."

These measures, Yunus emphasised, are aimed at creating a more open and predictable trade environment that supports increased US exports to Bangladesh.

The letter did not explain the reason behind choosing a three-month timeframe for the deferral request. Different international media outlets reported that Vietnam has also sought a three-month deferral of the reciprocal tariff on Vietnamese goods.

Trump has remained defiant since unleashing the blitz of levies on stunned countries around the world on April 2, insisting that his policies "will never change" even as markets went into a tailspin.

His staggered deadlines have left space for some countries to negotiate, even as he insisted he would stand firm and his administration warned against any retaliation, the AFP reported.

In a post on Truth Social yesterday, Trump threatened to terminate talks with China concerning their requested meetings with the US if China did not withdraw its retaliatory tariffs.

He, however, added that negotiations with other countries, which have also requested meetings, will "begin taking place immediately".

More than 50 countries have sought

talks with Trump to negotiate relief from the punitive tariffs on exports to the US, the White House said Sunday, as trade partners braced for fallout, the AFP said.

Yunus, in his letter to Trump, said that Bangladesh was the first to take "such a proactive initiative", mentioning the visit of his High Representative Khalilur Rahman to Washington, DC, in February, which indicates Bangladesh's intent to substantially increase imports from the US.

The chief adviser also said his government executed the necessary steps to launch Starlink, a US-based satellite internet provider owned by billionaire Elon Musk, in Bangladesh.

"This momentum ushers a new era for US businesses in Bangladesh across a number of advanced tech sectors including civil aviation and defence. We will complete the ongoing and planned actions within the next quarter."

The chief adviser said that Bangladesh, having the lowest tariff on most US exports in South Asia, commits to a zero tariff on American agricultural commodities, as well as on scrap metals.

A key focus of the government's action on the tariff issue is to significantly increase imports of US farm products, including cotton, wheat, corn and soybean, Yunus said.

The government was also finalising a dedicated bonded warehousing facility in Bangladesh where US cotton

will have duty-free access, he added.

Yunus also said Bangladesh is the first country to enter into a multi-year agreement to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the US, and has been exploring further collaboration since Trump lifted the freeze on LNG export permits.

Commerce Adviser Bashir Uddin, in his letter to the USTR, said the Yunus government was planning a long-term LNG deal with the US.

He mentioned that Bangladesh has a 6.10 percent weighted average tariff on US products, where raw cotton and steel scrap face 0 percent and 1 percent tariff, respectively.

He said the government had already held meetings with the trade wing of the US Embassy in Bangladesh to identify trade barriers and "agreed a number of measures to resolve".

The government also initiated reforms to enhance mutually beneficial trade, he said. The reform initiative includes import policy order, simplification of customs procedure, enforcement of intellectual property rights, and protection of trademarks and patent rights.

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Nation rallies against Gaza atrocities

FROM PAGE 1

In different parts of the capital, protesters—many waving Palestinian flags—chanted slogans such as "Free, Free Palestine" and "Stop Genocide in Gaza." Some carried effigies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and placards criticising the silence of world leaders, particularly those from the Muslim world.

In Dhaka, hundreds gathered near the US Embassy in Gulshan from the morning. A group of students gathered around 1:45pm at the footbridge opposite the embassy and chanted slogans like "Trump er duti gaaley, juta maaro taley taley" and "Who are we? Who are you? Palestine, Palestine."

Earlier in the day, a youth-led procession halted traffic in front of the embassy. Police and armed forces personnel were heavily deployed in the area, with officers forming human barricades and checking passers-by.

Administrative activities for two hours from 10:00am. It also postponed all classes and exams scheduled for the day. Confirming the suspension, Public Relations Director Mohammad Mohiuddin said it was done in support of the global movement.

Teachers and students of Jagannath University formed human chains and held rallies on campus, calling for a boycott of Israeli products and urging Muslim-majority countries to unite against Israeli aggression.

Speakers at the rally also slammed international bodies for what they termed as "criminal silence" on the Gaza crisis.

NATIONWIDE UPROAR

In Rajshahi, students, teachers, and staff of Rajshahi University staged a rally from Paris Road around 11:00am, carrying Palestinian flags and banners. They displayed images of US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, with messages condemning their role in the conflict.

In Chittagong, students from Chittagong Medical College brought out a procession at 11:00am, marching across the campus. Students from Chittagong College, Government Hazi Muhammad Mohsin College, Commerce College, and Hazeria Tajul College also joined the movement.

In Narsingdi, thousands of school and college students blocked the Dhaka-Sylhet highway for about an hour, calling for a boycott of Israeli products and the punishment of Israeli leaders.

In Cumilla, students, residents, and political leaders formed human chains and marched through the Pubali Chittora Kandirpar area.

In Chandpur, students from several institutions, including Chandpur Government Medical College and Chandpur Nursing Institute, took to the streets in large numbers. A protest rally was also held at the 250-bed Chandpur Government General Hospital.

In Pabna, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami organised a rally on Abdul Hamid Road in the town centre.

In Patuakhali, thousands gathered near the Circuit House in Jhautola from 10:00am. The crowd included students, political party workers, professionals, and families.

In Narayanganj, around 10:00am, demonstrators began gathering at the Central Shaheed Minar in Chashara in small processions. They later took to the streets in protest.

In Bandarban, a protest rally took place at the central bus terminal, followed by a protest gathering in front of the Bandarban Press Club. Speakers at the rally called for strong international intervention to immediately stop the Gaza genocide.

The protest rally saw participation from students, members of civil society, social organizations, and people from various walks of life.

In Gazipur, a protest march was held in the Chandana Chowrasta area this afternoon. The march circled various roads in Gazipur.

In Cox's Bazar, a protest march began around noon from Shaheed Daulat Maidan in front of Cox's Bazar Public Library, proceeding through Holiday Intersection, Laboni, and ending at Kolatoli.

In Sylhet, thousands of people from all walks of life joined a protest at the Central Shaheed Minar area at 3:00pm.

In Tangail, students of Alokito Hridoy School suspended classes and exams. They held a demonstration on the school premises from 9:20am to 1:00pm. Children displayed handmade banners and posters bearing messages such as "The World for Gaza," "Stop War," and "Stop Genocide."

In Bogura, thousands of students and people staged a large protest rally from morning to afternoon, condemning the attacks on Palestinians and demanding a boycott of Israeli products.

The people of Kishoreganj and

Kushtia also organised similar programmes.

Jamaat-e-Islami's Dhaka Metropolitan North Unit also held a rally and procession in the capital to protest Israel's attacks and genocide in Gaza.

VALDALISM MARS PROTEST

Rowdy elements from yesterday's protests committed vandalism and carried out looting at various business outlets, including restaurants and shoe stores, in multiple districts, including Sylhet, Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Khulna, Gazipur, and Bogura.

They tore down billboards and banners, stormed inside, trashed the properties, and looted the products on display. They alleged that those establishments sell pro-Israel and pro-American products.

In Cox's Bazar, at least five restaurants were attacked in the tourist zone.

Locals said the protest programme began around 12:00pm from the town's Shaheed Daulat Maidan area and proceeded through Holiday intersection, Laboni, and ended at Kolatoli.

At one point, a group of unruly protesters carried out vandalism on the pretext of boycotting Israeli products.

Several tourists were reported to have been injured during the vandalism.

Firoz Ahmed, manager of Kacha Lanka Restaurant, said, "There was a 7UP advertisement on our signboard, and they used that as an excuse to vandalise our restaurant."

Confirming that matter, Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station OC Elias Khan said police were deployed during the protest situation under control immediately.

In Bogura, riotous elements from the protest vandalised a shoe outlet in the town's Satmatha area around noon.

Witnesses said a group of people, who were shouting anti-Israel slogans, hurled brickbats and stones targeting the store. Within moments, all the windows were smashed.

The incident triggered panic and other shoe outlets in the town were closed following the incident.

Contacted, Bogura Sadar Police Station's OC SM Moinuddin confirmed the incident.

GOVT CONDEMNS GAZA GENOCIDE

Besides the citizen protests, the interim government yesterday strongly condemned Israel's ongoing military assault on Gaza, describing it as a gross violation of human rights. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement condemning Israel's indiscriminate aerial bombardment of civilian areas in Gaza and accusing Israel of attempting ethnic cleansing.

The statement called for an immediate halt to Israel's military operations, urging the country to adhere to international humanitarian law. Bangladesh also appealed to the international community, especially the United Nations, to take immediate action towards an unconditional ceasefire and ensure the protection of civilians and the unimpeded flow