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JnU protesters to press on with Kakrail sit-in

50 hurt as police beat up students, teachers; Adviser Mahfuj says govt open to talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jagannath University students last night declared they would not leave the streets until their three-point demand is met, after police action and Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam's attempt to move them through talks failed.

Several hundred students and some teachers, including the vice-chancellor and pro-vice chancellor, continued their sit-in in Dhaka's Kakrail intersection near Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' official residence Jamuna till the filing of this report at 1:00am.

The protesters said they would not withdraw their demonstration without getting assurances from Prof Yunus, who returned home around 8:00pm after his visit to Chattogram.

The students' demands include increased budget allocation for the university, introduction of a housing allowance, and improvement of academic facilities.

JnU Chhatra Dal's Member Secretary Shamsul Arefin, at a media briefing on behalf of the protesters around 12:00am, said, "After discussion with the students, we have decided that we will not leave this place under any circumstances."

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Police beat up a Jagannath University student protester near Kakrail mosque during the students' march to Jamuna, the chief adviser's residence, yesterday for housing allowance, increased budget allocation and improved academic facilities. Police baton-charged and fired tear gas shells at the protesters to disperse them.

'Let's create the world we envision'

Yunus tells graduates at 5th CU convocation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday urged everyone not to accept norms, but to work to create the kind of world they envision.



"I hope we all will try to shape the future of the world with our own hands, creating it as we envision," Yunus said in his speech at the 5th convocation ceremony of Chittagong University.

The CU authorities conferred an honorary Doctor of Literature degree on Yunus for his outstanding contributions to poverty alleviation through microcredit and establishing peace across the globe.

"Everyone should have a dream, imagining what kind of world, what kind

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MORE STORIES ON PAGE 3

SHAMMO MURDER Protests rage at DU JCD demands resignation of VC; DU forms probe body; 3 suspects held

DU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested three suspects over the murder of Dhaka University JCD leader Shahriar Alam Shammo at Suhrawardy Udyan, as his killing sparked outrage across the DU campus.

The arrestees are Tamim Hawlader, 30, Samrat Mallik, 28, and Palash Sarder, 30, said Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police.

They have no ties with the DU, he added. The arrests came after the killing, which took place on Tuesday night, drew strong reactions from various sections at DU, with different student bodies demanding exemplary punishment for the killers.

A platform named Students Against Terrorism has called a full-day strike at DU today, rejecting the administration's half-day mourning over the death of Shammo.

Earlier, in the evening, activists of JCD, Biplobi Chhatra Moitree, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, and Bangladesh Samajtantrik Chhatra Front held a torch procession on the campus under the banner of Students Against Terrorism.

They also urged students to boycott all classes, exams, and administrative activities, calling the university's response "insensitive and inadequate."

They said the strike will conclude with a protest rally at 5:00pm at the Aparajeyo Bangla, demanding the resignation of the vice-chancellor and proctor for their failure to provide security for students.

According to Sub-Inspector Tawfique Hasan of Shahbagh Police Station, the three arrestees, along with others, had a scuffle with Shammo at the Suhrawardy Udyan and subsequently killed him.

He said the scuffle took place when a motorcycle of the accused collided with Shammo's bike.

The SI, however, did not say whether the man who stabbed Shammo was among the arrestees.

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IMF LOAN TRANCHES Agreement with IMF at last

Extra \$762m sought from IMF; \$3.3b expected from dev partners by June

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The government has reached a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund for the fourth and fifth tranches of the \$4.7 billion loan programme, resolving months of uncertainty over their disbursement.

Besides, it has sought an additional \$762 million to navigate the "significant

revenue mobilisation and full implementation of exchange rate reforms, said Chris Papageorgiou, the IMF mission chief for Bangladesh, in the statement.

"The authorities reiterated their commitment to the objectives of the reform programme including fiscal reforms to address the emerging external financing gap, calibrating monetary policy to bring down inflation and fully

The authorities reiterated their commitment to the objectives of the reform programme including fiscal reforms to address the emerging external financing gap, calibrating monetary policy to bring down inflation and fully implementing exchange rate reforms to enhance flexibility.

— IMF

macroeconomic challenges", the IMF said in a statement yesterday.

The disbursement of the two tranches, amounting to about \$1.3 billion, and the request for a top-up of the loan amount are now awaiting approval by the IMF board.

The board approval is contingent on the completion of prior actions related to tax

implementing exchange rate reforms to enhance flexibility," the statement said.

Key priorities include streamlining tax exemptions, enhancing tax compliance and delineating tax policy from administration, the IMF said, adding that a comprehensive approach is required in parallel to rein in subsidy expenditures in the electricity sector.

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BB eases currency controls in IMF reform push

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has moved to a more flexible, market-oriented exchange rate system, easing pressure on foreign exchange reserves and meeting a key condition tied to a \$4.7 billion loan programme with the International Monetary Fund.

The central bank yesterday lifted a Tk 1 spread between buying and selling rates of the dollar by repealing a January directive. At the same time, it reinstated an earlier circular issued in December 2024, allowing banks to "freely" negotiate the dollar rate for both interbank and customer transactions. That marks a formal return to a pricing framework driven by demand and supply.

While not a fully floating regime, the move grants banks wider autonomy in setting rates and reflects a shift toward managed flexibility.

Bangladesh Bank is now expected to step back from daily intervention but will retain the option to stabilise the market when necessary. To that end, it has set aside a \$500 million fund to support the foreign exchange market.

"We believe the exchange rate will remain broadly where it is now, around its current level," Governor Ahsan H Mansur told reporters at a virtual briefing from Dubai yesterday.

"We don't anticipate any need for intervention going forward. This does not mean the dollar can be sold at any price. We will be able to keep the market-based system operational."

Mansur also warned that the central bank would take firm action against rogue traders seeking to manipulate the market.

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BSF pushes back 60 more Bangladeshis Says BGB

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

India's Border Security Force (BSF) pushed back at least 60 Bangladeshis through borders in Sylhet and Moulvibazar yesterday.

In Sylhet, BSF members pushed back 16 Bangladeshis through the Atgram border in Kanaighat upazila in the morning.

The group includes eight men, six women, and two children.

A BGB patrol team (Zakiganj Battalion) detained them soon after they entered Bangladesh, said Lieutenant Colonel Md Zubayer Anwar, commanding officer of the 19 BGB Battalion.

Lt Col Zubayer said their identities have been confirmed after questioning. They are Bangladeshis, and BSF pushed them back following illegal entry into India.

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Teachers and students of Dhaka University demonstrate near the vice-chancellor's residence yesterday, demanding justice for Shahriar Alam Shammo, a Chhatra Dal activist who was murdered near Suhrawardy Udyan on Tuesday night.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

DEATH OF MIGRANTS IN KSA HRW calls for investigation, compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Human Rights Watch investigation found that migrant workers from Bangladesh, India and Nepal have died in gruesome yet avoidable workplace-related accidents in Saudi Arabia.

Many migrant deaths in the Gulf country are erroneously classified as "natural" and are neither investigated nor compensated, said the report.

It found that employers violated or sought to evade their obligation under Saudi law that requires employers to bear the costs of repatriation of the remains.

HRW found that the "No Objection Certificate" given to a Bangladeshi worker who died of "electrocution" marked the possibility of compensation as "no", with the cause of death as "not available".

The son of the Bangladeshi man who died of electric shock told HRW that his father's employer said that they will receive compensation if they agree on a burial in Saudi soil. "The family rejected this and had to pay more than Tk 5 lakh to repatriate the body, which they financed through loans. The family received Tk 3.35 lakh in compensation from the Bangladeshi government," the report said.

The family is now in debt, it said. The family members of nine deceased Bangladeshi workers told HRW that the employers offered lump sum payments or coverage of monthly expenses provided that the dead are buried in Saudi Arabia.

"Despite their dire economic conditions, eight families said they had refused these offers while six paid the repatriation costs themselves," said the report.

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