

Genocide on Bangladeshi Students

and

Our Appeal to the World



For many years, the students have been agitating and staging demonstrations to demand reforming the quota system in the government job sectors, especially recruited by the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC). According to the act, there was a 56 percent quota in government jobs, including 30% for children and grandchildren of freedom fighters, 10% for individuals from each district, 10% for women, 5% for tribal people, and 1% for physically challenged people. In 1997, students raised their voices against discrimination in the quota system in government job sectors for the first time. Their protest continued in 2007 and 2013 at Dhaka University, though the government did not pay attention to the demand. In 2018, protests sparked across the country as the demand got the attention of the whole student community. Consequently, the government was compelled to abolish the quota system in first and second-class government job recruitment processes after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's declaration in parliament. The student community demanded a reform of the quota system, but the illegal prime minister (Seizing power through a non-voter election) demolished the whole quota system out of her anger. Since the liberation war, Awami League (the current ruling party) has been using the liberation war as one of the main tools for its political interests; they have recently tried to bring back this quota system by using the legal loopholes and the courts. However, the conscious student society of Bangladesh formed a nationwide peaceful movement against this government attempt and again raised the demand for the logical reform of the quota system. Even the freedom fighters and many of their heirs supported the students in this movement.

At first, the public university students started the movement. However, the people responsible for the government did not take any initiative to listen to the students' speeches. They directly announced to suppress the protesters by Chhatra League (the pro-government party Awami League's student wing, which is the government's vigilante force). In such a situation, on July 14, the Prime Minister insulted the protesting students as 'Razakar's grandson' (Razakar refers to the volunteers of the Pakistani army during the liberation war of Bangladesh), which greatly angered the student community across the country. Aggrieved students, who were on the streets demanding fair rights, raised slogans like 'Ami ke, tumi ke/ Razakar, Razakar' (who are you, who am I/ Razakar, Razakar) on the campuses. The very next day, when the government tried to stop the movement with force by using the Chhatra League, a terrorist organization, and the mercenary Lathial Bahini (baton-bearing group) on the agitators, the spark

of the movement spread to all the campuses of the country. Government forces like the Police, RAB (Rapid Action Battalion- a force which the USA sanctions), BGB (Border Guard Bangladesh), and Ansar; Terrorist organizations like Chhatra League, Jubo League, and mercenary terrorists tried to turn this peaceful student movement into violence by attacking them. The attack of the Chhatra League on talented students, especially women students of Dhaka University, is very distressing to the mass people. The students boycott Chhatra League from all the campuses of the country.

The government, unable to stop the student protests despite using force, announced the closure of all universities, colleges, schools, and madrasahs in the country on July 16. After these, police attacked students and forced them to leave the campuses and dormitories, including Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, and Rajshahi University. Even the administration expels them from the mess (private residential area of the students). **Being unable to stop the movement, the government forces started mass killing by firing on the marches of the general students indiscriminately. As a result of this action, the students of all the educational institutions of the country, as well as the mass people, came down to the streets, and this movement of the students turned into the most significant mass uprising in Bangladesh in remembrance history.** Unable to restrain the protesters on the road, the police, RAB, and BGB fired bullets, tear shells, and sound grenades from helicopters.

Especially since July 18, the government has brutally committed genocide on students and general people by shutting down all internet connections across the country and holding the country's media hostage, leaving the entire world in the dark. The actual death toll has yet to be ascertained. State-controlled media reports at least 209 dead, but the actual number is several times that number. There are still many bullet-riddled, unidentified, dead bodies lying in hospital morgues. Many parents are looking for their children in the morgue of hospitals. Thousands of students are groaning in excruciating pain, being shot and stabbed. Many are spending time on the beyond of life and death. Initially, Chhatra League also attacked the emergency department of the hospitals, disrupting the treatment of the injured. Now, the government forces are arresting the injured students and their relatives from the hospital as well, forcing them to leave the hospital without treatment and robbing the documents containing the information about the injury and the death from the hospitals. Thousands of

innocent students are detained, arrested, and brutally tortured. Some of the coordinators of the quota reform movement disappeared and were tortured inhumanely. Government agencies are even preventing the funerals and burial of the bodies of those genocide victims in the movement. After failing all drastic measures, the government imposed a nationwide curfew on the night of July 19 and deployed the army, which is still (July 27) in place. Internet connection is yet to be fully opened. In the areas where the internet connection has been launched, it has also become prolonged.

In this extreme brutality, the head of government of every civilized country resigns by taking responsibility for all the incidents. **The illegal Prime Minister of Bangladesh should also resign and surrender to the court, taking responsibility for the horrific genocide by his corrupt government forces and party militants.** But he (who is in power for the fourth consecutive term by destroying the electoral system of Bangladesh) is constantly venting his anger against the agitators without regard for civility. The government is carrying out mass arrests across the country, blaming the massacre on peaceful protesters. Protesters are forced to flee their families and homes to avoid arrest, which is the worst form of fascism and authoritarian behavior.

In such a situation, the student community is continuing the protest with the following 9-point demands:

- 1) The prime minister must accept responsibility for the mass killings of students and publicly apologize.
- 2) The Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader [he is also the general secretary of the Awami League], Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nowfel, Law Minister Anisul Haq must resign from their [cabinet] positions and the party.
- 3) Police officers (DIG, Police Commissioner, and Police Super) at the sites where students were killed must be sacked.
- 4) Vice Chancellors and Proctors of Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, and Rajshahi University must resign.
- 5) The police and goons (Chhatra League and Jubo League leaders and workers) who attacked the students and those who instigated the attacks must be arrested.
- 6) Families of the killed and injured must be compensated.
- 7) The terrorist organization Bangladesh Chhatra League and corrupted student politics must be banned, and student parliament should be established in all educational institutions, including Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Chittagong University, and Rajshahi University.
- 8) All educational institutions and student dormitories must be reopened.
- 9) Guarantees must be provided that no academic or administrative harassment of protesters will occur.

Though protesters did not directly demand the resignation of the government, the **reality is that the government, which has destroyed all the constitutional institutions of Bangladesh, brought the country's economy to the brink of collapse, and established a brutal dictatorship in the country, the genocide will not be prosecuted without the resignation of this government. The people of Bangladesh will not be emancipated as well.**

Therefore, our appeal to the people of the world is to raise your voices to demand the resignation of the current illegal government of Bangladesh and justice for the genocide on students as well as masses people and express your solidarity with Bangladeshis in the struggle for democratic rights.

Regards

SCB The Student Community of Bangladesh

