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## What are polytechnics students after ?

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Students of the 18 polytechnic institutes in the country are agitating for about four months to press home some of their demands including stopping the introduction of 'Higher Diploma' engineering course in the Islamic Centre for Technical Vocational Training and Research which is expected to start operation soon. Diploma engineers have also joined the agitation.

The agitation by the students has already led to some unhappy incidents in Dhaka city. And such incidents prompted the authorities concerned to close the institutes for some time for maintaining peace and discipline.

From the charters of demands, and memoranda submitted

led by the polytechnic students and the diploma engineers, it appears that the agitators fear that the introduction of the course named 'Higher Diploma' would lower the importance of the Diploma courses they pass through at the polytechnic institutes. In these institutes they are offered diploma on engineering. They thus feel that those having 'Higher Diploma' would have preference in respect of employment. They say qualification for enrolment in the 'Higher Diploma' course is twelve years of schooling, whereas ten years of schooling is the minimum requirement for admission to the polytechnic institutes. The diploma engineers of the country, who are at odds with the degree engineers,

suspect that this was another "conspiracy" by the latter to undermine their status. The same feeling runs high among the polytechnic institutes.

The diploma engineers who have recently formed an action council to press home their demand, maintain that the course curricula, and the co-diploma course were actually tract hours of the 'Higher diploma' course were actually "diploma" course offered by the polytechnic institutes. They maintained they were only after changing of the name of the course and nothing else. They also say, the minimum qualification for admission at the Institute should be ten years of schooling.