

Med Tech, Pharmacy

# Students demand separate directorate

A group of medical technology and pharmacy students staged a sit-in in front of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) in the capital yesterday, calling for a six-point demand that includes establishing a dedicated government directorate for their disciplines.

The protest began around 9:00am at Mohakhali's TB Gates, with students initially blocking the Gulshan Link Road.



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Under the banner of the "Anti-Discrimination Medical Technology and Pharmacy Student Action Council," they chanted slogans and held placards with messages such as "Pharmacists are essential for drug formulation" and "Recruit medical technologists."

After briefly moving to the DGHS main gate, the students resumed the road blockade by 11:30am, disrupting traffic flow from Gulshan to Amtali.

Their demands include establishing a separate department for medical technologists and pharmacists, granting diploma holders 10th-grade status and resuming the halted 2013 recruitment process, creating 9th-grade positions for graduate medical technologists and pharmacists, upgrading Dhaka's Institute of Health Technology (IHT) to university status, forming a Medical Technology Council and a Diploma Medical Education Board, and launching BSc and MSc programs across all IHTs, including BPharm, with scholarships and training allowances.

The protesters highlighted a recruitment freeze for medical technologists, which has persisted for over 14 years.

Currently, only 4,106 of the 5,975 government-sanctioned medical technologist positions are filled. The students cited World Health Organization (WHO) standards that recommend a ratio of three nurses and five medical technologists per doctor.

Many technologists have now exceeded the age limit for government jobs due to recruitment delays, the protesters said, pointing to prolonged discrimination and administrative issues as obstacles.

Sohel Howladar, joint secretary of the platform, said DGHS officials, including the director general, have assured the protesters that their demands will be addressed.

"We were assured that steps would be taken to meet our demands, so we cleared the road. However, if the demands remain unmet, we will announce further actions, including a long march," Sohel told

