

# Rape protest: JU students briefly block Dhaka-Aricha highway



Photo: Star/Sakib

Jahangirnagar University (JU) students blocked the Dhaka-Aricha highway tonight, protesting the rising incidents of rape and violence against women across the country.

They demanded the highest punishment for rapists and the resignation of Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.



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More than a hundred students, mostly from the university's female dormitories, brought out a torch procession around 10:10pm and marched through campus roads before gathering at the university's central Shaheed Minar.

Another group, under the banner Dhorshon Birodhi Manch, joined in solidarity. After a brief rally, the agitating students moved to the Dairy Gate and blocked the Dhaka-Aricha highway for 35 minutes from 10:55 pm to 11:30pm, disrupting traffic on both sides.

Chanting slogans such as "Dhorshokder biruddhe direct action" and "Ek, dui, tin, char—Jahangir, tui godi char", the protesters demanded justice.

Speakers at the gathering called for fair investigations into rape cases, particularly the recent rape of an eight-year-old child in Magura, and condemned the interim government's failure to ensure women's safety.

Syeda Shawli, spokesperson of Dhorshon Birodhi Manch, said, "We have reached a point where we are all victims. The government has never ensured our safety. We fought to remove a dictatorship, yet we are back on the streets demanding security for our lives and dignity. The police, who shot at us during the July protests, cannot protect our sisters today. Oppressors must be held accountable."

Associate Professor Ahsan Imam of the Bangla department said, "No woman is safe -- whether a child, a pregnant woman, a disabled person, or the elderly. This is not the Bangladesh we wanted. Rapists must face the death penalty. We refuse to tolerate another case of sexual violence."

The students held the interim government responsible for failing to curb gender-based violence and urged immediate action to ensure women's safety.

They warned that if the government could not do so, it should step down.