

Polytechnic students hold shroud processions

They say movement to continue until demands met

Staff Correspondent  19 April, 2025, 01:00

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Dhaka Polytechnic Institute students bring out a 'shroud procession' in Dhaka's Tejgaon area, as part of a central programme to press home their six-point demand, on Friday afternoon. | Sony Ramani

Polytechnic students in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country brought out shroud processions on Friday to press home their six-point demands and protest at the attack on protesters by law enforcers in Cumilla on April 16.

In the Dhaka city, several hundred students of the city's different polytechnic institutions, including Dhaka Polytechnic Institute, brought out a shroud procession after jumma (Friday congregational) prayers from the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute campus mosque to the Sat Rasta crossing in the Tejgaon area.

Their six-point demands include the cancelation of a High Court verdict that allows the promotion of craft instructors to junior instructors.

On April 16, the polytechnic students in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country staged demonstrations by blocking roads, highways and rail tracks to press home their demands.

The blockade at places in the country had disrupted communications and commuters had to suffer immensely on the day.

While talking to reporters after the shroud procession on Friday, Karigori Chhatra Andolan Bangladesh central representative Md Mashfiq Islam said that they had been protesting for the past seven months to press home their demands, but their demands were yet to be met.

'We have relaxed our countrywide rail blockade programme due to meeting with the education adviser. But, we are not satisfied with the meeting's outcome. We will continue our movements across the country until our demands are met,' said Mashfiq.

He threatened the government with tougher movements in the coming days.

Jubayer Patowari, another central representative of the movement, said that they demanded punishment of the attackers on polytechnic students in Cumilla through a fair investigation.

'We don't want law enforcers' actions on students like the ousted fascist regime,' he said, adding that the government had to ensure treatment for the injured students in Cumilla.

Polytechnic students also brought out shroud processions in different districts, including Chattogram, Cumilla, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Dinajpur and Sherpur in line with the central programme on Friday.

Mashfiq and Jubayer said that they would announce their next programmes after consulting with the polytechnic alumni.

They alleged that though the deputy assistant engineers and 10th-grade posts in the government, autonomous and private organisations were designated for polytechnic students, many such organisations were appointing diploma engineers in lower grade posts.

They urged the government to take legal action against the organisations that are appointing diploma engineers in posts lower than the 10th grade.

They demanded forming a technical and higher education ministry and a technical education reform commission for their cause.

They also demanded a ban on appointing people having no technical education background as assistant directors, directors, board chairpersons, deputy secretaries, examination controllers and principals for running the technical education.