

100 students injured in secretariat clash

Staff Correspondent  22 July, 2025, 19:40



Students fall on top of each other as law enforcers chase them outside the secretariat during a protest, demanding the resignation of education adviser, in Dhaka on Tuesday. | Md Saurav

Over 100 protesting students and 16 members of the security forces were injured as the students entered the Bangladesh secretariat bypassing security barricades and locked into clashes with the Bangladesh Army and police in the capital Dhaka on Tuesday, demanding mainly the resignation of the education adviser and the secretary for their alleged failure to postpone Tuesday's HSC and its equivalent examinations at the appropriate time.

The clash erupted after several hundred Higher Secondary Certificate examinees of different colleges stormed into the secretariat through its main gate and carried out vandalism inside the country's administrative hub.



The protesting students alleged that they were not informed about the postponement of the examinations Monday night and many of the examinees came to know about it when they reached their respective examination centres.

Police charged batons and lobbed tear gas and sound grenades to contain the situation at the secretariat.

Quoting education ministry adviser Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar, popularly known as CR Abrar, the information and broadcasting ministry at about 3:00am on Tuesday issued a press release saying that the Tuesday's HSC and its equivalent exams were suspended.

Later Tuesday morning, the chief adviser's press wing issued a press release in this regard.

Following the protests, the education ministry's Secondary and Higher Education Division senior secretary Siddique Zobair was withdrawn on the day.

Information and broadcasting adviser Mahfuj Alam on Tuesday in a post on his verified Facebook account confirmed the withdrawal.

In the post, Mahfuj also said that very soon a committee would be formed by coordinating a six-point demand of the students to conduct a full investigation into the 'Milestone tragedy', adding, 'the government is accountable to accept any fair demand.'

As of Tuesday, at least 31 people, mostly primary-level students, were killed and 165 other injured after a Bangladesh Air Force jet crashed into a building of Milestone School and College in the capital's Uttara area on Monday, according to the Inter Services Public Relations Directorate.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Ramna division deputy commissioner Masud Alam told New Age that 10-12 police personnel were seriously injured and four Bangladesh Army members were also injured in the secretariat clash on Tuesday.

Asked why police used force, the police official said that the agitating protesters had entered the secretariat, beaten police and vandalised vehicles.

He said that the process for filling a case over the incident was under way.

Police picked up four protesters during the clash at the secretariat to interrogate, said Shahbagh police station officer-in-charge Khalid Mansur.

Ideal College student Fahad Alam claimed that over 100 protesting students were injured in police attack and most of the injured were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

At the DMCH, 85 students were taken for primary treatment while one with head injuries was admitted, said DMCH police outpost in-charge Md Faruk.

Bangladesh's interim government on Tuesday postponed the HSC and its equivalent examinations scheduled to be held on Tuesday and Thursday across the country.

The decision was made as the interim government was observing one-day state mourning on Tuesday over the death and injury due to the BAF jet crash.

The protesting students took position in front of the secretariat, blocking roads at about 2:00pm alleging that the education adviser showed 'lack of humanity' by delaying the postponement of the HSC and its equivalent examinations after the tragic jet crash.

Their eight-point demand included the resignation of the education ministry adviser and the secretary and the publication of the actual list of death in the jet crash.

Dhaka Commerce College student Asif Mahmud told New Age that the adviser should postpone the examinations much earlier as the state mourning was announced on Monday.

'The nation is observing mourning today (Tuesday) but the ministry denied postponing the examinations yesterday (Monday),' said Asif, adding that the students came to know about the postponement in the morning.

'We do not need any adviser who cannot feel sorrow after such an incident and who is not sincere about academic life of students,' said Shariful Miraz, a student of Adamjee Cantonment College.

At about 3:45pm, law enforcers took actions to disperse the protesters when they entered inside the secretariat and vandalised vehicles inside, breaking police barricade.

Chase and counter-chase between the protesters and the law enforcers took place for about two hours in the secretariat area.

Meanwhile, in a post from his verified Facebook account, Pinaki Bhattacharya said that after the accident he immediately called the education adviser at Bangladesh time 3:00pm on Monday and urged him to postpone the exams (HSC and equivalent) though he did not usually call the advisers.

The adviser told him that he would look into the matter, the post mentioned.

‘I did not imagine he could not make this decision. Later, I came to know the education secretary did not agree to postpone this exam. Then why will Abrar bhai stay as the education adviser? The education secretary should be made the adviser,’ the post added.

In the post, Pinaki urged the people to show the education secretary the door today even if he postponed the exams.

HSC examinees in Rajshahi, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet also staged demonstrations, demanding the resignation for making a late-night announcement regarding the postponement of Tuesday’s HSC and its equivalent examinations, reported district correspondents.

Earlier in the face of student protest, the government on August 20, 2024, had cancelled the remaining six examinations of the postponed HSC and equivalent examinations past year.

On August 20, several hundred students had stormed the secretariat through different gates and later many students had gone to the offices of the education ministry on the 18th floor and had taken position there. At one stage, the decision of cancelling the remaining exams had been made.

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