

# Barishal University teachers' shutdown over promotion row enters third day

Classes, examinations and administrative activities remain suspended across the campus

2 HOUR(S) AGO UPDATED 2 HOUR(S) AGO CAMPUS

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Our Correspondent, Barishal



*File photo*

The indefinite shutdown programme enforced by teachers at University of Barishal over promotion demands continued for the third consecutive day today, leaving academic and administrative activities paralysed.

Classes, examinations and all administrative functions remained suspended across the campus amid the ongoing movement.



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A section of teachers involved in the protests claimed that the government may appoint a new vice-chancellor at any time, alleging that the current administration has failed to control the situation.

“The vice-chancellor has failed to manage the crisis and demonstrated incompetence in resolving the issue,” protesting teachers alleged, adding that there was now a strong possibility of a new VC being appointed soon.

Department of Disaster Management Chairman Hafiz Ashraful Haque said the current vice-chancellor had “completely failed” to resolve the crisis.

“We no longer have any confidence in the current VC,” he said.

According to him, salary increments for teachers, officers and staff members have remained stalled for the last two years.

“He keeps making contradictory statements. To hide one falsehood, he tells ten more. If he was genuinely incapable of resolving the matter, he could have admitted that directly instead of creating confusion through inconsistent remarks,” he added.

Hafiz Ashraful Haque further said that 72 teachers had already submitted written resignation letters to leaders of the movement.

“Several more resignation letters are yet to be collected. Some teachers are in Dhaka while others are ill. Once all the letters are gathered, we will submit them to the authorities,” he said.

A visit to the campus today found very few students present due to the suspension of classes and examinations. Locks were seen hanging from several administrative offices, including the registrar building, the controller of examinations office and the accounts section.

University sources said Vice-Chancellor Mohammad Toufiq Alam has not been on campus since Tuesday and is currently staying in Dhaka.



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## 72 teachers of Barishal University resign from admin posts

Teachers leading the movement said they had held a general meeting regarding the ongoing situation and raised two key demands. These include cancelling the initiative to formulate a new statute based on the uniform policy adopted at the syndicate meeting and ensuring promotions for all eligible teachers under the existing 2015 promotion policy.

According to sources, 24 teachers are currently awaiting promotion to professor, 30 to associate professor and six to assistant professor positions.

Teachers have been observing work abstention and shutdown programmes since April 21 in support of these demands. Although the movement was temporarily relaxed following assurances at a syndicate meeting on May 5, teachers resumed the indefinite shutdown from Monday after no decision on promotions was reached at the May 9 meeting.

The protesting teachers have also declared the vice-chancellor unwelcome on campus.

Students said examinations scheduled before Eid had repeatedly been postponed, raising concerns over session delays.

Repeated attempts to contact VC Toufiq Alam by phone went unanswered.

However, his personal assistant, Md Borhan Uddin, told The Daily Star that there had been “no new development” regarding the university situation.

“Sir tried to communicate with the teachers but failed. The situation remains unchanged,” he said.

Earlier, the VC administration had stated that promotions would be granted in line with the uniform policy issued by the University Grants Commission in January this year and that additional time was required to formulate a new statute.

However, protesting teachers argued that meetings of the promotion boards and recommendations had already been completed six months before the UGC issued the new policy, meaning the revised guideline should not obstruct their promotions.

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