



The strange case of JnU

Administrations came and went, but the institution with some 20,000 students remains the only public university with no halls; students demand PM's intervention



Jagannath University students demonstrate on the Central Shaheed Minar premises to press home their demand for residential halls. The photo was taken on August 26.

PHOTO:
PALASH KHAN

MARTIN SWAPAN PANDEY

For over a decade now, there have been class boycotts, exam cancellations, cases and counter cases, and even violence on the streets, but none of these has solved the accommodation problem of Jagannath University students.

Over the years, while successive

university administrations have not done enough to address the issue, the government and the University Grants Commission (UGC) in particular allocated little money to buy land and build halls there, teachers and general students have said.

Pushed to the wall as they always have been, JnU students have returned to the streets again,

demanding Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's personal intervention this time.

This year's protest comes two years after the 2014 failed attempt to reclaim the land of the 12 halls of the erstwhile Jagannath College that went to the hands of "illegal" occupants of various categories in the 1990s.

The current occupants include police members, a lawmaker, businessmen and leaders of Awami League-affiliated bodies.

"On the hall issue, we have lost confidence in the university administration and the education ministry. We now want a clear roadmap from the prime minister outlining

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