

Bangladesh students protest Israeli genocide in Gaza

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Thousands of university and college students across Bangladesh staged demonstrations on Monday, joining the wave of international student protests opposing the imperialist-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza.

The protesting Bangladeshi students also condemned the brutal police crackdown on students at university campuses and colleges across the US where they are also campaigning against Israel's barbaric war.

Dhaka University was the main centre of Monday's protests with students participating from other campuses and colleges. According to the Bangladesh-based *New Age*, other demonstrations were held at universities in Jahangirnagar, Chittagong, Comilla, Rajshahi and the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

Significant numbers of students also protested at Shah Azizul Haque College in Bogura and Mymensingh's Agricultural University. Palestinian students enrolled at these universities and university lecturers also participated.

The students at the rallies and marches carried banners with slogans such as "Free Palestine, Stop Genocide! Down with Zionism! Ceasefire in Gaza now!" The rally at Dhaka University, which was joined by several university lecturers, was under the banner "Solidarity with Free Palestine Movement in American Universities!"

Solaiman Khan, a 23-year-old Dhaka University student, told *Arab News*: "The US and some other big players always speak in favor of freedom of speech. But what we have seen at university campuses in the US is a shame for all world leaders." He added: "The youth [of Bangladesh] have come onto the streets against this sort of hypocrisy from the superpowers of the world."

Another student said: "We are here for the basic

human rights of Palestinian people, for liberty, peace, harmony and justice. We Bangladeshis know about war, we know about peace, we know conflicts and sufferings, we know the tragedy of colonisation, occupation, suppression and repression and we [know] the sufferings of the Palestinian people."

Issaq Nomura, a Palestinian studying in Bangladesh, told the *Dhaka Tribune*, "The first protest started at Columbia University, spread to universities across the USA and is now at universities all around the world. We stand today in solidarity with these people [students]. I want to shout my heart out to students back in my home Palestine. There are 300,000 Palestinian students in Gaza who cannot go to their schools or their colleges or universities."

Monday's nationwide demonstrations were preceded by an anti-genocide protest by Dhaka University students on Sunday.

Mosaddek Ibne Mohammad Ali, who attended that event, told the media: "What Israel has been doing to the people of Gaza is clearly a war crime and genocide. The Netanyahu administration has violated all the humanitarian laws. This illegal war must be stopped for the sake of humanity."

He condemned the Biden administration's unwavering support for Israel and recalled previous US imperialist wars: "They violated the laws of democracy in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and now they are violating democracy in their own country [by] attacking and imprisoning the students."

Dhaka University law professor Nakib Mahmud Nasrullah supported the demonstration declaring that Israel's genocidal attacks on Gaza were a global question. "It is not just an important issue for Muslims to stand with the people of Palestine... Netanyahu and Biden are the direct supporters of this war and they are

war criminals.”

This week’s protests were mainly organised by the Bangladesh Students’ League, the student wing of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s ruling Awami League. Its president, Saddam Hussain, read out a “Memorandum of Peace” at the end of Monday’s protest at Dhaka University.

The memorandum condemned the witch-hunting of students at US universities, noting the students were defying “intimidation and repression, demanding divestment from the arms that fill the machinery of oppression and genocide...”

In line with the Awami League’s pro-capitalist policies, Hussain made a futile appeal to the “world leaders,” including the US and other major powers, for peace. But these are the very same forces who fully support and provide billions of dollars in weaponry for the Netanyahu regime’s criminal war. Hussain called for these imperialist powers “to stand in solidarity with the oppressed, to fight for justice, peace and equality... now.”

Addressing a press conference on May 2, Prime Minister Hasina also criticised the arrest of the US students as a “breach of human rights” and questioned whether it was “part of the US democracy.” Hasina’s comments about “human rights” and “democracy” are completely hypocritical and exposed by her government’s repression of opposition parties and its violent assaults on the basic rights and jobs, wages and living standards of Bangladeshi workers and the poor.

Bangladeshi student protests are an expression of the growing global opposition of young people and workers against the bloody war being carried out by the fascistic Netanyahu regime, backed to the hilt by the imperialist powers. Campus university encampments and other protests have spread across the US and to Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Spain, Rome, Japan and Lebanon and continue despite police crackdowns.

So far, about 2,500 US student protesters have been arrested on false allegations of violence in the US, but all the violence is being perpetrated by the National Guard and militarised police in riot gear, to break up the university encampments. Similar police attacks have been reported in France, Germany and the UK.

However, to end the genocide in Gaza, requires a revolutionary perspective and program.

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and the *World Socialist Web Site* have called on students to turn to the international working class, the only social force that can halt the Netanyahu regime’s criminal attacks, the NATO-led war against in Russia in Ukraine and rapidly escalating preparation for a US-led military conflict with China.

The WSWs is providing extensive coverage of the student protests globally, including live updates, and outlining a revolutionary socialist and internationalist perspective to prevent a catastrophic war between nuclear-armed powers. We urge Bangladeshi students and workers to regularly read and circulate the WSWs.



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