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11–13 July 2024: Police start intervening, protests continue

The student movement announced a half-day blockade for 11 July 2024.1327 During the first three days of the ‘Bangla Blockade’, the police did not interfere with protests.1328 However, on 11 July 2024, the police announced that it would act against road blockades,1329 arguing that no valid justification remained for protests after the temporary suspension of the quota.1330

Nevertheless, tens of thousands reportedly joined the protests,1331 defied police barricades, 1332 and blocked Shahbagh intersection again,1333 as well as major highways1334 and rail tracks.1335 In Dhaka City, police reportedly prevented students from blocking the Science Lab intersection in the afternoon,1336 and prevented students of Dhaka College and Eden Mohila College from joining the Shahbagh blockade by stopping them in New Market area.1337 According to Dhaka Tribune, more police officers were deployed in the area compared to previous days, and further reported on police barricades at Victory Square, Farmgate, Karwan Bazar, Shahbagh, Gulistan, Science Lab, Nilkhet, and Agargaon.1338 Students however broke through police barricades, as well as their campus gates that had been locked to prevent protests.1339 Police clashed with protesters at She-e-Bangla Agricultural University in Shahbagh.1340 Somoy TV reported that one of their reporters and a cameraperson were attacked in the same area.1341

Students of Jahangirnagar University also broke through the campus gates and defied police barricades in order to block Dhaka–Aricha highway again.1342 They reportedly further defied police instructions to end the blockade within 30 minutes and continued for hours.1343

At least 30 people were reportedly injured in clashes across the country.1344 In the city of Cumilla, the police tried to disperse students trying to block a road and a railway1345 by making use of teargas1346 and reportedly also by charging with batons1347 and firing rubber bullets. 1348 20 people were reportedly injured due to police intervention in Cumilla,1349 including two journalists.1350 Police also clashed with students in the city of Chattogram.1351 According to Agence-France Presse (AFP), police charged with batons at hundreds of protesters.1352 Police also filed a report accusing students of vandalising police vehicles, and injuring police officers in Shahbagh by beating them up and throwing objects such as water bottles and bricks.1353 Local media footage showed protesters mounting a police vehicle in the area.1354

During a press conference, the President of the Chhatra League, Saddam Hussain, stated that ‘some are trying to use the movement politically and the Chhatra League is ready to face them’. 1355 The UN OHCHR later described this statement as an ‘apparent threat’,1356 and local

media outlet the Business Standard reported on the Chhatra League subsequently staging counter-demonstrations close to student protests.1357

On 12 July 2024, students across the country protested on their respective campuses against what they referred to as ‘attacks’ on protesters the previous day.1358 In Dhaka, students defied heavy rain flooding parts of the city,1359 and blocked Shahbagh intersection anew, but only for an hour this time, according to local media sources.1360 Local media also reported on students blocking roads and railways,1361 including students of Rajshahi University blocking a nearby railway in the afternoon.1362 In the evening, students of Jahangirnagar University1363 and other educational institutions nearby held simultaneous torch processions.1364 Senior government officials, including the Awami League General Secretary, Obaidul Quader, accused the opposition of trying to infiltrate the student protest movement and incite anti-government agitations.1365 The Minister of Law, Anisul Huq, accused the movement of conspiring with ‘ghosts of the culprits’ opposing Bangladesh’s independence.1366 The next day, the Detective Branch of Dhaka’s Metropolitan Police announced an investigation into alleged infiltration of the protests.1367

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