STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

What were the reasons for July 2024 protests in Bangladesh?

International Relations

25 Dec 2026

1. Controversial Job Quota System

Bangladesh’s public sector reserves 56% of government jobs under various quotas. Of this, 30% is reserved for families of 1971 freedom fighters. Only 44% of jobs are open to merit-based candidates, causing widespread resentment among educated youth.

2. Rising Youth Unemployment

According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), youth unemployment exceeds 10%, while graduate unemployment is significantly higher.

Each year, over 2 million graduates enter the job market, but government vacancies remain limited.

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3. Economic Pressure & Inflation

Inflation crossed 9–10% in 2023–24, sharply raising food, fuel, and housing costs. Bangladesh’s currency, the taka, lost over 30% of its value since 2022, reducing purchasing power.

4. Public Sector Job Demand

Government jobs are highly sought due to:

- Job security
- Pension benefits
- Stable income
- This increases competition and frustration when recruitment is seen as unfair.

5. Student-Led Protests

University students led mass demonstrations demanding:

- Reform or abolition of quota system
- Merit-based recruitment
- Protests spread across Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi, and other cities.

6. Law Enforcement Response

Police used crowd control measures including detentions and restrictions. Clashes between protesters and security forces intensified public anger.

7. Political Tensions

Opposition parties supported protests, accusing the government of authoritarianism. Government defended quotas as part of social justice policy.

8. Public Trust & Governance Issues

Allegations of corruption, lack of transparency, and shrinking democratic space added to unrest.

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