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US urges people to not travel to Bangladesh amid 'civil unrest'

By Kanishka Singh

July 21, 2024 6:48 AM GMT+6 · Updated 3 months ago



[1/2] Smoke rises as security forces engage in clashes, during a curfew imposed in response to student-led protests against government job quotas, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, July 20, 2024. REUTERS/Anik Rahman [Purchase Licensing Rights](#)



WASHINGTON, July 20 (Reuters) - The U.S. State Department said on Saturday it has raised Bangladesh's travel advisory to level four, which urges people to not travel to the Asian country due to what Washington described as "civil unrest" amid ongoing protests.

The State Department also said it authorized the voluntary departure of non-emergency U.S. government employees and family members in Bangladesh. A day earlier, the department had urged people to reconsider travel to the country.

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WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Massive protests have [broken out](#) in Bangladesh over [student anger](#) against quotas that set aside [30% of government jobs](#) for the families of those who fought for independence from Pakistan.

Police have fired tear gas to scatter protesters in some areas while the government has banned public gatherings, imposed communications restrictions, deployed the army in some parts and imposed a curfew. Dozens have been killed in the past week.

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KEY QUOTES

"Travelers should not travel to Bangladesh due to ongoing civil unrest in Dhaka. Demonstrations and violent clashes have been reported throughout the city of Dhaka, its neighboring areas, and throughout Bangladesh," the State Department said in a statement.

"Due to the security situation, there may be a delay in provision of routine consular services," it added.

The State Department also said that due to security concerns, U.S. Embassy personnel in Bangladesh are subject to some movement and travel restrictions, which could limit their ability to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens in Bangladesh.



REACTION

The United States and Canada have [called on Bangladesh](#) to uphold the right to peaceful protest and [expressed concern](#) over violence that has occurred in the country in recent days.

CONTEXT

Students have protested over public sector job quotas, which include a 30% reservation for family members of fighters from the [1971 War of Independence](#) from Pakistan. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the government would form a judicial committee to investigate the killings.

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The quotas have caused anger among students who face high youth unemployment rates, with nearly 32 million young Bangladeshis not in work or education out of a total population of 170 million people.

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Reporting by Kanishka Singh in Washington and Gnaneshwar Rajan in Bengaluru; editing by Diane Craft and Nick Zleminski

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Kanishka Singh is a breaking news reporter for Reuters in Washington DC, who primarily covers US politics and national affairs in his current role. His past breaking news coverage has spanned across a



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