

Bangladesh top Court scraps job quotas after deadly protests

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Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Sunday abolished most government job quotas that sparked student-led protests resulting in at least 114 deaths, local media reported. The court's Appellate Division dismissed a lower court order that had reinstated the quotas, directing that 93% of government jobs will now be merit-based.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government had initially scrapped the quota system in 2018.

However, the lower court reinstated it last month, igniting protests and a subsequent government crackdown. The response of the protesters to the new ruling remains unclear.

Authorities extended a curfew as the Supreme Court prepared to hear the case. Soldiers patrolled Dhaka, the epicenter of the demonstrations, which escalated into violent clashes between protesters and security forces. Since Thursday, internet and text message services in Bangladesh

have been suspended, cutting off communication as police enforced a ban on public gatherings.

The curfew, extended to 3 pm (0900 GMT), was set to continue indefinitely following a two-hour break for residents to gather supplies, local media reported. It was uncertain what would happen to the curfew after the ruling.

The court's decision marks a significant shift in the government's approach to public sector employment, aiming to quell unrest and promote meritocracy.