

# Higher studies abroad: 24 teachers owe over Tk 3cr to JU

They neither rejoined within the stipulated time nor returned salaries, benefits received during study leave

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Sakib Ahmed



*Jahangirnagar University. File photo*

**At least two dozen teachers at Jahangirnagar University, who went abroad for higher studies over the past 15 years, have neither rejoined their posts within the stipulated time nor refunded the salaries and benefits they received during study leave, show university records.**

Between 2010 and 2025, these teachers went to the US, Australia, Canada, the UK and other European countries to pursue master's or post-doctoral degrees. However, they didn't return and still owe Tk 3.15 crore, show JU documents.



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According to the JU Teachers' Employment Rules, teachers must rejoin their positions within 30 days of completing their studies and serve the university for at least three years, in addition to the duration of their stay abroad.

If they fail to do so, they must repay -- in a single instalment, along with interest at the prevailing bank rate -- all salaries and benefits received during the leave period.

**“Some of these teachers were permitted to retire. Most of the remaining ones were relieved from service following their applications, while a few were terminated. The decisions took effect from the date they went on study leave.”**

MD REZAUL KABIR, ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF THE TEACHING SECTION

“Some of these teachers were permitted to retire. Most of the remaining ones were relieved from service following their applications, while a few were terminated. The decisions took effect from the date they went on study leave,” Md Rezaul Kabir, assistant registrar of the Teaching Section, told The Daily Star on June 14.

Sources at the JU Registrar’s Office said most of these teachers were relieved of their positions following the JU syndicate’s approval of their applications. A few others were terminated as they didn’t respond to the administration’s repeated requests for explanations.

Rezaul said they sent at least three letters each to the teachers’ permanent addresses and also emailed them, seeking repayment and explanations, but many of them didn’t respond.

Recently, the JU administration moved to address the issue.

At a meeting on May 21, the syndicate decided to form a committee headed by the pro-vice chancellor (Academic) to probe irregularities related to study leave, JU Treasurer Prof M Abdur Rab told this newspaper.

When contacted, Pro-VC (Academic) Prof Md Shamsul Alam, said the university is taking the matter very seriously.

“We will thoroughly review all these cases and take appropriate action in accordance with the university regulations.”

## **DUES TO JU REMAIN UNPAID**

The bulk of the unpaid amount is held by a small group, with six former teachers accounting for more than half of the Tk 3.15 crore owed to the university as of May 19, 2026.

Of the six, Mohammad Faisal Jamal, former associate professor of the philosophy department, owes the highest outstanding amount -- Tk 48,86,180.

According to JU records, Faisal left for the US to pursue a master's degree in 2015. He got his study leave extended till November 11, 2021, to complete his PhD.

He returned to Bangladesh in June 2022, applied for retirement and then flew to the US shortly afterwards, said several JU teachers and officials.

At a meeting on December 20, 2022, the university syndicate decided that his resignation will be accepted only after he repays all the dues.

When contacted, Faisal said he rejoined JU after completing his studies, worked briefly, and later applied for voluntary retirement.

"I requested the authorities to adjust my dues against my pension and gratuity and allow me to pay any remaining balance.

"But they asked me to repay the full amount first. It's not possible for me to pay such a large sum in a single instalment. If they adjust the dues against my pension and gratuity and allow me to clear the rest, I will do so," he said.

Trailing Faisal on the list is Probal Dutta who was relieved from the post of associate professor of the accounting and information systems department in January 2018. He owes Tk 48,52,017 to the university.

Probal, now a doctoral researcher at the University of Vaasa in Finland, told this newspaper via email that he didn't rejoin JU for personal reasons.

"I will return to Bangladesh in the second week of July, and repay the amounts I received during my study leave," he said.

Md Tareq Ferdous Khan, who resigned as associate professor of the statistics and data science department in October 2017, owes Tk 44,09,326.

When contacted via email, Tareq, who now teaches at Clemson University in South Carolina of the US, said, "I have not yet been able to manage the full amount, but I plan to settle the dues as early as possible."

Another ex-associate professor from the same JU department, Azizur Rahman, owes Tk 44,52,571 to the university, which relieved him of his position effective on August 30, 2018.

In reply to this correspondent's email, Aziz said he informed the Registrar's Office of his circumstances and sought to discuss a reasonable timeline for settling the dues.

“I remain committed to resolving the matter. Once I’m able to arrange the full amount, I intend to travel to Bangladesh and make the payment.”

Another notable case is that of Nowrin Tabassum, a former assistant professor of international relations, who didn’t return to JU despite receiving extended study leave.

To pursue a master’s degree at a Canadian university, she went on study leave from September 6, 2012, to August 30, 2013, and was later granted leave until September 15, 2018, to do a PhD in political science at McMaster University.

She was later granted “extraordinary leave” without pay until September 15, 2020.

However, she didn’t return to JU after the expiry of her leave. She was relieved of service with effect from September 6, 2012, show documents at the JU Comptroller’s Office.

Nowrin now owes the university Tk 16,12,725 after the JU authorities withheld Tk 13,87,925 from the gratuity fund of her guarantor, Prof Abul Kalam Azad of the international relations department, upon his retirement in 2021.

JU Comptroller Md Mosanul Kabir said that as Nowrin didn’t pay her dues, part of the gratuity fund of her guarantor was withheld in line with the university rules. The amount will be returned to Prof Azad if she pays all her dues.

When contacted, Prof Azad said, “I have tried multiple times to contact Nowrin, but she has cut off all communication channels.”

JU officials said several letters were sent to her permanent and email addresses, but she didn’t respond.

She also didn’t reply to this correspondent’s emails.

Another former JU assistant professor, AKM Fazlur Rahman, owes Tk 12,47,522 to the university. The mathematics teacher was relieved of service effective from August 11, 2007.

Fazlur, now an associate professor of biostatistics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in the US, told this newspaper via email that the figure cited by the JU administration was inaccurate and about three times higher than the actual amount he owes.

“I submitted a letter to the Comptroller’s Office on December 20, 2018, requesting a detailed statement of all my funds held with the university. Once I receive a response, I’ll proceed accordingly,” he added.

When asked, officials at the Comptroller’s Office said the amount of the dues increased as yearly interest at the prevailing bank rate was added as per the rules.

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE**

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said, “The teachers who neither returned nor paid their dues to the university have abused their positions as faculty members. This amounts to fraud.

“They have wasted state resources. Undoubtedly, this falls within the scope of corruption.”

He further said the university administration should take legal action against them.

“If they are currently residing abroad, they should be tried in absentia under the existing laws.”

Prof Mohammad Mafruhi Sattar, dean of the Faculty of Biological Sciences at JU, described the teachers’ non-payment of dues as highly unethical.

Calling for stronger institutional measures, he said, “We often fail to create the right environment for teachers, which is why some don’t return after completing higher studies.”

Prof Anu Muhammad, a former teacher at JU, said teachers who receive study leave benefits while staying abroad are expected to return and contribute to the university’s academic development.

“If they fail to return for any reason, they should repay the funds which are public money. Not doing so is unethical,” he added.