Massive protests in India over alleged rape, murder of doctor

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Massive protests in India over alleged rape, murder of doctor  
  
Thousands of people protested in the eastern city of Kolkata to condemn the rape and murder of a doctor in a state-run hospital that also provoked demonstrations across India demanding better safety for women.  
  
The protests were held at more than 100 locations across Kolkata and spread to surrounding towns in the state of West Bengal late on Wednesday and rallies took place in several other Indian cities early into Thursday morning.  
  
The 31-year-old trainee doctor was raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, her brutalised body discovered last week.  
  
Large crowds of women and men marched through the streets of Kolkata, with a candlelight rally at midnight coinciding with the start of India’s Independence Day celebrations on Thursday.  
  
The protesters in Kolkata and other cities, who marched under the slogan “reclaim the night”, called for a wider tackling of violence against women and held up handwritten signs demanding action.  
  
“We want justice,” read one sign at a Kolkata rally. “Hang the rapist, save the women,” read another.  
  
Many government hospitals in cities across India suspended all services except emergency departments earlier this week, as junior doctors sat outside in protest, demanding justice for the victim.  
  
“Doctors nationwide are questioning what is so difficult about enacting a law for our security,” Dhruv Chauhan, from the Indian Medical Association’s Junior Doctors’ Network, told the Press Trust of India news agency. “The strike will continue until all demands are formally met.”  
  
“It is not just about one night. Every night, women should have this freedom and choice to go out, so that in future no girl child’s parents have to think in case it gets late in the evening, whether their child shall return home safe or not,” Shalini Datta, one of the demonstrators, told The Telegraph newspaper, which is based in Kolkata.  
  
Tanushree Das attended one rally with her daughter. “I believe the night is not just for men to enjoy, women also have equal rights. We have come out to claim this space for ourselves so that women no longer have a sense of fear associated with nights,” she said.  
  
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