

Agitation on to replace VCs of 5 universities

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Teachers, students and officials of five public universities have been continuing their agitation to replace the vice-chancellors for their alleged failure to meet various demands.

Allegiance of vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors, treasurers and the teachers to different political parties is another important reason for the agitation, sources said.

The anti-VC agitation have been continuing at Chittagong University (CU), Open University (OU), Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), Rajshahi University (RU) and Khulna University (KU).

In the face of continued agitation, SUST VC had to quit the campus taking a long leave and the acting VC Prof Moslehuddin Ahmed has now been carrying out administrative activities.

In Chittagong University, Progotishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ), a combine of eight left-leaning student organisations, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League have been demonstrating for immediate removal of VC Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury since April 2 for his failure to control the situations on the campus. A series of attacks on general students by the JCD activists have left at least 40 students injured.

In Rajshahi University, the JCD called indefinite strike after a clash with the Islami Chhatra Shibir on January 14, and demanded immediate resignation of the VC Prof Faisal Islam Faruki for his partisan role. Although normalcy has returned to campus, the JCD leaders are still communicating with the BNP high command to replace him, sources said.

A group of teachers and officials in Khulna University have been demanding immediate resignation of VC Prof Abdul Kadir Bhuiya alleging him responsible for the tragic death of 11 promising students on March 12. Nine of them were the students of KU.

A group of officials of the Open University have been demanding the removal of its VC Prof Ershadul Bari on charges of corruption and nepotism. Sources said Prof Bari is likely to be replaced soon as the government has been examining the allegations brought against him.

Earlier, the deadlock at Islami University (IU) in Kushtia over the removal of the VC ended with the appointment of Prof Rafiqul Islam as new VC replacing Prof Mustafizur Rahman. Ruling BNP and opposition Awami League-backed teachers and students of different organisations were demonstrating for months to remove Prof Rahman on charges of corruption, politicisation and nepotism.

Similarly, the stand-off at Jahangirnagar University (JU) came to an end with the removal of former VC Prof Jasimuddin Ahmed. He has been replaced by Prof Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman who bagged highest vote in the VC panel election. Prof Rahman is the only elected VC in public universities.

VC of Patuakhali Science and Technology University Prof AKMA Hannan Bhuiyan had to resign on charges of corruption as JCD and general students were demonstrating for his removal for months.

DU VC Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury had to quit due to student agitation in August 2001. The movement geared up as police swooped on the female students at their dormitory on July 23.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque has told The Daily Star that the agitation against the VCs takes place whenever they fail to solve administrative and other problems facing the students.

"Sometimes the VCs have been made scapegoat owing to political conflicts," he said. "Due to poor administrative capacity, resentment also grows against them. But we have never removed any VC on the pressure of the students."



The Jatiya Party took out a procession in Narayanganj yesterday demanding release of its leader Nasim Osman.

PHOTO: STAR

ABDUCTION OF SCHOOLGIRL

Kidnappers issue death threat to mother

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The abductors of a schoolgirl have given death threat to her mother for lodging a first information report (FIR) with Sonadanga Police Station.

According to the FIR lodged on April 4, Tasnim Sultana Shahin, student of class seven of Nazrul Nagar High School, was abducted on March 21 while she was going to school.

She is yet to be rescued by police.

Hasina Begum, mother of the victim and a resident of Nabapalli Residential Area, has sought security of her life from the police commissioner.

In her petition, she mentioned that the abductors of her daughter are moving at large and giving death threat for seeking police help.

Hasina also accused the officer-in-charge (OC) of Sonadanga Police Station for showing no interest in rescuing her daughter.

Obituary



Alhaj Advocate Md Rafiqul Hasan, a public prosecutor at the Narayanganj Judge Court, died on April 4 at the age of 60, says a press release.

He was also a chairman of Daudpur Union Parishad under Rupganj thana and president of Rupganj BNP.

He is survived by his wife, one son and four daughters.

Death anniversary



Today is the 14th death anniversary of Shamsud Doha, noted music director and senior staff singer of radio and television, says a press release.

A qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at 15/5 Tajmahal Road, Mohammadpur after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the milad.

Begum Badrun Nahar



Today is the first death anniversary of Begum Badrun Nahar, co-founder of ERBA Ltd, says a press release.

A milad mahfil and discussion will be held at the company's head office at National Scout Bhaban and at her village home at Barakhada in Kushtia.

Distribution of food has also been arranged at all the orphanages in Kushtia town.

Journalist union leaders criticise Time report

BSS, Dhaka

Leaders of journalist unions and the National Press Club yesterday criticised the report on Bangladesh published in the latest Asia edition of Time magazine and described it as "one-sided" and "misleading."

They alleged that the extent of corruption or prevailing law and order situation as depicted in the report certainly did not justify the Time's comment that the "system had now broken down and the country became ineffective."

The journalist leaders said the Time report did not maintain journalistic ethics as it reflected views of certain political quarters and it was based on the comments and information provided by their representatives.

They said the report was a part of an evil design to tarnish Bangladesh's image abroad undermining long-practised democratic process and harmony among the followers of different religious faiths.

President of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and editor of the Daily Khaborpatra Gias Kamal Chowdhury said the Time report had a link with other reports published in some foreign newspapers and weeklies in the last two years.

"In the past two years, some foreign newspapers published adverse reports on Bangladesh on the basis of the comments of people

representing a certain political ideology. The Time report was also prepared in the same manner," he said.

Gias Kamal said followers of different religious faiths have been practising their own rituals in Bangladesh freely.

When the country has earned worldwide appreciation for communal harmony, the Time allegation about attack and repression on the minority community did not reflect the reality, he added.

"Those who are active inside the country to tarnish Bangladesh's image abroad, Time highlighted their views in the report," he said.

President of the National Press Club and Editor of the News Today Reazuddin Ahmed rejected the Time report which commented that fundamentalism was on the rise in Bangladesh. The report did not reflect the actual situation of the country, he said.

"A democratic governing process exists and a baseline of democracy is taking a stronger shape in the country," he said.

Reazuddin said Bangladesh has a long tradition of communal harmony and it could be an example to be followed by many countries. "So, the Time comment on rising fundamentalism is nothing but an anti-Bangladesh campaign," he added.

JCD activist beaten up at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists of Shahidullah Hall of Dhaka University beat up a fellow worker early yesterday.

Musa Ahmed, a third year student, was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital with critical injuries.

Sources said Musa was beaten up due to internal feud of the hall unit JCD.

JCD sources said that a group of JCD activists led by Rasel, Reaz,

Rubel, Tanvir and Syeed, who are aligned to DU unit President Amirul Islam Khan, attacked Musa at about 1:30am.

Provost Prof. Abul Khaer said they would call a general meeting of the house tutors on April 15 or 16 to discuss the issue and take action against the attackers.

Tension has been prevailing at the hall centering the clash.

DU unit General Secretary Hasan Mamun said he would discuss the incident with DU unit President Alim.