

DU teachers stage silent protest

FROM PAGE 1
Prof MM Akash of economics department had announced the programme on Wednesday. He and a few teachers came to the spot at 11:30am yesterday and others joined them later one by one. Most participants were senior teachers of the university.

Hundreds of students standing around the Aparajeyo Bangla and the Arts Faculty building watched the demonstration of their teachers.

Prof Anisuzzaman, Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Prof M Akhtaruzzaman, Prof Gitiara Nasrin, Prof M Samad, Prof Naz Zaman, Prof Saad Uddin, Prof Ahmed Kamal, Prof Monowar Uddin Ahmed, Prof CR Abrar, Prof Zaheda Ahmed, Prof AHS Arefin, Prof AR Khan, Prof Humayun Kabir, Prof Sirajul Islam, Shamim Reza, Ayesha Banu, Kaberi Gayen, Israfil Shahin, Zinat Huda, Rafiqul Islam, Nurur Rahman, Fowzia Mannan, Dr

Amzad Hossain, Sheikh Muhammad S Imtiaz, among others, participated in the demonstration.

A speedy trial court in Rajshahi sentenced the four RU teachers on Tuesday to two years' rigorous imprisonment for violating the emergency power rules (EPR) by bringing out a silent procession on the campus on August 21.

The teachers brought out the protest procession following countrywide violence, which sparked when army personnel at a DU camp beat up three students during a football match at the university gymnasium on August 20.

Law enforcement agencies later upheld Prof Sadruddin Amin, president of DU Teachers' Association (Duta), its General Secretary Prof Anwar Hossain, Social Science Faculty Dean Prof Harun-or-Rashid and applied physics department Chairman Prof Neem Chandra

Bhowmik. They also arrested nine students.

After their demonstration yesterday, Prof Anisuzzaman said the conviction of the four RU teachers had saddened them. "We thought that all detained teachers will be freed as speeches from the government and university administration seemed to be positive," he said.

"So, we came here to express our grief at the call of our consciousness and to articulate our demand for release of all our colleagues and students," he added.

Asked if he thinks they broke the EPR by holding the demonstration, Prof Anisuzzaman said their act was some sort of breaching the emergency rules.

"But we have seen that not all who have broken the emergency have been punished. We have seen the protesters against the daily Prothom Alo. None of them was arrested or convicted. It does not

matter now if we are punished on this charge," he said. "We hope the teachers' association will take initiatives and our colleagues will get back to us."

Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury said teachers led the Liberation War and they sacrificed their lives for the country's independence. "But now they are in jail without committing any crime. Our consciousness has brought us here today," he said.

Prof Gitiara Nasrin said a university is a place of freethinking people and teachers must express their opinions. "Imprisonment for taking part in a silent procession is unjust," she said.

The Duta will hold an urgent general meeting today to set its next course of action regarding the teachers' release.

Meanwhile, teachers of different departments under the Social Sciences Faculty yesterday urged the government to immediately release all the detained teachers and students.

The resolution was passed at a meeting of the faculty with its Acting Dean Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair, a press release said.

CLASS BOYCOTT AT RU

Our RU correspondent adds: Students of the Department of Mass Communication yesterday boycotted their classes demanding the release of their teachers.

They also urged the chief adviser to the caretaker government for his kind consideration in the matter. They said they would not attend any classes and examinations until the teachers were freed.

They said they faxed and emailed a memorandum to the chief adviser. The memorandum had signatures of an undetermined number of students. They in the memorandum claimed their academic activities were being severely affected due to the absence of the teachers.

The students of the department had collected signatures from general students.

Around 100 students met the department Chairman Prof Khademul Islam at his office around 2:00pm yesterday and enquired about what the authorities were doing for the teachers' release. The students asked the teachers to sign the memorandum but the teachers refused.

Prof Khademul Islam told the students that teachers would act separately for release of their colleagues and they would make appeal to the caretaker government chief.

Meanwhile, a huge number of law enforcers have been on guard on the campus especially in front of mass communication department since morning.

A Rajshahi court on Tuesday sentenced four RU teachers to two years' rigorous imprisonment for violating Emergency Power Rules (EPR) by bringing out a silent procession on the campus on August 21.

The convicts are: Moloy Kumar Bhoomik of management department, and Dulal Chandra Biswas, Sayed Selim Reza Newton and Abdullah Al Mamun of mass communication department.

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