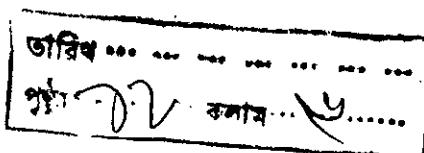


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Outsiders reign at DU halls

Authorities in a state of insecurity, says VC

ABUL KALAM AZAD

The Dhaka University (DU) administration is now in a state of insecurity, as outsiders and terrorists have established absolute supremacy on the campus soon after the landslide victory of the BNP-led four-party alliance in the October 1 general election.

Hundreds of outsiders and criminals under the banner of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) took control of the halls in the small hours of October 2 when the victory of the alliance became clear.

In the last two weeks, a number of bona fide students have faced ouster, and some resident students were beaten up by the gangsters.

Besides, the gangsters meddle in the hall management. They open and close the main gates of the halls at will, compelling many resident students to mount the compound walls up in order to enter their rooms at night.

The DU has held several meetings with provosts and house tutors since October 2. The hall authorities were asked to check identity cards and to take action against the outsiders. But the authorities failed to press on with the instructions due to what they called insecurity.

The 'fear of reprisal' is preventing both the provosts and house tutors from taking action against the outsiders.

On Monday, DU Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof. AK Azad Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the hall authorities are in a state of insecurity following threats by the outsiders and criminals.

"The criminals damaged the nameplate of a provost and have threatened many on the telephone since October 2," he added.

The VC, however, said he was communicating with the government high-ups to flush out the outsiders from the halls.

"I have already talked to the education minister and the home minister, and both have assured me of immediate action against them."

The police have taken a sit-back position despite repeated instructions from the authorities, he remarked.

A police officer, however, said the DU instruction was not enough for any action against the culprits. "We need an order from the government high-ups, otherwise we can't do anything," he said requesting anonymity.

The dormitories have become safe havens for the

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terrorists despite the large-scale deployment of police on the campus. Criminals from across the city frequent the campus and stay at the halls.

When contacted, Provost of the Salimullah Hall Prof. RIM Aminur Rashid said, "Now we are waiting for what steps the new government will take."

Prof. AI Mahbub Uddin Ahmed, the provost of Ziaur Rahman Hall, said such a situation would not have been created, if the law-enforcement agencies had taken action.

"I sat with the JCD factions twice to defuse tension at my hall." He identified the row among the JCD factions over establishing domination as the main reason behind it.

On Tuesday night, JCD President Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu went to the tension-gripped Ziaur Rahman Hall and warned the outsiders off.