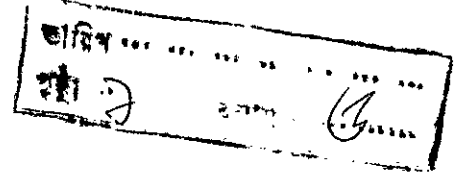


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RU students led by Shibir clash with villagers, 200 injured

RAJSHAHI, Feb 16:-Over 200 people were injured, many by bullets, in a series of clashes between Rajshahi University students and villagers following a political dispute today, reports UNB.

Witnesses and police said more than 200 homes and shops were ransacked and set ablaze during the daylong rioting.

They said troubles erupted following resistance from villagers to conducting organisational activities by Islamic Chhatra Shibir at Meherchandi Schoolpara Jam-e-Mosque, adjacent to the campus.

Protesting the attack on their varsity-mates and demanding their security, general students called nonstop student strike at the university from Saturday.

The sources said the clash started about 10am when youths of Meherchand village resisted university-unit Shibir leaders from conducting organisational activities at the mosque.

"In their bid to get support from the general

students, the Shibir leaders then came back to the campus, spread a rumour that the villagers detained some students," said a university source.

Incensed by the propaganda, the general students and rein-forced Shibir cadres then swooped on the villagers.

"In retaliation, the villagers made a counteroffensive on the students with country-made weapons, firing guns and exploding bombs turning the entire area into a veritable battlefield," said a spot report.

The belligerent villagers chased the students into the campus and began indiscriminate stabbing on the students in a lynch-mob attack.

The swarming mob ransacked Fine Arts Institute, Senate Bhaban, Tukitaki, news center, stadium and small shops in the campus area while the students ransacked and set fire to some 200 houses and shops of the village and its bazar during the marauding.

All shops of Station _____ (See Page 16 Col. 6)

RU students

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Bazar burnt to ashes in fire set by the villagers in an arson attack.

A contingent of police comprising 200 personnel led by RMP DC (East) Rawshon Ara rushed to the spot at about 1pm and managed to bring the situation under control at about 4.30pm.

Twelve policemen, including Rawshon Ara, were injured during the troubles where both the sides fired gunshots and exploded bombs.

The injured, many of them with bullets, were admitted to University Medical Center and Rajshahi Medical College Hospital and local clinics.

Paramilitary BDR and police patrols were deployed on the troubled campus to ward off further flare-ups.

The university authority also sat for an emergency meeting with Vice-chancellor Prof. Sayedur Rahman in the chair. The meeting was continuing till filing of the report.

Meanwhile, Awami League student front Bangladesh Chhatra League at a rally in the evening held Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat, responsible for triggering the troubles and demanded a ban on their politics on the campus.