



All DU exams postponed, strike on campus today

Over 100 girl students injured as police raid Shamsunnahar Hall

Varsity Correspondent

More than 100 Dhaka University students, mostly girls, were injured in a violent encounter with police on the campus on Wednesday as a sequel to the raid on a female dormitory in the small hours on Wednesday.

Police baton charged and lobbed teargas shells on hundreds of student demonstrators in front of the Vice Chancellor's office at noon when they laid a siege in

protest against police atrocities on the students of Shamsunnahar Hall in the early hours on Wednesday.

Police then arrested 18 girl students from Shamsunnahar Hall and set them free after Wednesday noon's rowdy protests. Hall residents alleged indecent assault by police.

In protest, all student bodies, excepting ruling BNP-backed

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, called a student strike on the campus today (Thursday). The university authorities postponed all examinations.

The University Syndicate, in an emergency meeting, formed a seven-member probe body headed by acting Pro-VC Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan to investigate into the incidents and asked to submit the report in next seven days. The

other members of the committee are the provosts of Shahidullah Hall, Haji Muhsin Hall, Bangladesh Kuwait Moitree Hall, Rokeya Hall and Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall and the Proctor of the University.

"I've never seen such a brutality during my entire university life," said fourth-year student Khadimul Karim Iqbal, a witness

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of massive police beating. A female student was cursing her male classmates, saying, "If my brother were here, I would have not been touched by this 'se mean creature' of police!"

Some 10 injured students were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and nearby clinics, witnesses said.

Police said they had to do so as the agitating students attacked them. However, Officer-in-Charge of Ramna thana Lutfur Rahman said the raid was conducted at the request of the Proctorial authorities of the university. "We were informed that some students residing in room No 235 were assaulted by their rivals and a tense situation was prevailing in the hall," UNB quoted him as saying.

The angry students set ablaze a bus of the university transport pool and ransacked 10 more and the official car of the Registrar and several cars of the teachers. An unknown attacker also stabbed the chauffeur of the registrar.

The agitating students demanded immediate resignation of Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury for his failure to ensure security even inside the dormitory. "He who used police against us is not our VC" was the slogan by the demonstrators.

The VC outright denied involvement of male policemen in the female dormitory. The university proctor and four assistant proctors echoed the voice of their boss.

Rather, amid a turbulent situation on the campus, the university authorities removed Shamsunnahar Hall Provost Dr Sultana Shafi to make room for Prof Habiba

Khatun.

VC Prof Chowdhury blamed Sultana Shafi for the incident of the dormitory. "She instigates some arrogant students against administration," Prof Chowdhury said.

The police raid came Wednesday midnight following a standoff in Shamsunnahar Hall administration. Sources there said it was a rivalry between some house tutors and ex-provost Dr Shafi over establishing supremacy.

At about 2:30 am, a huge contingent of riot police entered the hall, hurled abuse on many girls and beat some of them indiscriminately. "They did everything except physically raping us," a victim said in tearful eyes to reporters after her release.

A group of JCD leaders backed the house tutors while a few activists of Chhatra League, still inside the hall, were in favour of the provost. The provost, however, got sympathy of the common students, since the attempt was made to remove her before ending her tenure, the sources said.

The common students of the hall were against some outsider JCD leaders and demanded their ouster. Before the raid, the agitating students confined the "outsiders" in a room when they came in favour of the house tutors.

The student organisations that called strike to protest the "anarchy" on the campus are BCL, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree, BSD-backed Chhatra League and Smajkadi Chhatra Jote, Biplobi Chhatra Moitree, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation.

The university authorities deployed police and para-military BDR forces at different points on the campus ahead of the strike.