

Heated debate in JS over DU situation

Parliament on Tuesday witnessed a raucous debate over the student unrest and terrorism in Dhaka University as the Opposition demanded immediate discussion on the volatile campus situation, reports UNB.

The unscheduled debate started after Asr break when Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury requested the chair to allow discussion on Dhaka University where police allegedly evicted JCD workers from different halls.

Prof. Chowdhury referred to Monday's police action in JCD-dominated F Rahman, Shahidullah and FH halls that left at least 20 students injured and termed the incident "unfortunate".

The Deputy Opposition Leader alleged that police did not act neutrally, they favoured a particular student organisation. They raided Mujib, Zia and Suryasen halls keeping untouched Jagannath and Zahurul Huq halls, the strongholds of pro-government Bangladesh Chhatra League.

He said brilliant students of the country used to come to Dhaka

University for higher studies, but the present law and order situation there was disappointing. "The problems in Dhaka University should be discussed urgently."

Prof. Chowdhury reminded the chair that some members of the opposition BNP had already submitted notices for discussion on the situation in Dhaka University and in other educational institutions.

In response to Prof. Chowdhury, ruling Awami League Minister Mohammad Nasim sprang to his feet to express Government party's intent to discuss the present campus situation and also to look back.

"The Dhaka University campus had been made into a cantonment

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and battleground in last five years of BNP rule," he said in a sharp rebuttal.

Nasim narrated terrorist acts by JCD under police patronage in different educational institutions and armed attacks from the JCD-dominated halls on a mourning procession by Sangskritik Jote on August 15.

He said they had been waiting long to discuss how a number of students were killed in Dhaka University due to intra-party conflict in JCD, how police inspector Farhad was killed in crossfire between two factions of JCD at Jagannath University and how JCD activists indulged in vandalism for extorting tender and subscription on construction works.

The Post and Telecommunications Minister said they would produce document and photos to show how police officers had backed JCD workers during their attacks on the opposition student organisations.

Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid assured that he would earmark a day for discussion on the subject since both the Opposition and Treasury benches want it.

Earlier, BNP members Maj (Rtd) Hafizuddin Ahmed and Jainul Abedin drew attention of the chair to know the fate of their notices for discussion on Dhaka University and on other seats of learning.

Hafiz said the House should take up the matter when Dhaka University and other campuses were rocked with gunfire and law and order sharply deteriorated. But the Home Minister and the Education Minister kept mum.

Jainul Abedin said Barisal Medical College was closed and Chhatra League workers occupied F Rahman and FH halls of DU forcibly. Although he submitted notice on July 23, on date has been fixed for discussion.

The Deputy Speaker asked the opposition members to have patience and said the matter would enter into the order of day in due course.