

## BUET Closure And JCD Connection

The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has been closed sine die. Although student agitation has been cited as the reason for the closure of the premier engineering university of the country, the newspapers have come up with startling revelation. General students were not in favour of the agitation marked by widespread violation on the campus but the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) which controls the BUET students' union engineered the movement for deferment of term examination with an ulterior motive. The motive is plain and simple: if the term examination is completed in August, 20-22 JCD leaders will have to leave the university immediately. This almost coincides with the takeover of power by the caretaker government. The JCD is unwilling to leave the BUET because of the vacuum such a large number of JCD leaders' departure will create. It is reported that the JCD leaders even played a double role by instigating, on the one hand, the general students and at the same time brokering with the BUET authority an end to the student agitation.

However, the JCD has been making news for reasons—both right or wrong—in several other educational institutions for quite some time. At Jagannath University, the JCD has been playing an admirable role in that it has joined forces with the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) either to oust the Islami Chhatra Shibir from the campus or repulse the latter's attack. They have taken a joint stand that they would not allow the Shibir to do politics on the campus. The JCD however could not always maintain such a lofty ideal elsewhere. The organisation of a college in Bogra forced the college authority to stop sale of admission form because the quota it demanded was not entertained. Then it was engaged in a clash with Shibir over the seat allocation at Dinajpur Medical College.

However the Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University witnessed the most interesting development. The JCD along with the general students have been demanding removal of two administrative officials but on alleged complaint of acceptance of a fat amount of money received by a senior vice-president of the JCD from the vice-chancellor, other leaders of the organisation on Monday severely beat him up and sent him to hospital for betraying with the five-day long student agitation. Here the JCD has demonstrated both the right spirit and the wrong spirit. However, two most deplorable incidents involving the JCD have further damaged the already dented reputation of the student front of the main ruling partner. In one such incident six JCD cadres were arrested by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) with firearms, explosives and lethal weapons from a dormitory of the Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute. In another such incident RAB arrested as many as 17 youths in connection with a tender bid worth 40 crore taka on Sunday. Of them, six are JCD cadres—five of whom are studying at Dhaka University and one at Dhaka College.

Now all these incidents clearly demonstrate the rottenness of the student leadership as well as some glimmer of hope. In fact, the national politics is responsible for leading the students astray. The demand for abolishing student politics or at least an experimental ban on it for a few years was not for nothing. Clearly students' unions ought to be devoted to the welfare of students only and in time of national crisis to the cause of the nation. Tagging student fronts with political parties simply causes degeneration of both education and the student leaderships.