

Rajshahi Varsity closed sine die

3 killed, 200 injured in JCD-Shibir clash

Staff Correspondent

Three students were killed and over 200 injured in armed clashes between Jamaat-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir and BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) at Rajshahi University on Saturday.

The Rajshahi University has been closed sine die and the students have been asked to vacate the halls and the campus by 10 a.m. today (Sunday).

The victims were identified as Biswajit of JCD and Mustafiz and Rabiu Islam of Islami Chhatra Shibir. Of them two died on the spot in front of Zoha Hall and one succumbed to his bullet injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital at around 1.30 p.m.

Out of the injured students 150 were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. The condition of about 60 students were stated to be serious at the hospital.

Our Rajshahi Correspondent reported that the university campus turned like a battlefield during the five-hour armed clashes between the two rival groups of students. The gun fight was a sequel to the armed clashes between the two rival students groups that took place on the campus on January 16 in which over 50 students were injured.

The trouble started at about 11 a.m. when the activists of Chhatra Shibir and JCD exchanged abusive languages in front of the administrative building that led to chase and counter chase. Both the groups freely used cut rifles, bows and arrows and other lethal weapons and blasted bombs and cocktails. At one stage the Shibir activists took shelter inside Zoha Hall that ultimately became the bloodiest spot during the day-long run battle.

The JCD activists, backed by the

supporters of Chhatra Oikya, an alliance of seven student organisations including the pro-Awami League Chhatra League, JSD's student front Bangladesh Chhatra League and pro-Workers Party Chhatra Moitree, chased the Shibir workers and attacked Zoha Hall. They captured Latif Hall and Madar Baksh Hall. The Shibir activists opened fire on their rivals, lobbed bombs and showered bricks from the roof top of Zoha Hall. In the face of counter offensive from the rivals the defence of the Shibir activists collapsed and the JCD workers captured the hall when the Shibir boys retreated. They ransacked most of the rooms including the office room and the chamber of the Provost in the Hall.

Shibir activists reinforced their strength with outside help and recaptured Zoha Hall flushing out the

JCD and Chhatra Oikya workers. They beat their rivals and critically injured over a dozen inside the Hall. The Shibir activists also attacked Madar Baksh Hall at around 3 p.m. and ransacked over 200 rooms and set on fire the belongings of the inmates.

The gun battle between the two rival students groups continued for a few hours despite the presence of a permanent police camp on the campus. The police remained silent initially. When a BDR contingent reached the campus the Police became active. They lobbed tear gas

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shells and opened blank fire to disperse the rival students groups.

Police raided four halls around 5 p.m. and recovered one pipe gun, one cut rifle, about 70 bombs and five rifle bullets. They arrested eight students after the raid.

Most of the resident students particularly the girls, already left the campus in panic. Heavy contingents of police have been deployed at various points in Rajshahi town to stop further spread of the campus violence.