

DU campus turns into battle ground

By Our DU Correspondent

Dhaka University campus turned into a battle ground Saturday as two feuding factions of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) confronted each other near the Arts Faculty building and the student dormitories.

At least hundred rounds of gunshots and several cocktails were exploded in the hour long gunbattle. However, none was reportedly injured in the fierce shooting.

Witnesses said, the dispute

erupted when the activists of pro-Montu supporter of Chhatra League (A-L) were holding a rally at the foot of Aparajeya Bangla at about 10:30 am. During the rally other faction of Hasina-backed Chhatra League activists brought out a procession on the campus and chanted slogans against ousted Jubo League President Mostafa Mohsin Montu, tension gripped the supporters of two factions and at a stage BCL (M-I) supporter chased the Montu supporters

and started to gather at the Aparajeya Bangla. Some militant activists of BCL Montu group took shelter near the Arts Faculty Mall and fired several rounds of gunshots towards the BCL (M-I) rally. The supporters of BCL (M-I) group ran helter skelter and soon after the incident they organised a procession and at a stage started counter firing.

The two factions of BCL fired discriminately towards

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each other. The Montu supporters fired from Mall area and BCL (M-I) fired from lecture Theatre area. Some BCL (M-I) supporters also took position at the Central Library premises during the gunfight, witnesses said.

About 80 rounds of shots were fired by the two sides and at least 50 militants of both group were seen firing with cut-rifle, stengun, SMG and other automatic weapons.

Huge contingent of police deployed near the Arts Faculty building rushed to the spot and lobbed at least twenty rounds of teargas shells to disperse the warring groups. However, the police was not able to control the situation. Discriminate firing was heard till 11:45 am.

Soon after the gunfight BCL (M-I) group brought out a procession chanting slogans against violence. The processionists marched through different points of the campus.

Campus inmates and pedestrians ran helter skelter for safety. Motor vehicles geared-up to escape damage, but the militant, damaged some rickshaws on the campus, sources said.

Students and teachers left the campus immediately after the exchange of gunfire. But at about 12 noon gunmen returned to their respective dormitories and started firing.

The second phase of gunfight started at Zahurul Hug Hall and S.M Hall and Jagannath Halls. These three halls were strongholds of

Montu group and Gopalgonj and Barisal group respectively which continued for another half an hour.

Some armed outsiders were seen moving with automatic fire arms in S.M Hall and Jagannath hall areas, witnesses said.

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Chhatra Union (BCU), Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Chhatra Moitry and pro-JSD Chhatra League brought out processions and held separate rallies after the half an hour long gunfight.

Leaders at the all rallies blamed the Awami-backed Chhatra League for violence and demanded immediate arrest of the 'identified' terrorists and their expulsion from the university.

The leaders called upon the students to be united for resisting the armed hooligans and root out terrorism from the campus.

Tension was prevailing on the campus among the teachers and students apprehending further clashes at any time. It may be mentioned here that on Friday a passerby named Shahin received bullet injury due to gunfight between the two factions.

Later, pro-Hasina Chhatra League (M-I) hold a rally protesting the violence. The rally organised in front of Madhu's Canteen was addressed by Iqbalur Rahim, General Secretary of BCL and Pankaj Nath, GS of BCL DU Unit.

The leaders blamed the Montu factions of BCL for act of violence on the campus.