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THE DAILY STAR

DU tense as rival groups issue threats

By DU Correspondent.

Tension gripped the Dhaka University campus yesterday when two rival groups of students brought out separate processions and held rallies.

One group under the banner of "Students Protesting Sexual Harassment" was demanding punishment to teachers allegedly involved in sexual harassment and the other styled "Conscious Students" was staging programmes to "protect the image of teachers".

The "Conscious Students" group announced at their rally that they would capture the Vice-chancellor's office premises today and resist their rival's programme of burning effigies of accused teachers.

Witnesses said that the two groups were about to clash at about noon when activists of the "Conscious Students" group who were holding a rally at the Aparajeo Bangla allegedly hurled indecent remarks at a SPSH procession which was passing through the area.

The SPSH brought out a silent procession from in front of the DUCSU building wearing masks and carrying banners.

The "Conscious Students" group which appeared in the scene on Thursday gathered at the Aparajeo Bangla in the morning after parading the campus carrying placards reading "Save your varsity from NGO and Garment Workers."

Speakers at the rally alleged that the students who were staging programmes against teachers were garment workers and NGO agents. They are

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"outsiders" and will be declared "persona non-grata" on the campus, they said. None should be allowed to destroy the teacher-student relation by bringing "indiscriminate allegations" against teachers, they said.

They also distributed leaflets among students in which they urged the DU authorities not to indulge in any activity which may hamper investigation into the allegations against teachers and to take action against those who want to spoil the peaceful atmosphere on the campus at the instigation of "outsiders and NGOs".

Meanwhile, the president of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation was allegedly assaulted by some persons while he was preparing to bring out a procession protesting the alleged sexual harassment by teachers.

Chhatra Federation later brought out a procession and held a rally at the main entrance of the Arts Faculty building where the speakers extended support to the movement of students against sexual harassment.