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ADMISSION ROW

Zafar Iqbal, Yasmeen Haque resign



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shahjalal University of Science & Technology (SUST) Professor Muhammed Zafar Iqbal and his wife Professor Yasmeen Haque resigned yesterday soon after the university authority postponed the combined admission test for the SUST and JESSORE Science & Technology University (JSTU).

In a statement jointly issued by the academician couple, they said that the postponement of the university entry test which was

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scheduled for November 30 prompted their decision.

"When the process of holding the combined admission test was almost complete, a group of people who used to support them suddenly started opposing the process," the statement reads.

They also explained why they supported the combined entry test.

"Though the question paper would be the same, the universities could maintain their own standards of admission process through the combined test as the universities would prepare separate merit lists. Besides, the candidates could take the test at their preferred or nearest centres without having to travel from one place to another," they said in the statement released yesterday afternoon.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr Yasmeen Haque further explained that an aspirant who registered for admission to both the universities would have to qualify according to the admission requirements of individual universities, no matter where he took the test.

The combined entry test would greatly lessen the hassles of students and guardians, Dr Yasmeen added.

Dr Mozammel Haque, a member of the SUST academic council, told our Sylhet correspondent that the decision of postponing the test was made at an emergency meeting of the council with the Vice Chancellor in the chair yesterday afternoon.

The step was taken as a number of local organisations and student bodies were moving against the combined admission test system and requesting for separate admission test for SUST, he added.

Earlier on Monday, a group of civil society members of Sylhet met the VC and requested for cancelling the combined test system. Besides, representatives of local Awami League, BNP, JSD, BSD, Samyabadi Dal, CPB and some student groups handed over separate memos to the VC for the same.

They argued that since the standard of education was not the same at the SUST and the JSTU, holding one admission test for the two universities would not be justified. They also expressed fears that students hailing from Sylhet and surrounding areas would be deprived under this system.

As the news of the duo's resignation spread, several hundred students took out a procession on the campus demanding the two teachers reverse their decision and the test be taken as planned earlier.

Professor Zafar Iqbal who is also a noted writer of the country was the head of the electrical & electronics engineering department and had been with the SUST since its inception in 1991. Professor Yasmeen Haque was the dean of the School of Life Science in the same institute.