

# JU asks students to vacate halls after VC house siege

40 arrested; protest follows death of 2 fellows in road accident

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN

The authorities of Jahangirnagar University yesterday night decided that all the residential students of the university will have to vacate their dormitories by 10:00am today.

The decision was taken at an emergency syndicate meeting called by JU Vice-Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam around 11:00pm after students took position inside her residence compound by breaking the lock of the front gate, said JU Registrar Abu Bakr Siddique.

The students laid siege to the VC's residence, next to the teachers' quarters, demanding punishment for the BCL men who earlier attacked them while they were protesting deaths of two fellows in Friday's road accident blocking the Dhaka-Aricha highway.

Meanwhile, around midnight, after the meeting, police arrested some 40 students who took position inside the VC's residence, according to witnesses. The VC called the meeting over the phone as she was locked inside, said the registrar.

Also, a case has been filed by the university authorities with Ashulia Police Station against some 40 students for vandalising the VC's residence, said the JU registrar. A probe body has been formed in this regard, he added.

Meanwhile, some teachers alleged that they were hurt while trying to stop the students entering the VC's residence.

Earlier, at least 10 persons, including students, a JU official and two journalists, were injured yesterday when police and Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists of JU tried to disperse them in

three separate incidents after the students blocked the highway.

The injured are Hafizur Rahman and Abu Sayem, JU correspondents of Jagonews24.com and Daily Destiny; Sudipta Shaheen, chief security officer at JU; and students -- Jui, Ayon, Bhaishakhi, Anamika, Sajedur, Riman and Didar.

The injured were admitted to a local hospital. The students continued their demonstration for the second consecutive day blocking the road in front of the main entrance of the university yesterday from 11:30am to 5:30pm halting traffic movement.

They have been demonstrating to realise their three-point demand, including compensation for the family of the deceased, enforcing speed limit of 30km per hour from Bismail area to

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the campus and placing speed breakers on the road.

The protesters also demanded an explanation from the university authorities for not giving them permission to hold the namaz-e-janaza of the deceased students on the campus.

The students alleged that the university authorities did not bring the bodies of the deceased students to the campus for their janaza. But the authorities claimed that the families of the deceased did not agree and took the bodies back home for burial.

However, when this correspondent spoke to a

relative of one of the deceased students, on Friday, he claimed that one of the teachers of the university told him that arranging a janaza on the campus might create "an awkward situation".

Meanwhile, some protesters alleged that JU unit of BCL activists led by Niladree Shekhar Mazumder attacked them around 1:30pm. But no one was injured in the incident, according to witnesses.

Around an hour later, JU Vice-Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam went to the spot and urged the protesters to call off their demonstration and submit a written complaint. However, the

demonstrators refused her proposal.

Then around 3:45pm, at least seven to eight JU unit BCL activists led by its President Jewel Rana and Secretary SM Abu Sufian allegedly attacked the students, leaving Sayem, Sajedur and Riman injured, according to witnesses.

Contacted, SM Abu Sufian denied the allegation.

Later, around 4:00pm, the VC went to the spot again and tried to settle the matter but to no avail. The students then submitted a written complaint to the VC regarding the BCL attack on them mentioning names of 20 activists, including its secretary.

They also declared to continue their demonstration until construction of at least one speed breaker in front of the campus.

Soon afterwards, as the

university authorities could not make the students call off their demonstration, police took action to break them up, said police.

According to students and witnesses, police charged batons, lobbed several teargas canisters and fired rubber bullets and dispersed the students around 5:30pm. At least seven to eight persons, including Hafizur Rahman and Sudipta Shaheen, were injured.

Ashraful Azim, Dhaka district's additional superintendent of police, said, "We dispersed the students from the highway. The situation is under control now."

When asked that a journalist was also injured in the incident, he said, "It's unfortunate." He claimed one of their constables was also injured.

After being dispersed, agitated students laid

siege to the VC's residence. They also broke the lock of the front gate and also sought punishment for the BCL men who attacked them.

Police were deployed in the area to avoid any untoward incident.

Earlier, on Friday, two JU students -- Nazmul Hasan Rana, 24, of marketing department, and Arafat, 24, of microbiology, were killed as a bus rammed a human-haulier carrying them on Dhaka-Aricha highway in C&B bus stand area of Savar around 5:00am.

Rana died on the spot while Arafat succumbed to his injuries at Savar Enam Medical College Hospital.

Following the incident, hundreds of students blocked the highway in front of the main entrance and Joy Bangla Gate separately around noon.

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