

**DEMAND FOR PHULBARIA COLLEGE NATIONALISATION**

# Teacher, villager killed in police action

**Staff Correspondent**

A TEACHER of Phulbaria Degree Collage and a villager were killed and at least 25 others injured as police swooped on demonstrators agitating for nationalisation of the college at Phulbaria in Mymensingh Sunday afternoon.

The dead were identified as Abul Kalam, 55, botany department teacher of the college, and Safar Ali, 65, resident of village Kushmire under the upazila.

The college teachers alleged that Abul Kalam fell sick after being kicked by police personnel and died without treatment as the law enforcers barred them from taking him to hospital.

Students, teachers and locals of the upazila town had been on movement for the past one month and a half, demanding nationalisation of the collage, established in 1972, now having about six thousand students.

On Sunday, the demonstrators, as per their pre-announced programme, tried to bring out a procession from the college premises to press home their demand, when police intercepted them about 12:30pm, witnesses said.

Barred, the protesters hurled brick chips at the police personnel, which the law enforcers answered by firing blanks and tear shells.

The police personnel

began to beat and kick the students and the teachers whomever they found.

Being kicked by the law enforcers, botany teacher Abul Kalam fell sick, and collapsed to the ground.

As the news of attack on teachers spread, dispersed students and locals regrouped and were locked in clashes with police towards 2:00pm.

During the chase and counter-chase, villager Safar Ali, in his bid to flee the area, fell on the road and was injured.

He was taken to the upazila health complex by the police personnel, where he was declared dead.

Locals said that at least 25 others were injured and took treatment at different private clinics.

Social works department teacher of the college Mashrufa Sultana, talking to New Age in an emotion-choked voice in the evening, alleged that police barred the college teachers several times when they tried to take Abul Kalam to hospital.

'Though we called ambulance, they (police) also did not allow the driver to come to the college and forced the ambulance to go back,' she alleged.

He was kept in the teachers' room untreated for over two hours before we could secretly take him out of the college campus through the garden behind the college

building. He was unconscious when he was taken to Community Based Medical College Hospital in Mymensingh, she alleged.

She said that the on-duty doctors declared the teacher dead immediately after he was taken there.

When contacted by New Age over the official cell phone of the CBMCH in the evening, the call receiver neither gave his identity nor made any comment.

As the news of the teacher's death reached Phulbaria town, locals and students again tried to bring out a procession but it also faced police barricade, locals said, adding that tense situation was prevailing in the area.

Phulbaria Police Station officer-in-charge Rifat Khan Rajib, however, claimed that police rescued seriously sick Safar 200-300 metres away from the spot and took him to the upazila health complex where doctors declared him dead.

He claimed that Safar died of sickness, not because of their chase.

The Phulbaria OC claimed that the college teacher died of heart attack at the CBMCH, where he had gone to take treatment for his heart disease.

He said that the situation was now under control and extra forces were deployed in the area to avoid any untoward incident.