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# NEWAGE

## Bobby Hajjaj withdraws remarks on DU following protests

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*Bobby Hajjaj*

State minister for primary and mass education Bobby Hajjaj on Friday withdrew his recent comment that dubbed Dhaka University as a coaching centre.

The withdrawal came after his remarks drew criticism and triggered protests from Dhaka University teachers, including the pro-BNP teachers' alliance White Panel.



Recently the state minister made the comment on a podcast called 'SameerScane'.

'I consider Dhaka University as a coaching centre,' he said, claiming, 'Dhaka University does not do a fraction of the research that North South University or BRAC University does.'

He also said that despite being state-subsidised and having more than 100 departments, Dhaka University did not conduct research.

'Dhaka University does not conduct research at all; the few things they do publish are entirely plagiarised,' Bobby said, adding that there were many instances where full papers were plagiarised and published in the university's own journals instead of foreign ones.

Even after being caught, the individuals involved got promotions, he added.

After his comment surfaced on Friday, students and teachers of the university shared posts protesting against his remarks on different social media platforms, including Facebook.

In a statement issued on Friday, White Panel teachers of Dhaka University said that the recent comments made by the state minister were 'extremely derogatory and irresponsible' and unacceptable under any circumstances, reported by United News of Bangladesh.

The organisation said Dhaka University currently ranked among the country's leading research institutions and held the top position among public universities in Bangladesh in terms of research and publications.

The statement noted that nearly 56 active and specialised research bureaus and centres operate under the university's science, humanities, and social science faculties.

The White Panel alleged that the state minister compared Dhaka University with two private universities based on 'false information,' which it described as highly condemnable.

The statement further said that Dhaka University was not merely a higher education institution but deeply intertwined with the history and birth and development of independent Bangladesh.

The organisation claimed that the minister's remarks could not have come from any 'sane or historically conscious individual' and instead appeared to be 'ignorant ramblings.'

It said such comments from a member of the government were deeply shameful and had hurt the entire university community as well as the people of the country.

Demanding an immediate withdrawal of the comments, White Panel warned that teachers and students would be compelled to announce tougher programmes to protect the dignity of the university if the remarks were not retracted.

In the afternoon, state minister Bobby Hajjaj in a Facebook post said that some of his statements were misunderstood and in some cases misinterpreted.

He said that these were entirely his personal thoughts and opinions; they did not in any way reflect the official position or policy of the government.

‘What I really wanted to say is that the time has come to transform Dhaka University into a more world-class research university. My intention in my speech was never to belittle the heritage, prestige or contributions of Dhaka University; rather, it was to highlight our ambitions for the future,’ his post read.

‘But I am clear about one thing: I have deep respect for the history, heritage, and contributions of Dhaka University to nation-building. I want this university to gain a stronger position not only as the heart of higher education in Bangladesh, but also as a recognised centre of world-class research, innovation, and knowledge,’ it continued.

‘However, since my partial statement has created some misunderstanding, many have been dissatisfied, many of my loved ones and well-wishers have been hurt, I am completely withdrawing this statement and hope that there will be no more debate and misunderstanding on this issue,’ read the post.

Tags [#Dhaka University](#) [#Bobby Hajjaj](#)

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