

Restore Sanity at BUET

RECENT developments in the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) suggest that the unrest leading to its closure *sine die*, has deeper roots than vandalism. Quite a range of reasons, from machinations by a group of teachers belonging to a particular faculty to topple the incumbent vice-chancellor, to growing antipathy among students towards administration's high-handedness, have been attributed to the flare-up on April 25 and 26. However, a plea from a section of students and teachers for reopening the university immediately indicates that decision for an indefinite closure is far from popular. Besides, on no count, hoodlums should be allowed to dictate terms, neither at BUET nor at any other university.

From the very start, the authorities have successfully kept BUET at a safe distance from divisive politics. External interference has so far been minimal, if not non-existent. Students have benefited from what many might say an extremely controlled environment. In the absence of session jam, an epidemic which otherwise plagued most universities across the country, they have been able to complete their studies in due time. However, in the recent past, some incidents, like the fracas over revision of admission test format for the architecture faculty and the subsequent resignation of some teachers, threatened to disturb the equilibrium. These events may not be part of an intrigue to destabilise the university, but certainly the time has come for the authorities to rethink and streamline the system.

What happened on April 25 and 26 is beyond doubt a criminal offence, and the perpetrators deserve severe punishment. The government should form a probe committee right away to look deep into the matter. There are some disconcerting allegations against a few teachers. Besides, reported involvement of several Dhaka University students in the rumpus makes the whole scenario even more complex. On the whole, there is no reason to take the flare-up as a stray incident.

Sanity should be restored at BUET immediately.