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'91 most turbulent year for DU

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For Dhaka University, 1991 was a most turbulent one. Clashes among the rival student groups claimed six lives and forced more than 100 days of unscheduled closure. There were at least 100 terrorist incidents on the campus.

The All-Party Students Unity (APSU) which played the vanguard role in the mass upsurge of 1990 which toppled the autocratic regime of Ershad became non-functional immediate after the February 27 polls. The 10-point demand which was the basis of its unity against the autocracy sinking all political

differences became the first issue of conflict among themselves when the component were demanding implementation of the 10-point charter of demand. Jetiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) being the ruling party's students front ignored the demand which ultimately made the alliance inactive.

The APSU was finally split in April after Awami League backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (A-A) sheltered the suspect killers of Dr Milon who were expelled from JCD during the anti-Ershad movement.

Clashes that marred the

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academic atmosphere of the university, took place between mainly Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Chhatra League (A-A). There were also sporadic clashes between Chhatra League (A-A) and Chhatra League (N-S), the student front of JSD (Inu).

The first clash between JCD and BCL (A-A) occurred on February 3. APSU leaders at that time controlled the situation. But the situation turned violent on March 30 and April 1, when widespread clashes took place between the two organisations. Khokan an out-sider was shot dead at a room of Zahirul Huq Hall on April 13.

Meanwhile, DU authorities announced the schedule of DUCSU polls. But it was, later, deferred in the wake of terrorist activities. DUCSU polls, however, could not be held in 1990.

Tension mounted on the Campus, and situation further deteriorated with the gunbattles between the same organisations in May.

The DU authorities summoned a meeting of political leaders for the peace on Campus on May 27. But the meeting was followed by a untoward incident in which the Secretary General of Jamaat-e-Islam Maulana Matiur Rahman Nizami was assaulted.

On June 11, gunshots were exchanged between the activists of BCL (A-A) and BCL (N-S) at Jagannath Hall. As a sequel to this incident another gunbattle took place between these organisations on June 20 leaving BCL (N-S) leader Mahbubur Rahman dead.

Following the death of Mahbub, the students' dormitories of the University was vacated. The classes of the University later resume on July 7.

Another violent clash between JCD and BCL (A-A) took place on July 30 in which over 50 rounds of gun shots were exchanged. As a result, University was closed down sine die and students were asked to vacate their respective halls.

The University reopened on September 17 but the situation again turned tense following a

clash between the workers of BCL and police on September 18 at Jagannath Hall.

In the meantime, the Vice-Chancellor Prof Maniruzzaman Miah met Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina on September 18. The Syndicate meetings repeatedly appealed to the political leaders for their cooperation in removing violence. The Syndicate members called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on July 7. But all went in vain.

The BCL and JCD again indulged in a serious gunbattle on October 27. Two JCD members Mirza Galib and Liton, a BCL member Mizan and an unidentified street boy were killed in the battle.

All classes and examinations were suspended for three days. On the other hand the DU teachers began a work stoppage protesting Government inaction in containing terrorism.

Meanwhile, Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina on October 30 suspended all activities of her party's student organisation BCL on the Campus.

The DU teachers withdrew their programme on December 6 and classes resumed on December 8.

The BCL is yet to resume its activities on Campus. However, clashes between BCL and JCD were reported several times in December also.