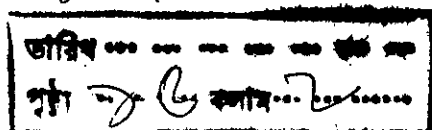


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DU gripped by tension before power transfer to Caretaker Govt

Varsity Correspondent

Fearing clashes between Awami League-backed Chhatra League and BNP-supported Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal on the Dhaka University campus, most of the general students remained absent on Saturday.

Tension has gripped the entire university at a time when the Awami League completes its five-year tenure and the Caretaker Government is about to take over office.

Many teachers did not take classes in the absence of students while some departments had to postpone the scheduled classes as attendance was very thin. Examinations of some departments have already been shifted.

At zero hours on Saturday, demonstrations of shootout took place inside the dormitories still dominated by BCL.

When some BNP cadres fired blank-shots from a procession crossing the Bangabandhu Hall-adjacent to Elephant Road early Saturday, the BCL activists retaliated it fearing an offensive hall by their rivals.

On Saturday morning, the JCD and its allies submitted a memorandum to President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, demanding removal of terrorism from the campuses. Their demands include cancellation of Gana Bhaban's allotment to outgoing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

BCL held a rally at Paltan Maidan in the evening to celebrate the completion of full five-year tenure of AL government.

Meanwhile, strict security measures taken by the DU authorities continued on Saturday. Restrictions were imposed on vehicular movement on the campus through three entrances— Chankharpul, Nilkhet and Plassy have been sealed.

A teacher of Library and Information Science Department fell victim to police harassment at Nilkhet. An embarrassed and angry Prof SM Mannan said he would not take any class until the Caretaker Government takes over office.

Some other teachers alleged that police did not allow their car to enter the campus. "Such a warlike situation is unwanted on the campus," said a teacher of Management department, who was very upset with behaviour of the security personnel.

Protesting the race between the two main student bodies for occupying the halls, left-leaning organisations brought out processions and held rallies on the campus.

They drew attention to the reality that the insecure common students had to leave their dormitories fearing bloodshed.

Central leaders of Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO), an umbrella of Five student bodies, addressed a rally in front of Arts Building.

BCL cadres of Jasimuddin Hall handed over one Zahedul Islam to police with two rounds of bullets.