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3CL, Shibir clash at 3 colleges

88 hurt as Khulna BL College, Meherpur, Dinajpur govt colleges erupt in violence over welcoming admission seekers

STAR REPORT

At least 88 people, mostly students, were injured as Bangladesh Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir activists locked in clashes at three colleges in Khulna, Meherpur and Dinajpur yesterday.

All the clashes were over welcoming aspirant freshmen to admission tests in colleges.

Fifty people, including two policemen and four photojournalists, were injured in a fierce clash between Chhatra Shibir and Chhatra League around 12:30pm at Daulatpur Government BL University College.

The college authorities imposed a ban on all political activities on campus and closed two dormitories for indefinite period after the clash.

Six of the injured were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital of whom two Shibir men are in critical condition.

The clash erupted when Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Chhatra Shibir men chanted abusive slogans against each other on

campus after the freshmen admission test ended.

They used bricks, sticks and iron rods against each other during the clash that continued till 4:30pm on and around the campus.

Police had to fire 18 teargas canisters to disperse the feuding groups.

Chhatra League men allegedly ransacked Mohsin Hall and Shaheed Titumir Hall of the college. These two dormitories were under the control of Chhatra Shibir, sources told our staff correspondent at Khulna.

Chhatra League men while denying allegations of ransacking the dorms said men of Chhatra Shibir attacked them first.

However, Principal of the college Ahmed Reza said he was not aware of who attacked whom first.

Chhatra League later laid siege to the administrative building of the college demanding expulsion of Shibir men from the college and dormitories.

Four platoons of police were deployed in

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BCL-Shibir clash

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and around the college to maintain law and order.

MEHERPUR

Meanwhile, at least 30 leaders and activists of Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir were injured in a clash in Meherpur yesterday, reports our correspondent in Kushtia.

Police arrested 26 Shibir men including Chhatra Shibir district president and general secretary in this connection.

Chhatra League, student wing of ruling Awami League, ransacked and torched the district office of Jamaat-e-Islami, parent organisation of Chhatra Shibir, and declared Chhatra Shibir "banned" in the district.

Chhatra League men also beat up two journalists and damaged their cameras.

According to police, Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir were receiving freshmen aspirants of Meherpur Government College standing on a road near the campus around 1:30pm.

Police said the college authorities had prohibited chanting slogans of student organisations to keep the admission test atmosphere calm.

Sources said Chhatra League activists at one stage started chanting slogans to which Shibir men protested.

A scuffle began and they chased each other. Shibir men ran for cover and took shelter inside a students' mess, which they control, across the street from the college. Chhatra League activists attacked the mess leading to an hour-long clash that left at least 30 activists injured.

The injured were admitted to Meherpur General Hospital.

Chhatra League activists then attacked Rtv and Amar Desh correspondent Palash Khondokar and Prothom Alo and ntv correspondent Tuhin Aranya as they were taking pictures.

Police and Rapid Action Battalion personnel rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. They surrounded the mess.

Police said they arrested 26 Shibir men at the mess and recovered several lethal weapons during a raid.

District Shibir President Iqbal Hossain and General Secretary Sohel Rana Dollar were among the arrestees.

They recovered eight swords, 20 iron rods and some white powder. Police could not say what the white powder was.

The Chhatra League men attacked district Jamaat office at Gohati around 2:30pm. They sacked furniture, two computers and three motorcycles inside the office and then set it ablaze.

They brought out a procession in the town in the afternoon.

DINAJPUR

At least eight students were injured in clashes between Chhatra League and Chhatra Shibir in Dinajpur Government College, our Dinajpur correspondent reports.

Six of the injured were identified as Shajal, Mithun, Ratan, Prodeep Roy, Shalekin and Hamidur Rahman. They were rushed to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital.

Dinajpur Government College and Government Women's College were open yesterday for the freshmen admission tests.

Sources said the clashes ensued when Chhatra Shibir Dinajpur Government College unit brought out a procession welcoming aspirant freshmen, violating a directive of the college authorities against processions of any student organisations on campus.

As Chhatra League unit of the college hindered the procession, Shibir activists attacked them with sticks and hurled brickbats at them, sources said.

The Chhatra League activists later regrouped and drove the Shibir activists away. They then sacked at least 34 rooms of two dormitories and staked fires in front of the dormitories, the sources added.

Later, fire fighters doused the fires while police removed Chhatra League activists from the campus.

A large number of police was deployed to avert further untoward incident on the campus.