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DU VC for further consultations

'Umbrella Act' to cripple public varsities' autonomy

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"Further steps will be taken in consultation with the relevant body regarding the proposed 'Umbrella Act'," said Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. SMA Faiz while commenting to newsmen on Saturday on the move taken by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to impose restriction on activities of the public universities.

The DU VC asserted that there would be no unilateral decision in this regard.

Replying to a query, he said that

he would make a statement in this regard at an appropriate time in perspective with conditions in Dhaka University.

The UGC has taken the move to cut the autonomy of all the public universities of the country. The move was initiated following 'earthing of forgery, corruption' and politicisation that marked the unfair practices in the public universities including Dhaka University.

The UGC thinks that such act would help address the rising

problems that ultimately hamper the proper functioning of the universities.

The proposed act titled "Umbrella Act of Public University" will replace the existing University Ordinance-1973. With the new law enacted all the public universities (28) will lose their autonomous status.

The UGC has already submitted a draft of the proposed Act specifying the rules and regulations to the ministry of education for vet-

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Umbrella Act

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ting. After reviewing the draft, effective measures will be taken to implement it.

Under the Act, the appointment of Vice-chancellor and Pro-Vice-chancellor in the public universities will take place as per the decision of the 'Search Committee'. Earlier, the government had formed a seven-member Search Committee headed by the Education Secretary.

Under the act, appointments of partisan teachers and politics in the universities by students should be banned. The teachers cannot work in favour of any political parties. The teachers must retire from the university if he/she wants to contest in the national or local elections.

The UGC will take measures regarding examination, teaching, research centres constructions of new Bhaban and investigation.

Meanwhile, eminent educationists of the country have expressed their mixed reaction to the proposed act. They demanded immediate cancellation of the decision.

According to them, the autonomy is the primary and essential condition of the public universities. The 1973-University Ordinance is related to the concept of liberation war. "It is necessary to take opinions from the teachers, educationist and students before making such an act".