

No end in sight to BUET stand-off over demand for VC removal

Staff Correspondent

NO END is in sight to the week-long BUET stand-off over teachers' decision to resign en masse unless the vice-chancellor is removed by Saturday as the government remains clueless about how to resolve the crisis at the prestigious seat of learning.

On Thursday, education minister Nurul Islam Nahid said that the teachers' decision not to hold demonstrations on Thursday and Friday would not lead to

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a peaceful solution unless they withdrew their ultimatum for mass resignation.

Speaking at an impromptu news conference at his office Nahid said that the agitating teachers announced the two-day break 'as a new strategy only to take rest, and not to show respect for my initiative as they said.'

'They did it only to embarrass me in public,' Nahid said.

The teachers and students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology have been asking the VC and the Pro-VC to resign.

They said that they postponed their demonstration for two days to show 'respect' to the initiative taken by the education minister for resolving the crisis that led to the unprecedented closure of BUET.

'We have postponed the demonstration only to prove that we did not begin the agitation to embarrass the government,' BUET Teachers' Association president Mujibur Rahman said on Wednesday.

The teachers took the decision to put off their agitations a day after Nahid said that the teachers had 'other motives' when they announced that they would resign en masse.

Nahid said that the teachers' ultimatum obstructed his efforts to resolve the impasse in consultations with the head of the government and the head of state, who is also chancellor of BUET.

The education minister, however, said that he would continue with his efforts to resolve the crisis facing BUET.

The teachers, on the other hand, said that they were holding peaceful and non-

violent programmes only to seek a solution to the crisis they were facing.

On Tuesday, the education minister said that 'certain quarters' might have instigated the teachers to offer masse resignation.

Nahid described the teachers' ultimatum aimed at mounting pressure on the vice-chancellor and the pro-vice-chancellor to resign as a 'hurdle' to the initiative he had taken to resolve the crisis.

On Monday, the agitating teachers announced that they would resign en masse on Sunday unless the vice-chancellor and the pro-vice chancellor stepped down by Saturday afternoon.

Nahid alleged that the teachers opposing the vice chancellor and the pro-vice chancellor took the extreme decision only to further deepen the crisis.

He said that the teach-

ers were doing this because they did not want a peaceful solution to the crisis.

The protesters, who offered to take extra classes after the resolution of the crisis, condemned the vice-chancellor for telling the media that he would hire teachers for taking classes and holding exams if the BUET teachers resigned en masse.

On Monday, the education minister met some BUET alumni as well as some of the 25 teachers, who had resigned on July 11 in protest against the decision of the vice-chancellor to close the university for 44 days.

On July 11, all the five deans, heads of all the 17 departments and directors of three institutes under BUET, also resigned in protest against the closure.

Students and employees of BUET later joined the anti VC demonstrations.