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2 pvt univs suspend classes as students clash

Staff Correspondent

AT LEAST 50 were injured as students of two private universities clashed at Banani in the capital city on Saturday afternoon.

More than 30 vehicles were vandalised during the clash and the police fired several rounds of teargas to disperse the students. The academic buildings of both the universities were also vandalized.

The Prime Asia University authorities suspended classes for an indefinite period and the Southeast Uni-

versity authorities suspend classes for March 4 and March 5.

Witnesses said that students of Prime Asia University and Southeast University picked up a quarrel about 2:00pm, leading to a clash that continued for four hours.

Both the groups gave their version of the reasons for the clash but additional deputy commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Nizam Uddin said that the clash had begun over eating in a restaurant.

He said that more than

five platoons of policemen were deployed to contain the situation.

There had been no traffic for more than an hour on Kemal Ataturk Avenue during the clash.

Students of other private universities in the area had been confined to their academic buildings for several hours.

The clash intensified as a rumor was high that two students of the Southeast University and one of the Prime Asia University were killed.

On hearing the news, students intensified their

attacks. But the authorities did not confirm any news of death.

The Southeast University authorities claimed that a law department teacher was also injured during the clash. Two journalists of a private television channel were also injured.

Students of both the universities held responsible each other for the clash. Southeast University students claimed that the clashes had begun when some Prime Asia University students who were drunk made

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comments about a female student of the Southeast University.

The Prime Asia University students said that students of the Southeast University had begun the clash when they were drinking juice.

Students of both the universities pelted each other with stones during the clash. They attacked each other with

iron rods and sticks. When the police tried to disperse the students, the students clashed in neighbouring areas.

At one point, the police fired teargas shells to contain the situation. Students were shouting slogans in front of the universities till 8:00pm.

Students of both the universities said that they were feeling insecure as clashes could break out any time.

The DMP's additional deputy commissioner, however, said that they had taken security measures to fend off any unwarranted incidents.

The Southeast University vice-chancellor, Anwar Hossain, declined comments on the matter.

The Prime Asia University vice-chancellor, Gias Uddin Ahmed, said that they were trying to calm the students.