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SUST declared closed following factional fighting in BCL

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THE authorities declared closed the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology on Monday noon following a series of attacks by a rival group of Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student front of the ruling Awami League, over the announcement of a new committee of the organisation's campus unit that left 6 leaders and activists injured.

The university authorities asked the students to leave the campus and vacate the boys' halls within Monday evening and the female students' halls by Wednesday noon.

The campus would reopen on June 2, sources in the authorities said.

The decision to close the university came from an emergency meeting of the university syndicate held at around 11am to discuss over the existing situation and avert further violence in on the campus, the sources said.

SUST proctor Himadri Sekhar Roy confirmed New Age the news of closing the campus and said the syndicate meeting had taken the decision in view of the rising tension on the campus.

'The university was set to close for summer vacation after two to three days, now the vacation has been advanced from Monday,' the proctor said, adding that the administrative activities on the campus would continue during the vacation.

A group of unidentified youths attacked Imran Ahmed Khan, general secretary in the newly announced committee of SUST BCL, in front of Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital at around 9pm on Sunday and left him critically injured, local sources said.

Imran was rushed and admitted to the hospital where he underwent more than one surgery overnight, but he had to be flown to Dhaka by a helicopter on Monday morning as his condition deteriorated, on-duty doctors in the SOMCH said.

Being contacted, SOMCH deputy director Ehteshamul Haque Chowdhury told New Age at noon that they had referred Imran to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital in Dhaka for better treatment.

Imran had gone to visit Ranjit Dey, the vice-president of BCL's new committee for SUST, who was admitted at the SOMCH on Thursday night after he was hacked and seriously injured by a group of masked attackers on the university campus.

On the early hours of Thursday, barely an hour after the new committee was announced, a group of BCL activists hacked and injured the unit ex-convener Shamsuzzaman Chowdhury Suman in front of the campus gate as they failed to get position in the committee, the campus sources said.

Suman was admitted at SOMCH and shifted to the National Pangu Hospital on Friday as his condition deteriorated.

A group of masked attackers also launched an attack on the Second Student Hall early on Sunday and hacked to injure three residential students— Rahath, Sunny and Arif—who were supporters of the new committee, the campus sources said.

Being questioned, SUST BCL vice-president Anjan Roy told New Age on Monday that they were not aware of the identity of the attackers on the organisation activists. 'Whoever are the attackers, we want that they must be punished,' he added.

BCL central committee in a statement issued on Thursday after Suman was hacked, suspended the organisation's SUST unit activists Uttam Kumar Das and Ehsanul Haque Babu on charge of breaking the organisational discipline.

Supporters of Uttam and Ehsanul along with the leaders who did not get position in the new committee, on Sunday also had called a strike for indefinite period on the campus to push for their demands that include cancellation of the newly announced committee and inclusion of their names in a fresh committee after withdrawal of the suspension order, the campus sources said.

SUST BCL president Sanjiban Chakrabarti, however, claimed on Monday that the ongoing strike was not the programme of the organisation. 'The callers of the strike on the campus are not related to the organisation,' he said.