

JAGANNATH UNIVERSITY HALL

Students stake claim on school

Locals resist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jagannath University students continued their demonstration demanding the return of their halls yesterday, gathering near a school in Old Dhaka.

They moved to reclaim the space of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman High School that once, according to them, belonged to 'Bazlur Rahman Hall'.

Locals, however, put down a banner which was hung by the students at the school's gate, claiming the area as their hall, witnesses said.

The students gathered at their campus around 10:30 am before heading to the school in Malitola in a procession.

Around 11:00 am, they started marching towards the school but were stopped by police near Rayshaheb Bazaar.

Facing obstruction, students began staging a sit-in there for the recovery of the hall.

At one stage, they demanded to go inside the school to hang a banner reading: 'Bazlur Rahman Hall'.

To avert any violence in the locality, only thirty students were allowed to go near the school with a police escort and they hung the banner at its entrance gate.

The school was built by the then Dhaka City Corporation in 2006 occupying the space that was previously belonged to Bazlur Rahman Hall.

The university students had used the space as their dormitory since 1985 until locals had ousted them for their alleged involvement in stalking girls and not paying bills, locals told The Daily Star.

Most of their allegations had been

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

Students stake

FROM PAGE 2

levelled against the activists of the then Ershad-backed student front, Chhatra Samaj, who used to stay in the hall, they said.

Locals under the banner Panchayet Committee had tore and burnt down the banner soon after the students hung it yesterday.

"We have no other high school in ward number 71. There is no question of

relocating the school," said Rahmatullah, general secretary of the committee.

"This is a densely populated area. Where can we find space for a playing field for the children?" he added.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shariful Islam, president of the university unit of BCL, said they would hold a rally at the Central Shaheed Minar premises on March 16 to gain support for their cause.