

## BCL halts exam at RU for leader's 'illness'

*Locks, vandalises classroom, threatens  
teachers brandishing guns*

RU CORRESPONDENT

Because one of their leaders was "ill", Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday forced the Islamic history and culture department at Rajshahi University to postpone an examination by locking and vandalising the exam hall, threatening teachers at gunpoint and hurling abuses at them.

The master's final exam of course no. 5 was scheduled to start at 9:00am but when students and teachers turned up, they found the exam hall, Room 204 at Shahidullah Arts Building, locked.

About 100 students were to sit for the exam.

Witnesses said about 20-25 BCL men, led by RU unit vice president Rana Chowdhury, joint secretary Mahbubur Rahman Polash, and environment affairs secretary Mustakin Billah, locked the room to stop the exam from taking place, as another RU BCL vice president and an examinee, Mehedi Hasan, was having "fever", according to BCL sources, and unable to sit for it.

Teachers said Mehedi neither did apply for any alternative arrangement nor did inform the

department about his illness through any letter.

"If he filed an application, we would try to arrange his exam in sick bed," the department chairperson, Prof Syeda Nure Kaseda Khatun, told The Daily Star. A scheduled exam cannot be cancelled without an academic committee meeting, she added.

After breaking the lock, the teachers prepared to start the exam at 9:30am, but then the BCL activists started vandalising windows of the classroom.

As the chairperson and two other professors, Imtiaz Hossain and MA Bari, stepped in, they hurled abuses at the teachers and threatened them by brandishing two pistols, said a teacher.

A witness preferring anonymity told The Daily Star that BCL leaders shouted, "catch them [teachers], beat them".

"All of you [teachers] will get punished," he said, quoting vice president Rana.

On information, Proctor Prof Tarikul Hasan rushed to the department and calmed the BCL marauders.

BCL's RU unit president Mizanur Rahman denied the allegations of any vandalism, threat or verbal abuse.