

STORY BY SHAHZAD KHAN

DU V-C, Proctor bow out, students end hunger strike

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The week-long massive students' upsurge on the Dhaka University campus ultimately saw beleaguered Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury along with his Proctor bowing out of the scene.

Against in the backdrop a huge protests and widespread demand for his resignation, Prof Chowdhury finally decided to quit after Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia suggested him to resign on Wednesday morning, campus sources said.

As per rules, the VC tendered his resignation to Acting President Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, who is the Chancellor of the university. The resignation letter was handed over to Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk who sent it to the acting President.

Pro-VC Prof AFM Yousuf Haider has taken the charge of Acting VC and, a while later, he received the resignation letter of Proctor Prof Nazrul Islam who too just complied with the students' demand.

As the news of the VC's step-down spread, a moderate size of gathering of students at the Central Shaheed Minar burst into jubilation, seeing this as a victory of their movement against a

ised to the agitating teachers to meet all their seven-point demand. Only the Syndicate could fulfil the demands and he would try his best to help implement those, Prof Haider told the teachers.



Prof. Anwarullah Chowdhury



Prof. Yusuf Haider

"stubborn person". The students, fasting unto death there, finally broke their hunger strike after the acting VC prom-

ised to meet the students' demands.

Also on Wednesday, different personalities and professionals expressed their solidarity with the

students.

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to celebrate inside the campus. Still, the roving students and their sympathisers showed V-sign to each other.

A number of DU teachers, including the acting VC and recently removed provost of Shamsunnahar Hall, termed "tragic and unfortunate" the VC's exit in the wake of students' demonstration.

"I've decided to resign from the post of Vice-Chancellor following unfortunate situation at Dhaka University and in view of the interests of common students," reads Prof Chowdhury's resignation letter addressed to the Chancellor.

Minar. Acting President of Awami League Abdus Samad Azad, former ministers Matia Chowdhury and Abdul Matin Khasru, leftist leader Tipu Biswas, Barrister Amirul Islam and Barrister Shawkat Ali Khan and the leaders of Supreme Court Bar Association were among them.

Prof Scrajul Islam Chowdhury, 1952 Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin, Engineer Sheikh M. Shahidullah and Prof Mesbah Kamal broke the students' fast offering them glasses of sharbar (juice).

In conformity with the popular demand, the acting VC pledged immediate opening of the university. "I'll call the Syndicate meeting to resume academic activities within a week," he told the surging reporters shortly before taking over the charge.

Despite the unique victory of the students' demonstrators, the already vacated campus looked deserted as police sealed all the entry points, denying the students

DU V-C, Proctor

Sources said he was summoned by the Prime Minister in the morning to attend a meeting for reviewing the campus situation and there he was suggested to relinquish the office. "It's better on his part to resign considering overall situation on the campus," Begum Zia was quoted to have said.

Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury was appointed DU VC on November 12, 2001 according to Article 11/2 of the Dhaka University Order 1973. His predecessor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury was removed as per the General Clauses Act 1897.

After assuming the office as an interim VC, Prof Chowdhury was elected VC by the university's highest executive body, the Senate, on June 24, 2002 for a four-year term.

When the Reporters and Dhaka University correspondents of the national media tried to approach the outgoing VC right from the midday, the police and BDR deployed in front of Vice Chancellor's residence blocked everyone. Completely upset with the way he

resigned, the VC was learnt to be reluctant to face the members of the media.

The stalemate that led to VC's resignation cropped up from the predawn police assault on female students at Shamsunnahar Hall on July 23.

The predawn attack on female students and subsequent police action on the campus sparked off unprecedented protests, which are reminiscence of the anti-autocratic movement in November-December 1990. The lucid difference between the two movement of that the one of '90 was led by a combination of student bodies while the latest one is completely an agitation of those who are not