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200 staff recruited at RU in 3 days

Move to appoint 800, mostly BNP-Jamaat men

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Rajshahi University (RU) authorities have appointed some 200 third and fourth-class employees in the last three days largely on political considerations ignoring the budgetary provisions of the university.

Sources said the authorities have planned to recruit a total of 800 staff within a short time and most of them are likely to be picked from BNP and Jamaat adherents.

There are allegations of widespread bribing in the recruitment process, the sources added.

Some 1500 job seekers, mostly political activists, are thronging the administrative building regularly, which is affecting the academic atmosphere greatly, senior RU teachers and officials alleged.

Influential BNP and Jamaat leaders including former lawmakers and their supporter teachers and student leaders have been making brisk money amounting to several crores of taka in exchange of assuring varsity jobs, many candidates alleged.

Rajshahi city mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, Motihar upazila BNP president Ansar Ali, secretary Mukhtar Hossain and BNP-Jamaat adherent ward commissioners Monwara Begum and Gias Uddin have lobbied for many candidates, several aspirants told The Daily Star.

Many of the political candidates from Meherchandl, Budpara, Dharampur, Kajla, and Binodpur were chosen on condition that they would work for BNP-Jamaat in the upcoming election. Some influential RU teachers have also registered their nominations with the selection board members, sources said.

"The instances of cashing in on the recruitment are alarming and the controversial appointments beyond budget will turn the institution into a white elephant soon, leading the government to stop grants," RU syndicate member Prof Abdus Sobhan said.

The RU authorities flouted legal procedures and confirmed the job of 544 employees in 2004 that created long-lasting chaos in the university.

Meanwhile, the University Grants Commission (UGC) recently threatened RU of stopping allocation of funds since the authority was increasing its budget deficit by 'unnecessarily' recruiting manpower.

RU Treasurer Abdul Jabbar Khan in a letter to the vice chancellor (VC) told that already Tk 18 crore had been spent in first four months of the current fiscal year against the annual allocation of Tk 52.40 crore on salaries.

"If this unnatural rate of

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escalating expenditure on salaries continues, the university will be dipped in financial adversity shortly making payment of the regular staffs uncertain," the letter reads.

Contacted, RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain and pro-VC Prof Mamnunul Keramat said that they were 'ill' and refused to talk.

"We will seek extra funds from UGC for fresh recruitment and it will be granted...there should not be any problem," RU Registrar Abdus Salam said adding that the UGC is generally lenient.