

Strike in DU today, exams postponed JCD attacks BCL rally, ransacks teacher's room

Varsity Correspondent

Aggressive supporters of ruling BNP's student wing, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) attacked a rally of the pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the Dhaka University campus on Tuesday, leaving at least 25 injured.

BCL President Bahadur Bepari and General Secretary Ajay Kar Khokon were the main targets of the assault by the cadres of JCD, witnesses and campus sources said. Khokon was now undergoing treatment at a city clinic. JCD activists also ransacked the office of a teacher at the Arts Faculty.

In protest against the attack by the JCD activists, BCL called a general strike on the Dhaka University campus today (Wednesday) and another strike in all the educational institutes across the country tomorrow (Thursday).

Tuesday's incident of attack took place when a group of BCL leaders and workers numbering around 70 gathered at Aparajeyo

Bangla on Arts Faculty campus about 1.30 p.m. to hold a rally protest against police obstacle BCL's scheduled demonstration at Shikha Bhaban to oppose dissection of history of the country Liberation War in the textbook.

Seeing the BCL supporters by organisation's President Bahadur Bepari and General Secretary Ajay Kar Khokon at Aparajeyo Bangla, the JCD cadres surrounded them and hurled abusive words, threw brickbats and wielded bamboo sticks. They one stage physically assaulted Khokon and other senior BCL leaders.

This was the first major programme attended by Khokon on the campus after BNP returned to power through the October 1 parliamentary polls. Since then had been in the hideout.

Police, deployed at the spot remained as silent spectators during the JCD attack until the B

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leaders and workers ran for shelter inside the Arts Building. Many of them took shelter inside rooms of some DU teachers but could not escape the attack of JCD activists. Besides the BCL leaders and workers, many common students also were assaulted by JCD activists during the incident.

Witnesses said, some senior leaders of JCD tried to save the BCL leaders from the attack of the JCD activists. At least six JCD leaders of DU unit received injuries while trying to calm down their supporters. The JCD activists also ransacked the office of a teacher of Sociology Department, AKM Jamaluddin, who was a central committee member of BCL.

Forced out of the campus, the BCL supporters again gathered at TSC area to bring out a procession, but police dispersed them by charging batons.

The Dhaka University authorities formed a six-member high-powered committee to investigate into the incident. The probe body formed with Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof Zinnatun Nesa Tahmid Begum, has been asked to submit report within 48 hours ending tomorrow (Thursday).

Vice Chancellor Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury told The Bangladesh Observer that he had taken the matter seriously and everyone responsible for the incident would be punished after identification. "I've formed a powerful committee to investigate into the incident," he added. He, however, did not condemn the JCD attack on BCL workers.

Meanwhile, the university authorities suspended a scheduled meeting of the university's Paribesh Parishad, a forum comprising all student organisations active on the campus.

Besides, Chhatra League President Bahadur Bepari and General Secretary Ajay Kar Khokon, Organising Secretary Ashraful Azim Rubon, vice-president Balaram Poddar, Sujit Roy Nandi, Joint-Secretary Liaqat Sikder and Law Secretary Proshanto Bhushan Barua came under serious beatings.

Also beaten up are central leaders Morsheduzzaman Selim, Shahabuddin Farazi, Rafiqul Islam, Nazrul Islam, Abdul Wadud Khokon, AKM Azim, Beg Shaheen Jahan, Elias Ahmed, Chowdhury Saifunnabi Sagar, Delwar Hossain, Reeva, Imran, Russel, Shima, Sharmin, Sharmin, Hillol, Nazmul Islam, Sohel, Tipu, Raja, Rupak, Pankaj, Dola and Shuba.

Bahadur, Ajay, Proshanto and Selim were hospitalised.

When his attention was drawn about the incident, DU Proctor Prof Nazrul Islam told reporters that none of the central JCD leaders was involved in the incident. "Perhaps, any third force is trying to gain something through this incident," said Prof Nazrul, also member-secretary of the probe body formed to investigate the

Later in the afternoon, Bepari held a press conference at his office where Bepari read out a written statement condemning the attack. "This is first ever such an attack on any president and general secretary of a student political organisation by rivals on the campus," he said.

Chhatra League demanded pension of the JCD men who involved in the attack as well as arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprits. They will demonstrate on the campus tomorrow (Wednesday) to observe student strike, the BCL leaders told newsmen.

They bitterly criticised role of police during the campus strike on Tuesday.

Members of the committee DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rasel Hasan, President of Teachers Association Prof AFM Yusuf Haider, General Secretary Sharif Bhuiyan, Dean of Arts Faiz Prof Kazi Shahidullah and Prof Nazrul Islam, said a release.

The probe body already summoned Prof ZN Tahmid Begum, the chair that asked for information about the incident.

Chhatra Dal, the student of ruling BNP, ousted BCL leaders from all the residential halls of DU after October 1 parliamentary elections.

All the scheduled examinations of Dhaka University to be held today (Wednesday) and on Friday have been postponed due to student strike called by C League.

Official sources said authorities postponed the examinations of Kalabhaban and Curzon centres in view of the strike. Fresh dates for the examinations would be announced later, it was added.

Meanwhile, different organisations condemned the attack on Chhatra League rally on the Dhaka University campus by the notorious activists of Jatiya Chhatra Dal (JCD).

Bangladesh Krishak President Haji Rashed Md. and General Secretary Md. Rashid blamed the attack on the BCL rally and assault on its president and General Secretary.

President of Samaj Chhatra Front Nurul Islam, General Secretary Khokar in a statement said the front coalition government was upholding the right of expressing fascist rule on the people.

Bangladesh Chhatra president Hasan Tariq Choudhury, Sohel and General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif condemned the attack and demanded the removal of all terrorists from the educational arena.

Jatiya Chhatra Samaj I Abdullah al Mahmud Md. General Secretary Fakhrul Shahjada said the government was repeating the practice of violence on the student organisation.