

Save RU campus from clutch of AL men, outsiders

Students urge authorities protesting halt of recruitment test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi University students yesterday protested Friday's halting of a staff recruitment test on the campus by pro-Awami League leaders and activists, and urged authorities to save the institution from the interference of outsiders.

General students brought out a huge procession and rallied in front of RU Central Library, with banners reading, "Drive away outsiders, Save campus", and participants chanting the same.

The university authority, however, was still not thinking of taking any action against the ruling party men responsible.

President of RU unit of Biplobi Chhatra Moitree Prodip Mardi said the university was an autonomous body

where no political party could flex muscle or exert influence.

"We want the authority to take action to stop the interference of outsiders for the security of teachers and students," he told The Daily Star.

Several hundred leaders and activists of RU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League and AL's Rajshahi city unit blocked the university gates and drove out test takers from the examination halls.

Around 3,308 applicants arrived on the campus yesterday from across the country to sit for the test, against 27 posts of cataloguer, bibliographer-cum-reference assistant, data entry operator, library assistant, press machine man, mason, mason helper, carpenter, electrical helper, and book binder.

Since April last year, the AL men have been putting pressure on the university authority to provide jobs to the party men.

A student, Saimon Rahman, said it was unacceptable that the university authority remained silent even after the outsiders kept them confined to the campus, putting barricades on the gates for nine hours.

"Had the administration played a strong role, the attackers would not have dared to create the chaos," he told the rally.

The students said the university was no colony of the city AL leaders or anybody else. Those who are destabilising the campus must be driven away and punished, they said.

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Friday's incident is a criminal offence and the university authority should take legal action against the persons responsible, the students said.

When contacted, the university teachers condemned the incident, but they did not hold any demonstration.

RU Teachers' Association general secretary Prof Shah Azam Shantanu said the way "some outsiders" stopped the examination tainted the image of the university.

"We didn't expect such acts when they could go to court with their complaints."

He, however, said the outsiders' statements should also be taken care of because they questioned the recruitment process.

RU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Sarwar Jahan Sajal said the administration was pledge-bound for ensuring good governance on the campus.

"One by one, we stopped illegal trades over bidding and admission on the campus, and we want to maintain discipline in the recruitment process."

He said the authority did not allow any appointment going beyond the logical recruitment process. "We cannot fill the campus with incompetent staff."

He said although they were yet to postpone the recruitment process, it would take some time to complete it.

Thousands of job seekers were harassed as the examination could not be held. "We don't want to repeat the harassment."

He said the VC was away from the campus over official work; they would make decisions on the recruitment when the VC was back.

Our RU correspondent contributed reporting.