

FAST-UNTO-DEATH AT JU 2 students fall sick, teachers join in

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TWO of the four Jahangirnagar University students on fast-unto-death demanding resignation of the vice-chancellor fell sick on the second day of the programme on Wednesday.

Two teachers of the university also joined the students' fast-unto-death in protest at irregularities of the vice-chancellor and an attack on cultural activists by a group of Chhatra League activists.

A number of academicians, rights activists and cultural and media personalities also expressed their solidarity with the students and teachers on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Russel Rana, Zubair Hossain, Sadia Zafrin and Atia Ferdous Chaiti under the banner of Sangskritik Jote began the fast-unto-death near the main gate to the vice-chancellor's house about 10:00am Tuesday after 15 cultural activists were beaten up by Chhatra League activists on April 28 for their protests at the vandalism by pro-government students at a demonstration of teachers the day before.

Rana and Zubair fell sick early Wednesday and were put on saline. In the morning, as Rana's condition deteriorated, he was admitted to Enam Medical College Hospital at Savar.

On Wednesday, drama and dramatics teacher Soma Momtaz and Bangla teacher Shanurma Sultana joined the fast-unto-death.

A large number of JU teachers under banner of Shikkhak Samaj have been demanding the resignation of the vice-chancellor, Shariff Enamul Kabir, for four months in protest of irregu-

larities in and politicisation of the administration.

Teachers began their agitation in December 2011. In the initial stage, the protest was against the political recruitment by the vice-chancellor. A new dimension was added to the teachers' movement after the killing of Zubair Ahmed on the campus.

Zubair, a fourth-year student of English, was tortured by the Chhatra League activists on January 8 and he died from his injuries in United Hospital early January 9.

On Wednesday morning, economist Anu Muhammad, also a teacher of the university, went to see the students and expressed his solidarity with the students.

Educationalist Serajul Islam Choudhury, rights activist Khushi Kabir, Ain o Salish Kendra president Hamida Sultana, jurist and human rights activist Shahdeen Malik, among others, also also expressed their solidarity.

On Tuesday morning, New Age editor Nurul Kabir, columnist Rahnuma Ahmed, Dhaka University teacher Gitiara Nasreen and singer Krishnakali Islam expressed their solidarity.

Former students of the university meanwhile on Tuesday held a rally at Shahbagh in Dhaka protesting at attack by 'VC-backed Chhatra League activists' on teachers and cultural activists.

They put forth their four-point demands including punishment of the attackers and removal of the vice-chancellor.

On Monday, the students gave the vice-chancellor till Tuesday morning to resign. As the vice-chancellor did not resign his position, the students began the fast-unto-death.