

# No end to BUET stand-off

No classes taken on first working day

DU Correspondent

NO CLASSES were held on Saturday at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology although the university opened after a 44-day vacation.

The campus was almost empty and only a few students were found gossiping, mostly in the BUET's cafeteria, and wandering here and there on the campus for the teachers did not take any classes.

Most of the teachers, wearing black T-shirts with the inscription — 'Save BUET, Remove VC, Pro-VC' — abstained from all educational activities to press home their demand for the removal of vice-chancellor SM Nazrul Islam and pro-vice-chancellor Habibur Rahman for their alleged involvement in irregularities in administration.

They said that they began their fresh round of peaceful strikes at the personal level by skipping classes, but did



BUET teachers, students and staff on the campus on Saturday wear T-shirts sporting the demand for removal of the vice-chancellor and the pro-vice-chancellor.

— Indrajit Ghosh

not make any formal declaration or protest openly in order to save themselves from the charge of contempt

of court.

The authorities announced the advanced vacation from 11 July to 24

August amid protest by its teachers who were demanding the resignation of the two top officials, though

the vacation is supposed to stretch from 11 to 24 August according to the academic calendar.

The High Court on July 31 imposed an injunction on the demonstrations of the teachers, jointly with the students and other employees, who have been staging an indefinite sit-in since July 11.

A teacher of industrial production and engineering, Professor AKM Masud, who wore a black T-shirt, told New Age, 'We want to go back to the classrooms but a congenial atmosphere is no longer prevalent on the campus due to the irregularities committed by the VC and Pro-VC.'

He said that the crisis would have been resolved earlier had the government removed the beleaguered vice-chancellor and his deputy.

BUET employees, who were on duty on Saturday, said that only a few students

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came for the classes in the morning, but later they left the classrooms when they heard that no classes are being held.

'I couldn't imagine that this renowned university would suffer from such a stand-off, which is hampering our education,' a student of the urban and rural planning department told New Age.

The first-year student sought early resolution of the existing crisis.

The canteens and dining rooms of the residential halls are yet to be opened.

The general secretary of the teachers' association, Md Ashraful Islam, denied the

association's involvement with the strike as the teachers on personal grounds refrained from academic activities.

The leaders of the teachers' association, facing the High Court's injunction against staging demonstrations, said that they did not have any confidence in the present university administration but would abide by the law.

Vice-chancellor SM Nazrul Islam said that the low presence of students in the classrooms is usual on the first working day.

The students are yet to arrive in Dhaka after the Eid holidays and the teachers should not abstain from

work,' he said.

Regarding admission for the 2012-13 session, he said that a meeting of the academic council would be held on Tuesday to start the process.

The High Court on August 14 directed the concerned authorities to start the admission process to the current session as soon as possible.

On July 11, the teachers, along with the students and employees, began staging an indefinite sit-in at the academic building for 22 days with breaks for two days (July 19 and 20).

On the day, all the five deans and the 17 department heads and directors of three institutes under the university resigned as the

vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor refused to quit.

They also submitted a memorandum to the country's president, Mohammad Zillur Rahman, who is the chancellor of the university.

Several initiatives by the government failed to bring the BUET stalemate to an end.

From April 7 to May 5, the teachers have been abstaining from classes and other academic activities to press home their demand for removal of the vice-chancellor and pro-vice-chancellor for their alleged involvement in irregularities including political recruitment and tampering with examination scripts.