

BCL, JCD to lay siege to home ministry today

Fresh violence in demand for release of leaders

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) will lay siege to the home ministry in the capital today demanding immediate release of detained BCL General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton and JCD President Azizul Bari Helal.

Leaders and activists of BCL and JCD will march separately towards the home ministry from Dhaka University (DU) campus at around 12:00 noon.

Violence erupted again on DU campus last night after the activists of both BCL and JCD brought out

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processions separately on the campus at about 8:45pm.

Meanwhile, DU Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz last night said the government has decided in principle to release both Roton and Helal by Thursday night.

Acting BCL General Secretary Syed Abul Kalam told The Daily Star that although the High Court (HC) has already declared Roton's detention illegal, the government has kept him in prison.

"We shall wait till tomorrow morning as per the assurance of the vice chancellor. If Roton is not released by then, we shall march towards the home ministry," Kalam added.

JCD DU unit General Secretary Saiful Islam Feroz said, "Although the High Court granted Helal bail, the jail authorities did not release him saying that they are yet to receive the order. It is not acceptable."

Feroz said JCD would lay siege to the home ministry to realise their demands including the release of detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and providing Tarique Rahman with proper medical treatment abroad.

Meantime, JCD activists vandalised several vehicles and set a few tyres ablaze at the DU Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) intersection last night.

Agitating activists of both BCL and JCD also staged demonstration in front of the vice chancellor's office.

Later, VC Prof SMA Fiaz at a meeting with BCL leaders at his office last night said the government would release the two student leaders by Thursday night.

He earlier held talks with government high-ups at the chief adviser's office.

BCL on Tuesday kept DU vice chancellor Prof SMA Faiz confined

for four hours protesting the fresh arrest of Roton soon after his release from the Mymensingh jail in the afternoon the same day.

They also ransacked window-panes at the VC office and damaged three cars.

They withdrew the siege following assurance from VC Prof Faiz that the government would settle the issue.