

# BCL activists' suspension is unjust

*They were misguided, says Prof Zafar Iqbal*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The suspension of Chhatra League activists in connection with Sunday's assault on teachers at Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) was unjust, acclaimed writer Prof Zafar Iqbal yesterday said.

They were misguided, he said, adding that those who had sent students to attack the teachers should be punished instead.

On Sunday, alleged BCL activists swooped on teachers at SUST during the latter's scheduled demonstration to stop Vice-chancellor Prof Aminul Haque Bhuiyan from entering his office. Several teachers, including Prof Yasmeen Haque, wife of Zafar Iqbal, were assaulted at the time.

The next day BCL suspended three of its SUST unit leaders followed by suspension of four BCL activists by the university authorities.

"I literally feel for them [the suspended students]," said the professor of the computer science and engineering department while replying to a query after a protest programme on the campus.

"Who have attacked the teachers? Boys of Chhatra League? No. They are students, our students. They are young boys, and what do they understand? They would understand what you make them understand."

Prof Yasmeen echoed his view.

"Chhatra League has no fault of its own in the incident. We don't have any resentment against them. They are our

students and have been used to attack us. The vice-chancellor unleashed them to achieve his own ends," she said.

Earlier in the day, teachers under the banner of Mahan Muktiyuddher Chetonay Udbuddho Shikkhak Parishad abstained from work for three hours as part of their three-day programme protesting the assault on them. They also brought out a silent procession and held a rally in front of the administrative building-2.

A tense situation has been prevailing at the university since the teachers under the platform launched an agitation in April demanding removal of the VC for alleged misbehaviour with some teachers and for "irregularities".

However, the teachers who are on the side of the VC taught classes yesterday.

Meanwhile, 11 publishers, later joined by students from SUST, Brac and World University, at a human chain in front of the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka demanded punishment to those involved in the assault.

The attackers, whatever political links they might have, should be brought to justice, said cartoonist Ahsan Habib, editor and publisher of popular satire magazine Unmad and younger brother of Zafar Iqbal.

At another human chain at Shahbagh, Pahari Chhatra Parishad and Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra demanded exemplary punishment to those responsible for the attack.