

Report 22

24 FEB 2007

Tougher movement planned DU students oppose Yunus' presence as convocation speaker

DU Correspondent

Teachers and students of the Dhaka University (DU) strongly opposed the presence of Nobel Laureate Prof. Muhammad Yunus as the convocation speaker terming him a controversial person. They are now going for tougher movements in this regard. But the DU authorities have been showing rigid mentality to make him convocation speaker. The convocation is scheduled to be held on February 28.

The general students will hold a news conference at Modhu's

Canteen today (Saturday) to press home their demand.

Earlier, Chhatra Sangram Parishad (CSP) a combine of 14 party-backed student organisations at a meeting at Shahid Asad auditorium in the city on Thursday with BCL president Mahmud Hasan Ripon in the chair urged the university authorities not to invite Dr. Muhammad Yunus as the convocation speaker.

They said that Prof. Yunus has disqualified himself from being

(See Page 15 Col. 5)

DU students

(From Page 1 Col. 3)

the convocation speaker by announcing the formation of a political party.

JSD-backed Chhatra League President Shariful Kabir Swapan, General Secretary Ali Hasan Tarun, Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree President Rafiqul Islam Sujon, General Secretary Muktar Hossain Nahid and Jatiya Chhatra Dhara General Secretary Jewel Ahmed Khan were present at the meeting.

Controversies arose over whether Muhammad Yunus should be invited to the convocation after the stalwarts of Awami League-backed "Blue-Panel" in a meeting of the academic council last week opposed his presence accusing of him of waging virulent campaigns against politicians.

The issue was not on the agenda of the meeting but the Dean of Social Science Faculty Prof. Harun-Ur Rashid wanted to talk on the issue and opposed Yunus's presence saying he had kicked up controversies. General Secretary of DUTA Prof. Anwar Hossain and Prof. Sadeka Halim also opposed the decision.

A "Blue-Panel" teacher, Harun-Ur Rashid told the meeting that they had agreed in the meeting of the council which was held on October last year to the proposal to invite Muhammad Yunus as the convocation speaker. But now the situation has changed, as Yunus has become a controversial person. He does not deserve to be awarded doctor of Laws degree.

Teachers belonging to Pro-Awami-League "Blue-Panel", Left Leaning "Pink-Panel" and BNP-Jamaat "White-Panel" teachers opposed the decision to make Yunus the convocation speaker. A 72 hour ultimatum given to the VC by "Blue" and "Pink" panel teachers ended on Thursday but the Vice-chancellor Prof. S M A Faiz remained rigid on his decision.

According to sources, the students who will attend the convocation are distributing leaflets among the students demanding cancellation of the decision.

Former President of Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) Prof. A A M S Arefin Siddique said that, "We agreed to the proposal to invite Muhammad Yunus as the convocation speaker and we awarded him Doctor of Laws degree but now Yunus is no longer an acceptable person to deliver the convocation speech as he had maligned the politicians and has already launched his own political party. DU Vice-Chancellor Prof. S M A Faiz said that, most of the teachers spoke in favour of Muhammad Yunus's presence at the convocation as he had been selected by the same council in recognition to his winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammad was the convocation speaker at the 42nd convocation of DU in 2004.