

DUET ‘shutdown’ over VC appointment enters seventh day

Students lock campus gates, demand VC appointment from university faculty

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Our Correspondent, Gazipur



Photo: Star.

The “complete shutdown” programme declared by protesting students at Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology (DUET) over the appointment of the university’s new vice-chancellor continued for the seventh consecutive day today.

DUET Director of Student Welfare Utpal Kumar Das told The Daily Star that the shutdown remained in force and many general students had already left the campus.



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“However, those involved in industrial attachment programmes are still staying on campus,” he said.

He added that the vice-chancellor could not enter the campus today either, although discussions with the students were expected later in the day.

The protesting students said the programme would continue until further notice.

During a visit to the campus around 1:00pm, the university’s main gate was found locked by students, leaving academic and administrative activities almost completely paralysed.

Shahriar, a security guard stationed inside the main gate, told The Daily Star, “The gate has been locked by the students. No one is being allowed to enter the campus.”

Imran Hossain, an admission-seeking student from Rangpur, said he had travelled to visit the campus but was unable to enter.

“I study at Rangpur Polytechnic Institute. I want to get admitted to DUET, so I came to visit the campus, but I could not enter,” he said.

Several students, requesting anonymity, said they were climbing over boundary walls to move in and out of the campus due to the closure of the main gate.

The protesters are demanding cancellation of the newly appointed vice-chancellor’s appointment and the selection of a vice-chancellor from among DUET’s own faculty members.

Tension has persisted on the campus for the past several days over the appointment.

Officer-in-Charge Aminul Islam of Gazipur Sadar Metro Police Station told The Daily Star that the situation was currently calm.

Newly appointed Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr Mohammad Iqbal told The Daily Star yesterday morning that he was continuing his official duties regularly.

“Salaries, bonuses, and outstanding payments for officers, employees, and teachers have been cleared. Instructions have also been given to ensure treatment for the injured students,” he said.

Asked when he planned to enter the campus, he said discussions with teachers were ongoing.