

Thursday, August 09, 2018



VCs for general amnesty for students as they meet Nahid

Staff Correspondent | Updated at 12:17am on August 09, 2018



Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid speaks at a views exchange with private university vice-chancellors at International Mother Language Institute in Dhaka on Wednesday. -- Focusbangla photo

Vice-chancellors of the private universities on Wednesday urged the government to announce a general amnesty for students arrested for joining protests for road safety. Education minister Nurul Islam Nahid in response to the vice-chancellors' demand at a views exchange programme said that legal actions against the arrested students would be taken on the basis evidences.

'We also do not want any harassment to any innocent students. But legal actions will be taken against those who will be found guilty,' Nahid said in a views exchange programme with vice-chancellors of private universities.

Education ministry's secondary and higher education division and University

Grants Commission organised the programme in the wake of student protests for road safety and justice for their fellows of Shaheed Ramiz Uddin Cantonment College killed by a bus on July 29.

'Who are we to forgive anyone? We cannot spare anyone who spread rumours, who went to there [in protests] intentionally. Law will take its own course. We cannot say that the

culprits will not face legal action,' Nahid said.

He urged the vice-chancellors to take steps to motivate students to send them back to classes. 'Along with pro-VCs, treasurers, registrars and other teachers take immediate steps to bring back all students to class rooms. You can also engage members of trustee board in the job' the minister told vice-chancellors.

'VCs should take responsibilities. They should engage guardians. You need to control students. If you fail to keep them in right track, you would be accountable,' he said.

Nahid said that he was surprised as students of some private universities took to the street on August 6 when students of schools and colleges went back to classes ending their protests.

Earlier, World University of Bangladesh vice-chancellor Abdul Mannan Choudhury, Eastern University vice-chancellor Aminul Hoque, Hamdard University Bangladesh vice-chancellor Abdul Mannan, Primeasia University vice-chancellor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury and others demanded general amnesty for students arrested for protests.

The vice-chancellors raise voice as at least 34 cases were filed with different police stations in Dhaka metropolitan area against hundreds of people over violence during the recent protests for road safety launched by school and college students on July 29.

Twenty-two students of North South, East West, South East and Brac universities were on Tuesday remanded in custody for two days for interrogation in two cases over violence triggered by attacks on protesting students reportedly by ruling Awami League and its front body activists.

Abdul Mannan Choudhury said that some students were arrested and they were passing hard time. 'I will request the government to announce a general amnesty for all,' he said.

Abdul Hannan Chowdhury said that some of arrested students were implicated in cases filed against unnamed people. 'These students should be released. We do not want to see them falling in legal tangle,' he said.

He also proposed that law enforcers should take permission before entering a private university campus as police need to take permission to enter public universities.

'Sometime presence of police aggravates the situation,' he observed.

Hamdard University Bangladesh vice-chancellor said students should get mercy as they joined the protests with 'instigation from others'.

Northern University Bangladesh vice-chancellor Anwar Hossain demanded actions against bus drivers and owners who were behind the accidents. It is not fair the drivers and others get bail, go unpunished even after fatal accidents.'

University Grants Commission chairman Abdul Mannan urged all not to pay heed to any rumour. He said that government and commission wanted no disruption of normal academic activities at any university even for one hour.

He made the comments when several private universities keep academic activities suspended for the day. These universities either closed all academic activities or cancelled exams since August 4 due to protests.

Independent University Bangladesh remained closed for third straight day on Wednesday.

The university registrar Anwarul Islam in a notice on Wednesday announced that 'the university will resume its normal office activities from August 9.'

BRAC University registrar Foyzul Islam said that semester final examinations of summer 2018 scheduled from August 8 had been postponed. Final Examinations would begin soon after Eid-ul-Azha vacation. The fresh schedule would be announced soon.

United International University registrar ASM Salahuddin said that classes of undergrad would begin on August 11 and classes of graduate programme would begin on August 10.

The classes of these courses remained closed since July 29, said a university teacher.

University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh authorities said that classes, exams and all other activities remained closed on Wednesday. Make-up schedule would be communicated later.