

Students bleed as violence spreads thru campuses



A blood-stained shirt of an anti-quota protester lies on the ground, surrounded by BCL men, who carried out attacks on students in several universities across the country yesterday. Photo: Prabir Das/Star

Not just the students of Dhaka University, students of at least four more universities across the country bled yesterday as they came under attack by Chhatra League men during their anti-quota protests.

Students of Jagannath University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, and Eden Mohila College, among others, were protesting against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent comments on freedom fighter quota, alongside demanding reform in quota system, when BCL activists and leaders carried out the attacks on them.



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At JU, students, under the banner of Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, started a march in front of the university central library around 6:30pm.

However, at least 50 students were injured after being attacked by BCL members around 7:00pm.

The attack lasted for over two hours.

According to victims and eyewitnesses, BCL leaders and activists carried out the attack, which started from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall.

"Around 50 students took treatment at the university medical centre. Of them, 20 were referred to a private hospital in Savar as their condition deteriorated," said Rezwanur Rahman, a doctor at the centre.

In Chattogram, BCL members attacked quota reform movement activists in Sholashahar Railway Station area, resulting in at least three students being injured.

Earlier, BCL activists seized the key to the CU shuttle train and halted it at 2:30pm. CU students were supposed to travel to the city to attend a quota reform programme at Sholashahar Railway Station by train.

BCL members then detained Talat Mahmud, assistant convener of the quota reform movement in Chattogram, beat him, and forcibly took him to the proctor's office.

Eyewitnesses said when the protesters started for the proctor's office in a procession, they were attacked by BCL activists in front of the Shaheed Minar.

Contacted, Enamul Haque, assistant proctor of CU, said, "BCL activists took Talat to the proctor's office. Upon receiving information, Talat's fellow activists also came to the office. We drove out both groups after counselling."

"Talat is now safely in our custody," he added.

Later, when the quota reform movement activists started a rally at Sholashahar Railway Station, a clash ensued between BCL activists and quota reform movement activists around 3:30pm, said eyewitnesses.

At least 20 JnU students were injured after they participated in the demo held in Dhaka University area. The injured students are currently receiving treatment at DMCH.

Junayed Islam, a JnU student, said, "We were peacefully conducting our protest when suddenly Chhatra League activists attacked us with weapons and sticks. I managed to get to safety somehow, but at least 20 of my friends were injured."

Meanwhile, at least four students of Eden College were allegedly beaten up by BCL activists during the protest programme at 11:30pm.

On RU campus, at least four RU students, also leaders of different left-leaning organisations were injured, after they came under BCL attack.

According to the victims, RU BCL leaders and activists launched a sudden attack on them at 6:20pm and ordered them to go back to their halls.

Nasim, an injured student, said, "BCL men started beating us and ordered us to return to halls. Eventually, I ran away from the scene."

Earlier, RU BCL President Mostafizur Rahman Babu warned that no concession would be given if anyone called themselves a Razakar. "If any Jamaat-Shibir members raises any slogans by the name of Razakar, then RU BCL will not make any concessions," he said.

Meanwhile, demanding reform in quota system and protesting against the premier's speech, students of Khulna University and Kuet blocked four roads at Zero Point around 5:30pm.

In Barishal, protesting students brought out a procession from the main gate of Barishal University at around 4:30pm. They also staged a demonstration, partially blocking the Barishal-Kuakata road.

At the same time, Muktiyoddha Sangsad Barishal District and Metropolitan Command and Muktiyoddha Santan Command organised a protest rally and procession in front of Ashwini Kumar Hall yesterday afternoon.

In Sylhet, to counter the protesting students, BCL leaders and activists marched with bamboo sticks in Tilagor area of the city around 2:00pm.

Besides, students of Comilla University brought out a procession for half an hour at Chhatro Andolon Chatter on the campus around 3:00pm.

Students in Narayanganj also carried out a procession demanding quota reforms and protesting the PM's comments.

Meanwhile, BCL activists brought out a procession yesterday evening on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Tongi, protesting "anarchy and instability" in the name of anti-quota movement.