

Stop arrest, abduction of students

Over 100 univ teachers urge govt

Photo: Firoz Ahmed

Over a hundred university teachers yesterday demanded that harassment of students by abduction and mass arrest be stopped, and they be released immediately.

Expressing solidarity with the protesting students' demands, they also called upon the authorities concerned to reopen all universities right away.



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They observed a one-minute silence in remembrance of those killed in what they termed "July massacre".

University Teachers Network, a platform of public and private university teachers, made the demands from a "Anti-Repression Teachers' Rally" at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla at Dhaka University.

Prof Saeed Ferdous, of Jahangirnagar University's anthropology department, who presided over the rally, said the government is showing its two faces.

During the day, they are expressing grief over the deaths and offering compensation to the victims' families to get sympathy, but at night they abduct people and force people to issue statements to the media.

The government should stop this, he said, calling for an end to the abductions and killings.

He said the government is considering students their opponents, but they took to the streets to overhaul the country.

Students are making history by challenging the systematic repression at educational institutions by pro-government student bodies and the anarchy in the state and at educational institutions over the past five decades since independence, said Prof Ferdous.

"We support every demand of the students," he said.

Referring to pre-liberation era history, Prof Abdul Hasib Chowdhury, former president of Buet Teachers' Association, said in February 1969, Prof Shamsuzzoha embraced martyrdom while protecting students and now they have gathered here as his successors.

"Our students, who are fighting for their rights and against inequality, are the successors of freedom fighters," he said.

Prof Kamrul Hassan Mamun, of Dhaka University's physics department, said a professor from the University of California, after watching foreign media, expressed concern over the situation in Bangladesh. "But where are the

teachers of our country? Why so a few teachers are here?

Nasir Uddin Ahmed, associate professor of Jagannath University's English department, criticised police for filing cases against students and urged the authorities to stop such practices. He also demanded reopening of universities so that students can return to studies.

Dhaka University teacher Rushad Faridi, BRAC University teacher Saimum Reza Talukder, Khulna University Prof Abdullah Harun Chowdhury, and Jahangirnagar University Prof Masud Imran, among others, spoke at the rally.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University authorities yesterday urged law enforcement agencies and other concerned to ensure no innocent student is harassed over the recent violence.

The university administration has instructed students to report to the Proctor's Office if they face any harassment, said a press release.

Students will be provided with necessary assistance in such cases, it added.
