

CU students stage torch procession

Staff Correspondent . Chattogram  17 February, 2025, 23:12

Share

Tweet

Email

Share

Print



Students of Chittagong University staged a torch procession on Monday, demanding the resignation of the proctor over controversial remarks and the revocation of what they called unjust expulsion of nine female students.

The protest march began at 5:30pm from the university's Zero Point, proceeded to the proctor's office, and ended at Sheikh Hasina Hall.

Sumaiya Shikder, one of the protesting students, said that nine students were expelled over the February 5 incident without being given a reason or even a show-cause letter.

‘Despite nationwide protests in our support, the administration has taken no action. Instead, the proctor has made derogatory remarks on social media. One student has already attempted suicide, and two others are in critical condition. Someone with such a mind-set towards female students cannot continue as proctor,’ she added.

Another protester Jannatul Mawa Mithila questioned the expulsion process, saying, ‘I was called for an investigation and asked who accused me, even though I was merely standing outside the gate. Yet, we have not received any official expulsion letter. Instead, the announcement was made via the Facebook page of the Chittagong University Journalists Association, which is unethical and unacceptable.’

‘If the administration expelled us, why can’t they provide official documentation? Are they looking for evidence now? If so, why was the expulsion announced beforehand?’ she asked.

On February 5, a group of students allegedly vandalised property near Sheikh Hasina Hall, leading to chaos. The expelled students claim that at about 11:30pm, a group of male students led a procession to the hall and began vandalising the premises. Amid the panic, the female residents were subjected to derogatory remarks and misogynistic slogans.

In a written statement, the students explained that, fearing for their safety, they came downstairs and saw one of the vandals recording videos without permission. In response, they broke a small side gate lock and stepped outside to protest.

During the altercation, a person identifying as a journalist allegedly insulted the female students, calling them ‘Hasina’s accomplices’ and ‘fascists’. The students strongly objected to the remarks. They also reported that despite informing the proctor about the incidents, no effective action was taken to ensure their safety.

Later, the students marched to the vice-chancellor’s residence to seek justice but faced further verbal abuse. According to them, individuals stepping out of a vehicle continued the insults, and they were unaware at the time that these individuals were members of the proctorial body.

The protesting students accused the administration of negligence in ensuring hall security. They claimed that repeated requests to change the hall’s name and remove the boat-shaped seating structure near the gate had been ignored, despite multiple written appeals. Instead of addressing security concerns, they argued that the administration unfairly punished female students for its own failures.

On February 13, the university’s board of residence, health, and discipline expelled one female student permanently and suspended nine others for two years. The decision was based on allegations of assaulting an assistant proctor and other charges related to the February 5 incident.

On Sunday afternoon, the expelled students held a press conference at Sholashohor Rail Station in the city to explain the February 5 incident and demand the withdrawal of the expulsion order.

They also demanded proctor’s resignation and gave the university administration three days to respond.

When asked, proctor Professor Tanvir Mohammad Haider Arif said that the board of residence had proposed the expulsion of the students, which was then under investigation. An official notice would be issued once the process was complete.