

Academic activities in KUET stalled for over 5 months

Immediate appointment of VC demanded

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Academic activities at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology has been stalled for over five months now as its teachers have continued their full boycott since February protesting at the assaults on them.

Also, the university does not have a vice-chancellor at the moment.

Amid the impasse, a section of teachers, students and guardians on Wednesday held a human chain, demanding immediate appointment of a vice-chancellor to resolve the ongoing crisis at the university and resume academic activities.

The human chain was organised by the KUET Teachers' Association at the university's Durbar Bangla Chattar in the morning, said its press release.

The stalemate in the university began on February 19 following the February 18 violent clash between Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Students Against Discrimination over banning on-campus student politics, leading to the closure of the institution on February 25 for an indefinite period.

University authorities cited 'in the interest of ensuring students' overall safety' as the reason of the closure.

KUET Teachers' Association president Professor Md Shahidul Islam told New Age that due to absence of the head of the institution, the vice-chancellor, all academic, financial, developmental and administrative activities remained stalled.

New Age specials

The situation also led to several clashes held between the students and local people and the safety of the students and discipline of the university were under stake, he added.

'For a long time the academic and administrative order of the university has been disrupted,' he said, adding, 'without appointment of the new vice-chancellor the crisis cannot be solved.'

Earlier, the KUET authorities on April 14 temporarily expelled 37 students for their alleged involvement in February 18 clashes, leading to the start of yet another bout of protests from April 15 by students who demanded the removal of the then vice-chancellor and withdrawal of the expulsion order.

Amid the students' protests, the government published notices on April 25 removing then KUET vice-chancellor Professor Mohammad Mashud and pro-vice-chancellor Professor Sheikh Shariful Alam from their posts.

The government, on May 4, issued a gazette notification appointing Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology professor Md Hazrat Ali as the KUET acting vice-chancellor.

The classes at the university were also scheduled to resume on May 4, but the teachers refused to conduct classes and administrative work, demanding punishment of all those involved in their assault.

Professor Hazrat Ali resigned on May 21, 17 days after his appointment as the vice-chancellor amid teachers' protests.