

New VC to meet teachers, students today over resuming classes

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A tripartite discussion of the newly appointed vice-chancellor, all teachers and student representatives is likely to be held today on the resumption of academic activities at the Khulna University of Engineering and Technology after over five months.

Some officials said that the classes were likely to resume from July 29.

The discussion on resuming academic activities started after Professor Md Maksud Helali, a retired teacher of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and freedom fighter, formally took charge as the 9th KUET vice-chancellor on Friday evening.

‘We will hold a discussion with the teachers and students tomorrow (Sunday) on when classes can be resumed,’ he said.

The vice-chancellor also met the four deans of the university on Saturday to discuss different issues.

One of the deans, seeking anonymity, said that after the meeting with the teachers and the students a notice is likely to be published today (Sunday) to resume all academic activities from July 29.

Academic activities at the university has remained stalled for over five months now as its teachers have continued their full boycott since February protesting at alleged assaults on them.

Amid the impasse, a section of teachers, students and guardians on July 23 held a human chain, demanding immediate appointment of a vice-chancellor to resolve the ongoing crisis and resume academic activities.

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 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.