

The BUET Reprieve

By virtue of its internal dynamics facilitated by the Chancellor's hands-off approach Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology is close to resuming normal academic life. The BUET Teachers' Association suspended day before yesterday its work-abstention programme launched since May 5 in response to appeals made by Vice Chancellor Dr Iqbal Mahmud. Earlier on June 2 the officers of the administrative wing had resumed their duties. So the stage looks set for the classes to begin, subject to adjustment in the academic calendar necessitated by 35 days of regrettable shut-down. Also the convenience of 30 per cent students who had left Dhaka for their hometowns will have to be taken into account. Aside from these nitty-gritties of a none-too-easy rejuvenation exercise, the fate of 13 architecture teachers who had resigned will have to be decided in a positive way if that faculty is to pulsate with life again.

Thus the arrangement worked out by the VC in cooperation with the BUET Teachers' Association is a stop-gap one and not a complete recipe for enduring normalcy.

The positive elements in the scenarios are there for anyone see though — VC Dr Iqbal Mahmud's resignation has not been accepted by the Chancellor and, he in turn, has not entertained the resignation letters submitted by the 70 teachers. There is also a decision on the admission test issue concerning the Faculty of Architecture which had triggered the whole crisis in the first place. A note of understanding is supposed to have been struck as well on the matter relating to the resignation of 13 architecture teachers. All of this seemed to have floundered on the rock of will assertions and procedural see-saws.

The positive elements will have to be built upon so that a congenial academic atmosphere can be restored to the BUET. There, in an astounding departure from track-record, a one-year-plus sessions jam stares everybody in the face.