

## Matters Of The Moment

# BUET In Baffling Crisis

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**B**ANGLADESH University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is currently in the grip of a serious crisis which has been baffling its Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, teachers and students for the past several weeks, culminating in suspension of all academic activities.

Teachers of the university have announced their work suspension early last month. The worst sufferers of this decision are students because their final examinations, due to be held in the middle of this month, will have to be postponed by at least two months if not more, due to non-completion of their courses of study. In other words, their session, due to expire in the middle of the current month, will prolong until the end of August or early September.

While an all-out effort should be made to clear session-jam in the universities, BUET provides a classic example of how the university authorities by their sheer stupidity and stubbornness have contributed to it. The complexity of the problem is compounded by naked interference from outside in the internal affairs of the university.

The trouble erupted with the resignations tendered by 13 teachers of the architecture department of the university. Interestingly enough, twelve other teachers of the Department including six professors have dissociated themselves with the group of 13 being led by an under-qualified teacher who has only a second class B Sc Engineering degree in architecture. He has neither post-graduate nor Ph D degree from BUET or any foreign university. What is more, he rarely comes to the department and takes his class. He has the record of taking only four classes in one academic session. He remains too deeply engrossed with his consultancy work and commercial farm to pay attention to teaching.

Twelve teachers of the architecture department under his leadership tendered their resigna-

tions to protest the Academic Council's decision to hold test of the students seeking admission to different faculties of the university in a day. The decision of the Academic Council is binding on all its members including those who may have given their note of dissent on it. But flouting the decision of the Academic Council, this group of teachers kept insisting on holding test for students seeking admission to the architecture faculty on a separate date. Besides, they called for dropping of physics and including drawing as a subject of test for students seeking admission to architecture faculty. Nothing could be more preposterous than this. How can an architect design a building without the knowledge of heat, light, wind velocity and environmental condition of nature of the place

corum, directed him to accept demand of the 13 teachers and reinstate them to their posts. What is more, the vested interest working behind the scene to make confusion worse confounded, misinformed and misguided the Prime Minister who happens to be the Chancellor of the University, about the problem overtaking the University. The PM at one stage advised the Vice-Chancellor to take admission test this year for the fresh entrants to the University as per the decision of the Academic Council and instructed him to review the whole issue well before the admission that next year. The Prime Minister, however, did not know that the dissident teachers had already filed a case with the lower court seeking permanent injunction on the admission test. When the Prime

Minister heard about the case, she was learnt to have been deeply disgusted with the fight between the dissident 13 and rest of the teachers of the university numbering 312, the Academic Council and the Syndicate.

Meanwhile, deeply disappointed with the extraneous pulls and pressures to regulate the affairs of the University and to undermine its authority, the Vice-Chancellor tendered his resignation to the Prime Minister. Soon after 70 teachers of the University tendered their resignations from the administrative posts they were holding. But the Vice-Chancellor's resignation has not yet been accepted by the Prime Minister. Nor has he been officially intimated about the rejection of his resignation. Therefore the Vice-

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Chancellor is swinging like a pendulum betwixt two ends. As a result, there is hardly any administration in the university. Indeed, everything in BUET has virtually come to a standstill.

But the most agonizing part of the sad tale is that students are loitering about in the campus with no class to attend. Having fallen in the cross-fire between the two feuding factions of teachers, the students are frittering away their precious time for no fault of theirs.

The teachers association of the university has sought an appointment with the Prime Minister to explain to her in details the situation prevailing in the campus and the causes that led to the present academic deadlock therein. But the association is not being given appointment because the vested interests working as the stumbling block between the Prime Minister and the BUET authorities are trying to prevent the meeting. The interested quarters meddling in the affairs of BUET and the dissident group of teachers know for certain that their machination will be exposed if teachers under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor are allowed to meet the Prime Minister and explain to her their stand vis-a-vis the stand of the dissident group. The Prime Minister must have been briefed about the viewpoints of the dissident group of teachers. She must now hear the viewpoints of the teachers association, academic council and the syndicate of BUET before taking steps to break the stalemate that has crippled the academic life of this premier educational institutions of the country. Instead of hearing from others about the protracted crisis that has gripped BUET, the Prime Minister should hear from the university teachers, members of the Academic Council directly. In fact, the appointment has been sought to enable the Prime Minister to take a dispassionate view of the problem and take steps to resolve it.