

**The Bangladesh Times**

122 Dhaka Saturday, October 10, 1987

**Academic discipline**

For a batch of the Dhaka University students Wednesday last was a solemn day. They attended their maiden classes in the university, which was nothing novel, except that those classes were scheduled to be held about a year back. This unacceptable delay in the beginning of their career in the university was caused by no fault of their own. They are victims of the festering institutional malaise from which the Dhaka University suffers in common with the other such institutions of the country. These maladies are forced closures of classes, session jams and campus violence.

The loss incurred by the successive generations of students since the mid-sixties in terms of lost academic years is incalculable. The cumulative effects of this on the national economy in terms of lost working hours are imponderable.

The campus cannot, of course, be treated as an oasis of peace in any disturbed society. But at the same time possible societal chaos cannot be accepted as a sufficient justification for anarchy on the campus. This actually works as a vicious cycle.

The Dhaka University has apparently embarked on a determined move to break this vicious cycle and re-establish academic discipline. The university re-opened on Wednesday last after a normal vacation, the dormitories cleared of the 'outsiders' and the residents are now obliged to obey the rules practically forgotten in the turbulent past, and the classes sat as scheduled. There have been student rallies which neither disturbed peace on the campus nor created any hindrance to smooth running of the classes. This is the atmosphere which should have ordinarily prevailed on the campus. But the most difficult task is the maintenance of the ordinary, routine choirs of university life.

It will be too premature to congratulate the university authorities on its achievements at this stage. The current campus atmosphere, which resulted from unusual efforts, has been maintained for too short a period. There is no scope for complacency till this position is consolidated. And that is a herculean task.

The university authorities may draw inspiration and courage from the support they have received from all the quarters. The President has placed the whole weight of the administration behind the attempt of the university authorities at restoring academic atmosphere on the campus. The Jatiya Sangsad adopted, during its last session, a unanimous resolution calling for straightening the mess on the campus. Associations of teachers and students have joined the university authorities within the forum of the Educational Environment Council in a unique gesture of solidarity.

We want to emphasise only one point, that the main focus of all actions should be eventual restoration of academic discipline which means classes will sit as per routine, examinations will take place as scheduled and the students will pass out from the university at regular intervals. Obviously, the most ideal thing would have been if these goals could be reached through the instrumentality of the offices of the university itself. We hope that the university authorities will take all the pains to not only act with academic loftiness but also to see that their actions appear to be guided by the noble interest of restoring academic discipline and nothing else.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* B A N B E I \*  
\*\*\*\*\*