

## PUBLIC UNIVS Govt plans ban on party-linked politics for teachers, students

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THE government is planning to ban party-linked political activities of teachers and students in public universities to ensure a congenial academic environment. Authorities of private universities do not allow politics in the institutions.

The government has also banned political gatherings and processions across the country for a month with effect from May 19, drawing

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protests from many parties and groups.

Government officials told New Age that a series of meetings involving education and home ministry officials were recently to work out a report with recommendations for imposing a ban on politics of teachers and students.

A cabinet decision made in December 1986 aimed at imposing a ban on party politics by teachers and students was also discussed at the meetings, a high cabinet

division official said. A copy of the December 12, 1986 cabinet decision has been sent to the ministries of education, law and home affairs recently for the planners now to follow.

The 1986 cabinet decision asked the ministries of law and home affairs to prepare a detailed report with recommendations for a ban and submit it to the cabinet for consideration.

The decision read: 'The educational institutions should be free from politics

to ensure a favourable environment for education.'

'We are facing pressure from different corners as uneasy situation continues in at least five higher educational institutions right now. Teachers and students should be free of party-linked politics,' an education ministry official said. 'But politics on campuses will be there.'

The education minister, Nurul Islam Nahid, on Thursday said, 'We will take every possible step to keep the campus normal.'

Thirty-four public universities are run under acts and their rules have no uniformity.

Dhaka University is run in keeping with the Dhaka University Order 1973 and Rajshahi University, Chittagong and Jahangirnagar are run in keeping with the relevant acts passed in 1973. The education ministry has almost no control over them.

But other public universities are more or less controlled by the education ministry and the University Grants Commission.