

# NEWAGE

# BCL rowdies on the loose again

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ACTIVISTS of the ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League have unleashed terror in educational institutions again vitiating the atmosphere and putting students' academic life in jeopardy.

Chhatra League activists have continued atrocities in educational institutions and seemed to have made teachers their latest targets. At least 50 teachers of Islamic University in Kushtia, six teachers and some students

of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, and three teachers and scores of students of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute were injured in a series of attacks by BCL activists recently.

All three educational institutions have been closed for an indefinite period following the BCL violence.

After the present government assumed office on January 6, 2009, the BCL started taking over the campuses, occupying halls and attacking activists of rival student organisations. Chhatra League

activists also indulged in vandalism, extortion and tender snatching in different parts of the country.

When asked by New Age, Chhatra League general secretary Siddique Nazmul Alam, however, flatly denied that BCL activists had been involved in the violence in Rangpur, Kushtia and Dhaka.

At least 50 teachers were injured when Chhatra League activists attacked the Islamic University teachers, kept them confined and forced them to withdraw

their agitation against the university treasurer on January 12.

The teachers went to meet the vice-chancellor, Abdul Hakim Sarkar, demanding removal of treasurer M Shahjahan Ali, AHM Aktarul Islam (Zillu) and student adviser Lokman Hakim.

Hearing the news, BCL activists, led by its university unit secretary Shamsuzzaman Tuhin and joint secretary Mahmud Hassan Lenin, and backed by outsiders,

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drove the teachers out of the teachers' association office and locked its door. They also vandalised classrooms.

As the teachers took shelter at the teachers' lounge, the Chhatra League men, brandishing firearms, pounced on them breaking open the door and beat them up injuring 50 teachers, witnesses said.

IU unit Chhatra League president Jahangir Hossain, however, denied the allegation of BCL activists' involvement in the attack on the teachers and said that the teachers who were not taking classes were beaten up by general students.

Earlier on November 19, 2012, at least 30 teachers were injured in an attack by Chhatra League activists at the university.

On January 10, 2013, the authorities closed Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur after 15 people, including six teachers had been injured as a Chhatra League faction loyal to the vice-chancellor threw acid at and beat up teachers and students rallying for the removal of the vice-chancellor Abdul Zilil Miah.

District unit BCL president Dhanajit Ghosh Tapposh brushed aside the allegations that activists of his organisation had been involved in the attack.

He said that the Chhatra League was not responsible

for the attack as there was no unit of the organisation in the university.

On January 6, authorities closed Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute in the capital after 10 people, including three teachers, had been injured as Chhatra League men ran riots on the campus to put pressure on the principal to declare successful the students who had failed the exams.

Chhatra League Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute unit president Zakir Haossian denied the allegation.

Their 'rages on teachers' are not new as on August 13, 2011 Chhatra League activists foiled the examinations for teachers' recruitment at the SD Degree College at Kotchandpur in Jhenaidah. The activists beat up the college principal, Amal Kumar Ghosh.

At least 20 teachers of the Bangladesh Agricultural University were injured when Chhatra League activists pounced on them on August 8, 2011. The university proctor, Abu Hadi Noor Ali, came under attack after he handed over to the police two students held on suspicion of being involved in mugging in the botanical garden of the university.

On May 22, 2011, a teacher of chemistry at the Government Bangla College at Mirpur in Dhaka was attacked by BCL activists dur-

ing the HSC admission test. Rubel Hawlader, a BCL leader pushed the teacher down the staircase from the first floor in a college building as he refused to have students of their choice admitted.

The Chittagong University proctor, Mohammad Akhtar Hossain, and three assistant proctors submitted to authorities their resignation on August 1, 2011, over 'misconduct' by groups of Chhatra League activists.

BCL activists on February 18, 2011 ransacked the office of Hossain Kabir, the provost of the Alaol Hall in Chittagong University, and damaged furniture over the distribution of seats in the hall.

On August 13, Chhatra League activists foiled the examinations for teachers' recruitment at the SD Degree College at Kotchandpur in Jhenaidah. The activists beat up the college principal, Amal Kumar Ghosh.

According to newspaper reports, since the present government assumed office in January 2009, Chhatra League activists have been responsible for the killing of at least 20 student activists in factional feuds or fighting with rival student organisations.

With official motto of 'Education, Peace and Progress', Chhatra League activists also hit headlines for driving out the rival BNP-backed

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal from campuses, trying to foil students' movements over various issues and sexually harassing and raping women on different occasions.

Against this backdrop, communications minister Obaidul Quader, also former president of Chhatra League, on January 4 slammed its activists for their misdeeds which, he warned, were tarnishing the image of the ruling Awami League.

'The unhealthy activities of Chhatra League are tarnishing the image of Awami League,' he said.

Chhatra League general secretary Siddique Nazmul Alam denying the allegations said that their organisation had not tolerated campus violence in the past. 'We will not tolerate violence in the future, too.'

'If anyone is found guilty of violence, he will be expelled from the organisation and handed over to the law enforcers,' Nazmul said.

Against the backdrop of Chhatra League's terror, the Awami League president, Sheikh Hasina, also the prime minister, quit as the Chhatra League's organisational chief on April 4, 2009.

Later AL general secretary, Syed Ashrafur Islam, came up with the revelation that Islami Chhatra Shibir activists had infiltrated into the BCL with a plan for sabotage.