

Egypt universities students protest over niqab ban

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Sheikh Mohamed Said Tantawi

Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood students organized a series of protests this week at the Universities of Ain Shams, Helwan, Zaqazeeq and Menya in response to what they call discrimination against female students who choose to wear the niqab, or face veil.

At the beginning of this month Sheikh Mohamed Said Tantawi, the highest authority at Al Azhar University, issued a religious edict against the . Last week the Minister of Higher Education announced that he will prohibit the niqab inside female dorms.

At Ain Shams University, tens of niqab-wearing students demonstrated in front of the university president's headquarters, protesting a decision two days ago that barred them from entering university dormitories.

The protestors said they should be allowed to enter university buildings freely, as the niqab is "a personal freedom for which a female student should not be punished."

Ten female students have filed a lawsuit appealing decisions to ban the niqab by the Minister of Higher Education Hani Helal and President of Ain Shams University Ahmed Zaki Badr, said Mohamed Yehya, an official spokesman for Muslim Brotherhood students at Ain Shams University.

