Campus rape protest at SU

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A GROUP of Stellenbosch University (SU) students demonstrated half-naked on the university’s Red Square and held discussions on rape culture at campuses.

The event was in solidarity with Rhodes University (RU) students who demonstrated last week by blocking entrances to that campus.

The RU protests followed the social media posting of a list containing names of 11 students accused of rape.

The SU demonstration and talks, attended by about 50 students, were to give students an opportunity to discuss a rape culture at the institution.

Co-organiser of yesterday’s event Melissa Sparrow said: “Rape culture is a serious issue in this university and to get to the bottom of it we need to address security issues.”

She said although many students at SU were aware of efforts against rape, few students attended meetings to raise their views.

Sparrow said it was disappointing that the university’s management had not honoured an invitation to be part of the meeting.

Student Farai Mubaiwa said the discussions were meant to find solutions about students’ safety.

“We are taking a stand against rape culture,” she said, adding that those in attendance included rape survivors.

Another student, Jodi Williams, said rape culture at SU was a “crisis and a time bomb waiting to explode”.

SU spokesperson Martin Viljoen said management only learnt about the event late yesterday morning and they had not been requested to attend the event.

“Management is, however, very serious about the issue and it should be noted that the Student Representative Council and management met recently, where the issue of ending rape culture was discussed,” said Viljoen.