

SUST acting VC, teachers freed after 13 hrs of captivity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The acting vice-chancellor (VC) and members of the Academic Council of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) were freed after 13 hours of confinement inside the Administrative Building at 5:30am yesterday.

A group of students besieged them demanding resumption of classes and resolution of the teachers' crisis, which led to the suspension of classes by the teachers. They also locked the main gate of the Administrative Building at around 3:30pm to put pressure on the Academic Council.

The group did not withdraw the siege even after the Academic Council members including the acting VC, after a meeting on Sunday, told them about the decision to resume classes from

October 26.

However, the teachers said they would not take additional classes other than those defined by the University Grants Commission. The students then pressed for a written statement from the authorities, which they declined.

At about 8:30pm, a group of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists went to talk them out of their rigid position but failed. The JCD men also physically assaulted some of the students, sources said.

As all the moves fell apart, members of the Academic Council were held in captivity in the Administrative Building for the whole night while police were deployed at the university gate. Later, the group withdrew the siege early in the morning.

Acting VC Prof Mosleh Uddin

Ahmed told The Daily Star the authorities were keen to start classes of the first semester of the first year honours courses from October 26 while classes of other semesters would begin from November 2.

He also hoped the advertisement for appointment of 38 teachers would soon come out in newspapers.

The teachers have been declining to take classes on the plea of acute shortage of teaching staff for the last two months. Although student organisations were agitating for the resumption of classes, the authorities failed to convince the teachers association.

Some senior teachers expressed anger at the unruly behaviour of the students who confined the teachers for 13 hours.

Cops clueless whether Jamal alive or dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) yesterday said they are not certain whether abducted magnate Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury is alive or dead.

Talking to journalists at a meeting at his office, SM Sabbir Ali, who was appointed about two months back, said "We received no further information from any source in this regard. But we'll carry on with our

investigation into the abduction."

Sabbir replaced former CMP commissioner Shahidullah Khan, who has been made officer on special duty (OSD) in Dhaka for his failure to rescue Jamal.

Later, a reshuffle was made in Chittagong police administration to improve law and order.

But after 87 days of the abduction, the law enforcers are yet to know anything specific about Jamal, also a leader of the ruling BNP.

The new commissioner said 18

suspects were arrested so far in connection with the abduction.

He claimed that some headway has been made with the investigation. But he would not give any detail.

Abul Kasem, prime accused in the case and a local Union Parishad chairman of Fatikchhari upazila, is still at large. He took refuge in Tripura of India, some sources said.

'Youth unemployment hampers development'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unemployment of youth has emerged as a major problem that hampers the development of south Asian countries including Bangladesh, said Education Minister Dr Osman Faruk while inaugurating a conference in the city yesterday.

He said creation of employment for the youth is a must to speed up the development process of these countries.

The conference titled 'Youth development and self-help promotion: Experience of SAARC countries' was organised jointly by The Youth Academy and Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO at the BIAM auditorium.

The four-day-long conference is aimed at exchanging experience among the SAARC countries to

reduce unemployment through self-employment.

"Apart from general education, we have to provide technical and vocational education to our young people so that they could compete with the present world of science and technology," the minister said.

"A large number of students of our country do not continue their study after higher secondary level due to various reasons including financial insolvency," he added.

"We have to provide these drop out students with proper technological know-how so that they could earn for their families as well as contribute to the national development," the minister noted.

Referring to the gender disparity, he said the number of unemployed young women is higher than their male counterparts in the SAARC countries.

"Development would remain a far cry if we fail to incorporate these young women with the national economy through providing employment," the minister added.

He said the young people will have to engage themselves in self-generating income and the government will extend all possible supports to their efforts.

Besides host Bangladesh, 19 representatives from other SAARC countries are attending the conference.

Education Secretary Muhammad Shahidul Alam, Chairman of the Youth Academy Muhammad Tajul Islam and Secretary of Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO also spoke at the inaugural session.



PHOTO: STAR
Student nurses march in a procession in the city yesterday to press for their demands and protest police action on their demonstrations.



PHOTO: STAR
Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina speaks at a discussion marking the birth anniversary of Sheikh Russel, youngest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday. Sheikh Russel Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad organised the event.

South Asian confce on sanitation begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day South Asian Conference on Sanitation begins in the city today to discuss regional state of sanitation and hygiene, and generate political commitment that prioritises regional policy and targets.

More than 250 delegates including eight ministers from nine countries are expected to attend the conference, said Sayed-Ur-Rahman, joint secretary of the LGRD ministry at a press conference yesterday.

Delegates from the Saarc countries and Afghanistan and Myanmar will deliberate on measures to ensure sanitation of the people.

Representatives from private sector, civil society, external support agencies and the media will also take part in the conference organised by the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives.

The conference aims at accelerating the progress of sanitation and hygienic activities in South Asia to enhance the quality of life in fulfilment of the Millennium development goals and the commitments made in the world Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

Sayed-Ur Rahman said the government has undertaken a National Sanitation Campaign to

bring the country under 100 percent sanitation coverage and to ensure personal hygiene by 2010.

At present, 33 percent of the urban and rural population are under sanitation coverage, he added.

According to a paper presented at the briefing, the sanitation picture over past decade has been dismal in Asia despite manifold achievement in other areas.

Only 39 percent of the population in South Asia and 48 percent in East Asia and the Pacific have sanitation facilities, the paper said citing the Human Development Report-2002.

Three out of eight UN Millennium Development Goals -- reducing child mortality, combating diseases, and ensuring environmental sustainability -- are directly linked to

sanitation, speakers said at the briefing.

Sanitation is a critical requirement to ensure hygiene, healthy life, nutrition, wellbeing and above all education, said the World Health Organisation's Environmental Health Advisor Han A Heijnen.

"The conference will facilitate enhanced sanitation with political commitment from the participating ministers together with finance and technical support provided by the development partners," Heijnen said.

Chief of Unicef information section Naseem-Ur-Rehman was present on the occasion.

Jatiya Press Club urged to extend membership to all DUJ members

UNB, Dhaka

The Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) has urged the Jatiya Press Club authorities to extend its membership to all union members.

The call came from a meeting of the executive committee of the DUJ at its office yesterday. DUJ President Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan presided over the meeting.

The DUJ leaders warned that the union would go for tougher action programme if the press club authorities fail to provide membership to the journalists as per the constitution of the organisation.

The leaders also called on the government to immediately form the 6th wage board and announce 60 percent dearness allowance, said a press release.

NDI team meets PM's political secretary

UNB, Dhaka

A three-member delegation of Washington-based international organisation National Democratic Institute (NDI) called on PM's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury at his office yesterday.

Newly appointed Resident Director of NDI to Bangladesh Dr Owen Lippert led the delegation. Other members were Director (political programme) Deborah Healy and senior Programme Manager Makram Ouass.

During the meeting, they discussed various aspects of socio-economic development and democratisation process in Bangladesh.

Highlighting various activities undertaken by them in Bangladesh as well as in the world, the delegation members said they have been implementing different programmes for socio-economic development, good governance and institutionalising democracy in Bangladesh.

The NDI have also started various programmes at divisional levels to train up political leaders to make them conscious about the democratisation process, they added.

The NDI leaders said democratisation process in Bangladesh is progressing day by day. They highly lauded the efforts made by BNP in this regard.



PHOTO: STAR
Construction workers stage a demonstration in the city yesterday to press for their 11-point demand.

Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers is likely at one or two places over Khulna, Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country in the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna and the lowest of 24.3 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:28pm and rises at 5:59 am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature In Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	26.6	76	81
Chittagong	34.5	25.5	69	69
Rajshahi	33.2	25.6	97	83
Khulna	35.2	26.0	77	80
Barisal	34.2	26.2	78	81
Sylhet	32.8	24.8	78	85
Cox's Bazar	34.0	25.5	85	75



Managing Director of GrameenPhone Ola Ree leads the inaugural procession of the Health, Safety and Environment Week at the corporate head office in the city on Sunday.

Discussion

Purnima Basar, a cultural organisation, holds a discussion to mark the birth centenary of poet Be-Nazir Ahmed with Dr Ashraf Siddiqui in the chair. Venue: Seminar room of the Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 4.00pm.

Lecture

German Cultural Centre organises a lecture and exhibition on architecture. Venue: Goethe Institut, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm.

Certificate awarding ceremony

The certificate awarding ceremony of a training course organised by Bangladesh Institute of Communication Studies and Public Relations, will be held with Prof SMA Faiz, vice-chancellor of Dhaka University as chief guest. Venue: Conference room of the institute, Elephant road. Time: 5.30pm.

Seminar

A seminar on 'Earthquake monitoring and loss mitigation' will be held with Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf as chief guest. Venue: LGED Bhaban, Agargaon. Time: 9.30am.

Film show

The Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'The girl of your dreams'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Conference

The inaugural session of a three-day South Asian Conference on Sanitation will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship

Conference Centre, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Health seminar

Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) organises a seminar titled 'Management of metastatic breast carcinoma: A multidisciplinary approach.' Venue: AMCH building, Mirpur-14. Time: 1.30pm.

Blood donation programme

Orca blood for life organises a voluntary blood donation programme on the occasion of the freshers' reception of the computer science department of Dhaka University. Venue: TSC auditorium. Time: 10.30am.

Rotary Ramna

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Ramna will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.

Rotary Sonargaon

Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Sonargaon Dhaka will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 5.30pm.

Rally

Bangladesh Mohila Awami League organises a rally to protest the price hike of daily essentials. Venue: 23, Bangabandhu Avenue. Time: 3.00pm.

AGM

The annual general meeting of Bangladesh Ghari Byabasae Samity will be held. Venue: 33, Patuatooli. Time: 11.00am.

Ecstasy festival

The inaugural ceremony of a