



Lux Star Dinner
Dream comes true for Aupee fans

Lux, the glamorous brand of Lever Brothers Bangladesh Limited, hosted a Star dinner at a posh city restaurant on December 10 to give ten lucky Aupee Karim fans a rare opportunity to meet the star of their dream in a memorable evening along with other stars of the world of glamour and fashion.

The dinner was the culmination of a month-long consumer contest featuring Lux Star Aupee Karim, says a press release.

During the open-for-all contest, the consumers were bombarded with a television commercial where the talented and celebrated actress invited the consumers to dine with her and other beauties of Lux Anandadhara Miss Bangladesh Photogenic Contest 2003.

The invitation went to ten lucky winners who provided the best answer to "Lux brings out the star in me because..." within 20 words.

The winners were Shahriar and Arfiza Islam (Shelly) from Rajshahi, Atique and Md Tanbir Hasan from Chittagong, Sadia Moni from Comilla, Chandana Dutta from Khulna, Sujata Ghosh from Srimongol, Md Mahbubur Rahman from Sylhet, Mohsina Khanam Munna from Barisal and Mahmuda Akhter Chandini from Mymensingh.

They also received gold jewellery sets along with the pleasure of dining with Aupee Karim and former Lux stars like Ishita, Mimi, Nipa, Shakila Zafar and others.

The first one thousand entries from each of the six divisions received a special "Thank you letter" along with a Lux gift hamper.

The evening started at 6.30pm although ardent fans gathered at the venue with their dear ones long before the scheduled time.

Kaniska Chakraborty and Shahed Zubair of Lever Brothers Bangladesh Limited welcomed the guests.

Nila, a budding vocalist from Chittagong who also happens to be a Lux Anandadhara Miss Photogenic beauty, enthralled the audience with her performance.

Shaila Shabnam, The Lux Anandadhara Miss Bangladesh 2003, then called the winners to the stage one by one to take their gifts of gold jewellery sets.

While the winners were making their way to the stage, their respective answers were read out to the audience.

The delighted winners also got to take home a picture capturing the special moment of receiving the gift from Shabnam.

The cultural programme was followed by a sumptuous buffet dinner.

During the dinner, Aupee Karim sat with the winners and talked about her life and activities as the Brand Ambassador of Lux. She also gave autographs to her fans.

Thus, Lux turned the dreams of stardom into a reality for Aupee fans for an evening.



Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. SMA Faiz places wreaths at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial yesterday on the occasion of Martyred Intellectuals Day.

IIUC 2nd convocation on Dec 17 in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The second convocation of International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) will be held in Dhaka on December 17.

President Iajuddin Ahmed also chancellor of the university is expected to attend the convocation as the chief guest at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

Former Chief Justice Mostafa Kamal will be the Convocation Speaker while Minister for Education Dr. Osman Faruq will be present as the special guest.

Besides, 23 international personalities from nine countries will attend the convocation.

The IIUC Vice Chancellor Prof Dr AKM Azharul Islam at a press conference in the port city yesterday said 471 outgoing students of six courses - MBA, BBA, Quranic Science, Daawa and Islamic Studies, Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and Computer Communication and Engineering (CCE), will receive certificates from the chancellor.

Two students will be awarded "Chancellor Gold Medal" while ten get "Vice-Chancellor Gold Medal", he said.

The university that started its journey in 1995 with three departments - Quranic Science and Islamic Studies, Computer Science and Technology and Business Administration, now offers four-year course on six different subjects under five faculties - Sharia faculty, Law faculty and faculties of Modern Science, Administrative Science and Arts & Humanities.

Of 3384 students, 2372 are on the city campus and permanent campus at Kumira under Sitakunda upazila in Chittagong while the rest 1012 are on Dhaka campus.

The university has 261 teachers and 207 other officials and employees. Of the teachers around 60 per cent were made permanent.

The university also introduced three short courses on Arabic Language, Diploma in Computer

Science and Diploma in Communicative English, which met with a tremendous response, Azharul Islam said.

He said IIUC recently had some remarkable achievements.

IIUC was one of the two universities of the country that achieved success in the international programming competition held in India recently. The other one was Bangladesh University of Science and Technology (BUET), he said.

IIUC secured 9th position among 57 participants of the ACM Programming Competition of Asian region held in India.

a two-day biennial convention of IIUC Trust will begin on the permanent campus of the university at Kumira, some 35 kms off the city, on December 18.

Six buildings including the library building of the university will be inaugurated on the permanent campus on December 19.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, and Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman will also attend the concluding day programme.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Abu Bakar Rafeeq, Alhaj Md Badiul Alim, Prof Dr Syed Mohammad Athar, Prof Dr M Atar Ali, Prof Dr Abdul Monayem Al Birri, Registrar (acting) Md. Nurul Islam, Alhaj Mowla Shamsuddin and syndicate member Mowla Md. Shamsul Islam attended the press conference.

Besides, heads of different departments were also present at the press conference.

Urs

The 10-day holy Salana Ursekul Majlish of Hazrat Maulana Sufi Azangachi (R), a noted saint of the subcontinent, will be held at 18 Bagmari Maniktala in Kolkata on December 19-28, says a press release.

The ending prayer will be made on December 28 and the present Gaddinashin Hazrat Azangachi (R) will conduct the prayer.

EU faces 2-speed future as constitution talks fail

REUTERS, Brussels

France and Germany warned after EU constitutional talks collapsed that they and other states could gear up for closer integration, triggering a possible two-speed bloc as it expands beyond the former Iron Curtain.

European leaders abandoned efforts to strike a deal on an historic first constitution for the European Union on Saturday when a dispute over voting rights, pitting France and Germany against Spain and Poland, proved insurmountable.

The impasse at the Brussels summit over the blueprint to streamline the running of the EU and give it more international clout plunged the bloc into crisis before the biggest expansion in its five-decade history.

France and Germany, core founder members of the Union due to expand from 15 to 25 members in May, talked up the possibility of like-minded nations integrating more closely in the absence of a constitution, leaving other states on the sidelines.

"If we do not reach a consensus in the foreseeable future, then a two-speed Europe will emerge. That would be the logic of such a final failure," German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder told a news conference after the talks broke down.

French President Jacques Chirac said he too hoped to see a small group working together on closer cooperation.

"This will provide an engine, an example that will allow Europe to go faster, further and better," he said, pointing to defense, economic policy and justice as three areas where a small group could work closer together within the Union.

Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, whose country is by far the biggest of the 10 mostly formerly communist entrants to the EU, said the bloc should "develop jointly, with the same speed over the entire area and not only among the chosen ones."

Leaders sought to find positives in the collapse of negotiations on the constitution, which would have installed an EU foreign minister and strengthened the post of president.

But they set no date to resuscitate negotiations, and Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson said serious talks were unlikely to resume until the first half of 2005.

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, who takes over the rotating EU presidency from Italy in January, said he would hold consultations and propose a way forward at the next regular summit in March.

The failure of the talks means

the voting system agreed after acrimonious negotiations in Nice in 2000 will now go into force as scheduled.

Under the Nice Treaty, Poland and Spain received 27 votes in the European Council of leaders, where the bloc's most important decisions are taken, against 29 for Germany, which has a population more than double their size.

They refused to give up their voting powers, while France and Germany were prime movers urging adoption of a new system.

A Convention of lawmakers and national representatives led by former French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing proposed a reform whereby most decisions would pass if backed by a majority of EU states representing 60 per cent of its population.

The breakdown capped a year in which Europeans were bitterly split over war in Iraq, EU budget rules were bent, Sweden voted against joining the euro and Britain delayed indefinitely a referendum on the same issue.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who hosted the summit, said his handling of the six-month EU presidency had been a "triumph."

"Some people see the glass half empty. I see the glass half full," Berlusconi told reporters.

Syria wants talks with US

REUTERS, Damascus

Syria said Saturday it wants a frank and constructive dialogue with the United States, a day after President Bush signed a law that threatens diplomatic and economic sanctions against the Arab state.

The official Syrian Arab News Agency said President Bashar al-Assad's talks with a US Homeland Security Committee delegation led by California Republican Christopher Cox dealt with combating terrorism and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

It said the talks tackled "the necessity for establishing a clear, constructive and reasonable dialogue."

Cox told a news conference after what he said was a very constructive meeting that he was encouraged "that there is a prospect for getting Syrian-US relations back on track."

But he added: "I can't say that I sensed that there was a diplomatic breakthrough today...I can report back from those discussions that the president fully appreciates -- which is a different word than agrees with -- the American position."

Washington accuses Syria of ignoring its requests to crack down

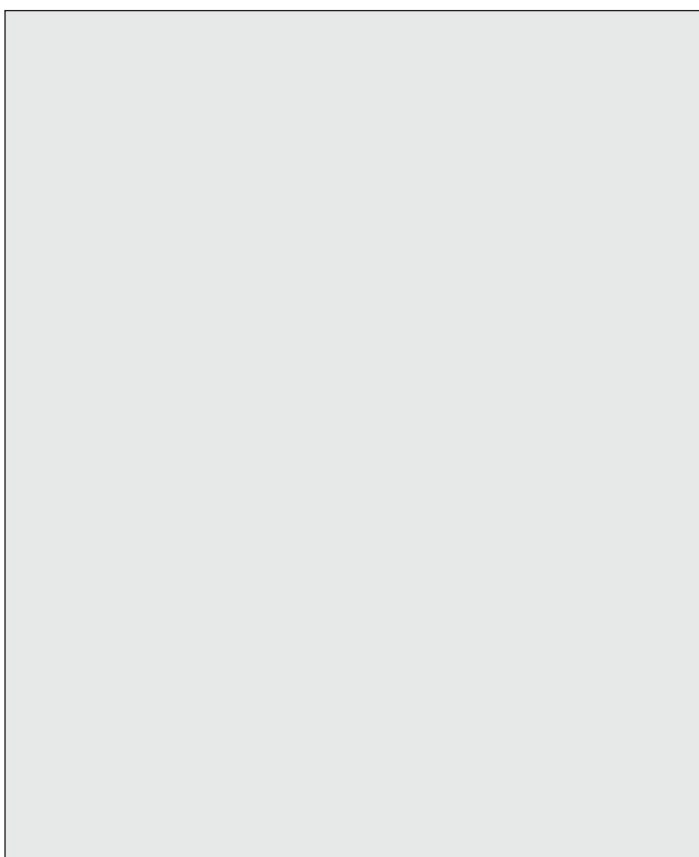
on Palestinian and Lebanese guerrilla groups and has long included Syria on a list of states that sponsor terrorism.

The bill authorises Bush to bar trade in items that could be used in weapons programs until the administration certifies that Syria is not supporting terror groups, has withdrawn its military from Lebanon, is not developing unconventional weapons and has secured its border with Iraq.

"Assad expressed his view, which I share, that this legislation can be viewed as a glass half full rather than a glass half empty. Because if these points of disagreement can be worked on and resolved the legislation itself contains an expression of American policy that we want to have expanded relations with Syria," said Cox.

"He (Assad) also went out of his way to be as agreeable as he could with our basic assumptions about fighting terrorism and the importance of working together," he added.

Different political and socio-cultural organisations placed wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial at Mirpur in Dhaka yesterday to pay homage to the intellectuals and professionals killed on December 14, 1971. From top to 11-Party alliance, Muktijoddha Sanghati Parishad and Projanmo '71.



The winners of consumer contest, organised by the Lever Brothers Bangladesh Ltd., pose with Lux Star Aupee Karim at the Lux Star Dinner at a city restaurant on Wednesday.

Vow to materialise ideals of martyred intellectuals
BSS, Dhaka

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) yesterday renewed their pledges to work for materialising the ideals of the martyred intellectuals for what they laid down their lives.

They were addressing a discussion organised by DUJ marking the Martyred Intellectuals Day at its office at Jatija Press Club here.

Chaired by DUJ President Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, the discussion was addressed by BFUJ President Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, former Presidents of BFUJ Habibur Rahman Milon and Abul Kalam Azad, former Acting Presidents Alhaj Zahirul Huq and G M Yakub, DUJ General Secretary Omar Faruque, BFUJ vice president Amirul Momenin, Treasurer Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, former General

Secretary of Press Club Shafiqur Rahman, former DUJ President Altaf Mahmud, Saiful Islam Talukder, Aslam Sani, Anup Khashtogir, Amya Ghatak Pulak and Abdul Majid.

They also expressed deep concern over 'recent attacks' on journalists in Jhalakathi.

Filipino FM dies in Taiwan
AFP, Taipei

Philippine Foreign Minister Blas Ople died in a Taiwan hospital after he fell critically ill while on an aircraft taking him from Tokyo to Bangkok, officials said yesterday.

Lin Sung-huan, head of the East Asian and Pacific Affairs Department of Taiwan's foreign ministry, said Ople died after emergency treatment at Minsheng Healthcare, a hospital in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan county.

Lin said his ministry had notified the Philippine government and Ople's family and that the Taiwan government would provide the family with necessary assistance.

Officials in Manila said Ople's body was expected to be flown to Manila late Sunday.

In Manila, his daughter Susan Ople spoke of her father's death, saying, "we've lost him." She urged the public to pray for his soul.

She was to have joined Ople in Bahrain, where he was headed to rendezvous with President Gloria Arroyo on a visit.

Taiwan's foreign ministry said earlier that Ople, who was 76, was taken ill late Saturday while on a Japan Asia Airways flight to Bangkok.

"The plane was forced to make an emergency landing at Chiang Kai-shek airport at around 10:30 pm (1430 GMT Saturday)," foreign ministry spokesman Richard Shih told AFP.

He said Ople was rushed to Minsheng Healthcare, but declined to give details on Ople's illness.

"The (details of the) illness should be given by Ople's family... We respect their desires," he said.

A statement from his family said Ople had died of natural causes "in the service of his country" after efforts to revive him both on the plane and at the hospital failed.

Taiwan's state-run Central News Agency said Ople did not show any sign of life when a doctor at the airport was called in to the aircraft.

"The Philippines government will send an airplane to Taiwan to bring back the body," it quoted an airport source as saying.