

Come up with farsighted plans to build skilled manpower

PM tells Buet convocation

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday said Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) will have to come up with a firm commitment and farsighted plans to build up skilled manpower, which the country desperately needs in the 21st century.

"Education, research, science and technology will have to be placed above everything to make our independence meaningful," Khaleda told a Buet convocation at its playground, recalling John F Kennedy's famous words, "Independence without education is always vulnerable and education without freedom is always meaningless."

She assured the Buet authorities of government's all-out cooperation in its all activities, aiming at bigger development planning for the country.

Addressing its 9th convocation, Khaleda, also chancellor of Buet, said Bangladesh needs skilled engineers and technologists, efficient administrators and managers to build it as an industrially developed modern country.

She suggested the Buet authorities to consider with due importance whether it could offer degrees both in technology and management as done by the US universities.

"University Grant Commission (UGC) may extend full cooperation in this regard," she told the function. Former Buet vice-chancellors, its teachers and students, VCs of other universities and guardians of the graduate engineers also attended the convocation.

The prime minister said that they do not want to make education meaningless for lack of freedom.

Complete freedom and autonomy are necessary in administrative education and research works for flourishing merits of the students and better utilisation of Buet potentials, she said. "And then Buet will be able to implement new planning through national and international supports."

"I would like to ensure full freedom to the Buet to set up laboratory and Research Centre and introduce new education and research activities with international support and joint venture."

she told the function.

She also assured of giving quick decision if Buet comes up with pragmatic planning.

Former Chief Justice Mahmudul Amin Chowdhury addressed the function as convocation speaker. Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk, State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Huq Milon and Buet Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Md Ali Murtaza also spoke on the occasion.

Khaleda as chancellor of the university conferred graduate and post-graduate degrees on the graduate and post-graduate students of 2001-02 and 2002-03 academic sessions of different

departments of Architecture and Planning Faculty, Civil Engineering Faculty, Electric and Electronic Faculty, Engineering Faculty, Mechanical Engineering Faculty and Institute.

Some 789 graduate and 142 post-graduate students, received the certificates, including three of PhD degrees, at the convocation.

Abduallah Al Mujaheed, a graduate student of Computer Science and Engineering received the University Gold Medal 2005 for securing highest GPA. The prime minister distributed the award.

She also took part in the ceremonial convocation procession.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses the 9th convocation of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) on its campus in the city yesterday.

Create 5 posts for doctors in each hospital Suggests JS body

BSS, Dhaka

The parliamentary standing committee on health and family welfare ministry yesterday recommended creating at least five posts of doctors, including a female doctor, in every hospital.

The committee also suggested to the government that necessary staff be recruited in all new hospitals and medical equipment be supplied immediately after the completion of the infrastructure work.

It made the recommendations at a meeting held at the Sangsad Bhaban, with its chairman M Moshir Rahman in the chair.

Police Week 2006 begins today

UNB, Dhaka

Police Week 2006 will begin today with expectations of a better service from police in ensuring security of public life and property.

On the occasion, President Iajuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia have given messages highlighting the role of police in ensuring peace in society.

Attempt to rape DMCH staff protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The city unit of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) yesterday formed a human chain in front of the emergency gate of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) in protest of an attempt to rape a female employee of the hospital allegedly by a BNP leader.

M Osman Ali, general secretary of DMCH unit of BNP, made an attempt at about 8:00pm on December 12 to rape a sweeper of Ward 12, when she was passing beside the Samity office of fourth class employees.

The BMP activists from different parts of the city took part in the human chain that started at 3:30pm and continued up to 4:15pm. The participants expressed their grave concern at the insecurity of female service workers in government hospitals.

BMP city unit Vice-president Kazi Aziza Idris, Rawshan Ara Begum, Suraiya Chaklader, General Secretary Saraban Tahura, Organising Secretary Nurulwara Begum, Publicity Secretary Homaira Khatun, and Legal Aid Secretary Rehana Yunus were present.

Hanufa also participated in the human chain.

She told The Daily Star that an arbitration was held on Saturday on the incident but I did not accept its decision.

"I demand exemplary punishment to Osman Ali," she added.

Unite to face WTO challenges Speakers urge developing countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called upon the developing countries to be united as non-aligned countries did, in order to confront the challenges of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

They said lack of unity among the developing countries to set a comprehensive agenda in the WTO's Hong Kong ministerial meeting deprived developing countries including Bangladesh in international trade.

Blaming Bangladesh team in the meeting headed by commerce minister for their weak negotiation, the speakers said their stand in the meeting was self-contradictory.

Left Democratic Front (LDF) organised the seminar on "WTO Hong Kong Round: United Developing World Versus Divided Third World" at Moni Singha-Farhad memorial trust Bhaban in the city with Ruhin Hossain Prince in the chair.

They said rival developed countries are more powerful and more united than developing countries. They still heavily subsidise their agriculture to compete our agriculture, they added.

Presenting a keynote paper, Prof MM Akash of economics department, Dhaka University, said the third world countries have to raise their voice for reciprocal advantages.

To ensure free movement of labour, he demanded visa-free

access to all over the world.

"As the government doesn't admit the price inflation and dollar crisis in the country we can't expect a good negotiation from the government team joined the WTO ministerial conference," said Dr Kazi Khaliquzzaman, president of Bangladesh Economic Society.

Prof Dr Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University said, our finance minister often opposes the policy guidelines of IMF and World Bank but in practice he does more than what they prescribe.

Economist Dr Ananya Raihan, Prof Rashed Titumir of Dhaka University and central leaders of LDF spoke at the seminar.

'Country needs leaders like Kibria'

'Pechhane Phire Dekha' launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country today needs dedicated, honest and patriotic leaders like former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria to tackle the present crises and safeguard the nation from the clutches of the defeated forces of the liberation war, speakers at a publication ceremony of a book said yesterday.

The autobiographical book titled 'Pechhane Phire Dekha' by Kibria was launched at the National Museum auditorium in the city.

Termining the book a pathfinder for the nation, the speakers said Kibria was an icon of self-sacrifice, honesty and patriotism and the new generation should follow his ideology.

The book has also provided guidelines on how the nation can achieve a better future in a highly competitive global environment, especially in economic sector, they added.

AAMS Arefin Siddique, former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, said, "Fantics and militants are carrying out bomb attacks across the country without any resistance, killing progressive political leaders, civil society members and intellectuals one after another, but the government still remains indifferent."

Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Prof Anisuzzaman, Syed Shamsul Huq, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Awami League leader Prof Abu Sayeed, National Museum Director Shamsuzzaman Khan and Kibria's widow Asma Kibria and son Reza Kibria also spoke at the ceremony.

48 youths rescued from slavery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Coastguards of Mongla station rescued 48 youths on Monday from confinement at fishermen's colonies at Dular Char, Alorok, Shelachar and Narkelbaria.

They were abducted from different districts of the country for serving as "slaves" under duress in the fishermen's colonies adjacent to the Sundarbans.

According to coastguard sources, the rescued boys were never provided with proper food and shelter by their masters who mainly deal in "Shutki" (dry fish) in the coastal belts of the Bay of Bengal. Many of the boys were made victims of sodomy, said another reliable source.

The rescued were sent to their respective home districts on Monday evening.

Obaid, Khoka hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee member KM Obaidur Rahman MP and DCC Mayor and city BNP President Sadeque Hossain Khoka have been hospitalised after they fell ill.

Obaidur was admitted to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital when he suddenly fell sick with heart and diabetes-related problems.

He underwent a minor operation. He has started recovering and doctors have suggested complete rest for him.

Khoka had an operation in his gallbladder at National University Hospital in Singapore yesterday.

Family sources said his condition is improving. City BNP is organising a doa mahfil at its Naya Palan office today for Mayor's speedy recovery.

Party leaders, activists and well-wishers have been requested to attend the mahfil.

CEC's unilateral move to erode foundations of polls: 11-party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The left-leaning 11-Party alliance yesterday said the Chief Election Commissioner's (CEC) unilateral decision to create a fresh voter list using BNP-Jamaat activists will erode the foundations of election in the country.

"The ruling BNP-Jamaat alliance is formulating an election plan engineered to retain power in the next elections," said 11-Party alliance leaders at their central executive committee meeting at the Workers Party (WP) office.

The BNP-Jamaat alliance is processing the voter list to implement their blueprint to retain power, they said.

Presided over by Alhaj Abdus Samad the meeting was also attended by WP President Rashed Khan Menon, President Member of Gano Forum Pankaj Bhattacharya and Democratic Party President Nurul Islam.



Prof Kabir Chowdhury and Asma Kibria launch a book titled 'Pechhane Phire Dekha' by slain former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria at a ceremony at the National Museum auditorium in the city yesterday. Prof Anisuzzaman, extreme right, Reza Kibria, extreme left, and Syed Shamsul Huq, second from left, are also seen.

FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS Govt to welcome suggestions from opposition

Moudud says at book publication ceremony

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has no plan to bring any reform to the electoral system, but if the opposition makes suggestions regarding free and fair elections, the government would welcome those, said Law Minister Moudud Ahmed at a publication ceremony of a book yesterday.

The book titled 'Bichar O Rajniti' (Justice and Politics) by journalist Waliullah Noman was launched at the ceremony, organised by the Mouli Prokashoni at the National Press Club in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Moudud said, "It was a good suggestion made by Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina in 1996 that the most recent retired chief justice would be made the chief advisor of the caretaker government and we accepted that suggestion with due respect."

But now why they do not want to take part in the next election under the caretaker government headed by a former chief justice, he said, adding that "Is there any person in the country who is more neutral than the chief justice?"

The law minister also said that a very bad culture has been established in the country that the parties who fail to secure majority seats in national elections are reluctant to join parliament.

There is no alternative to a free

and fair election, he said, adding that it is a matter of regret that those who lost the elections are now raising question about the fairness of the election.

Referring to the main opposition Awami League's statement that the incidents of bomb blasts will stop if the four-party alliance government resigns, the law minister said the people have got a clear message from it that the opposition is behind the bomb attack.

About the book, Moudud said

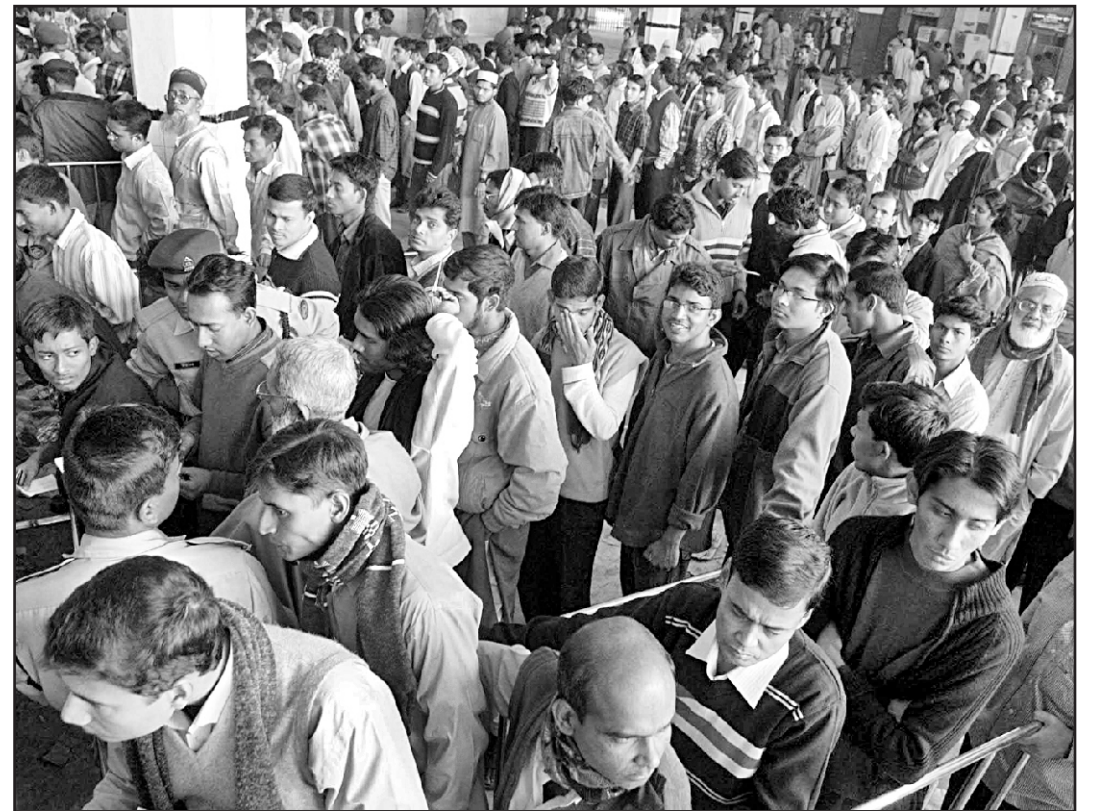
Daily Star reporter Porimol wins PIB-Unicef Award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Porimol Palma, staff correspondent of The Daily Star, has won the Bangladesh Press Institute (PIB)-Unicef Award 2005 for his report titled 'Harrowing Tales of Azad's 10 Years as Camel Jockey.'

Other winners of the award are Khandaker Golam Azad of the Dinkal, Bipal Kumar Pal of the Sangbad, and Labonya Prohba and Mostakim Swadhin of the Jugantar.

Each winner will get cash, a certificate and a crest at a function to be held at PIB seminar hall at 10.30am today.



Hundreds of homebound passengers wait in queue to collect advance tickets of trains on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha at Kamalapur Railway Station in the city yesterday.

WEATHER TODAY

Light to moderate fog likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the river basins of the country during early morning. Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged night temperature.

Highest temperature 27.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and Sandwip and lowest 8.5 degree Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:25pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

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

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in	
	in Celsius	percentage	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.7	13.0	69	57
Chittagong	27.5	14.8	84	77
Rajshahi	26.6	10.9	84	68
Khulna	25.8	13.0	81	74
Barisal	26.2	12.0	96	90
Sylhet	27.6	13.9	69	--
Cox's Bazar	27.0	15.0	74	67

DUJ New Nation unit election held

UNB, Dhaka

M Hemayet Hossain and M Sahidul Islam were elected unit chief and deputy unit

chief of the New Nation Unit of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ). Golam Haider, assistant editor of The New Nation, conducted the election as chief election commissioner.

Earlier, the biennial meeting of the unit, was held at its newsroom with outgoing unit chief Syed Afzal Hossain in the chair.

Sheikh Mohiuddin, Khondaker Abdur Razzag, Syed Zahurul Abedin, Sushil Chowdhury, ATM Nurun Nabi, M Nasiruddin and M Rafiqul Islam Azad spoke at the meeting.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar on dentistry

A daylong seminar on 'Current Concept of Modern Dentistry' will be held with LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 8:30am.

BILIA workshop

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA) organises a workshop on 'The Implementation of the UN Plan of Action on Small Arms: Perspective Bangladesh'. Venue: BILIA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 2:30pm.

Human chain for bonus

Jatiya Garments Stramik Kalyan Federation will form a human chain demanding Eid bonus. Venue: Muktagong. Time: 3:30pm.

IEB seminar

Engineers' Institution, Bangladesh (IEB) organises a seminar on 'Railway Communication and Economics: Perspective Bangladesh'. Venue: IEB seminar room. Time: 3:30pm.

Publication ceremony

Abosor Prokashony organises a publication ceremony of a book titled 'Thousand year-old Bengali culture' by Dr Golam Murshid. Venue: Bishwa Sahitya Kendra, Bangla Motor. Time: 4:00pm.

Brac workshop

Brac University (BU) organises a workshop on 'Blended e-learning in Bangladesh context'. Venue: BU-IED, Dhanmondi. Time: 2:00pm.