

Broaden access to education at affordable cost

President tells first convocation of Brac University

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday called for broadening access to education and knowledge at an affordable cost along with the commitment to excellence, suiting needs of a country trying to graduate into a higher stage of development.

"Bangladesh is at a crossroads between the developed and the developing countries. So, it demands appropriate knowledge and human resources to face the challenges of 21st century," President told the students who graduated from the Brac University.

"As you know, educational institutions are the sign of a civilised society. The greatest challenge for the educational institutions in the 21st century is to be able to develop to meet the needs of the changing world order, which has a direct influence on our national situations," he said.

The president was addressing the first convocation of Brac University at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

He congratulated the proud graduating students, guardians and fellow teachers for their combined efforts in acquiring and providing knowledge and degrees.

He noted with satisfaction that

some public institutions in Bangladesh have gained a reputation as world-class institutions that can compete with the best in the world.

The President lauded the Brac University for its efforts in providing scholarship funds available to meritorious at the same time financially underprivileged students.

A total of Tk 1.95 crore has been disbursed as scholarship during the 2005 academic year. "This indeed leads me to lay emphasis on the philanthropic intent of the institution," said Iajuddin.

He appreciated the BRAC University for adopting some time-befitting subjects, including Public Health, Disaster Management and Governance and Development.

He also praised the university for being able to establish bridge

with some of the top-notch academic institutions in the USA, the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands, Australia and Singapore. He expressed his hope that the graduates would be accomplished in touch with the subjects and universities.

"In conferring the graduation degrees upon you I am performing a sacred task and it is only befitting that you realise in letter and spirit the sanctity of this graduation that marks the onset of a new chapter in your lives. The work ahead of you is more challenging," the President told the graduates fresh from the university.

He said that the decade of 2005-2015 has been declared the "Saarc decade of poverty alleviation". This day marks the beginning of yet another journey, said Iajuddin, adding: "The achievements that

you have earned today have also earned you the task of being more responsible."

Reminding the students of their duties, he asked them to never forget that they are among the fortunate few of the teeming millions who have had the privilege to receive education up to the stage of graduation. "This reality is one of the exceptional significance in a country like ours where the greater majority of the population remains deprived of higher education."

He called on the students to dedicate their education and resourcefulness to changing the destiny of the nation and making life wholesome and conducive for everyone.

Education Minister Dr M Osman Faruk was also present at the Convocation ceremony.



President Iajuddin Ahmed addresses the first convocation of Brac University at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

Three writers receive Prothom Alo Best Book awards

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Jatin Sarker, Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam and Haider Akbar Khan Rono received the 'Prothom Alo Best Book of the Year 1411' award yesterday.

Prof Jatin won the award for his book titled 'Pakistaner Janmo Mrityu-Darshan', Manzoorul Islam for 'Prem O Prarthonar Golpo' and Akbar Khan Rono for 'Shatabdi Perie'.

Prof Zillur Rahman Siddique gave away the awards, which carries Tk 50,000, a certificate and a crest, to the winners at a ceremony organised by the daily Prothom Alo at a city hotel.

The Prothom Alo introduced the award last year of Bangla calendar for creative books of Bangladeshi writers.

Speaking at the ceremony, Prof Zillur Rahman lauded the Prothom Alo for taking such an initiative, saying that the award will inspire the young writers.

There are a very few literary magazines in the country, he said, but the national dailies are trying to fill the gap.

On his award-winning book, Prof Jatin Sarker said his own experiences have been reflected in the book.

"I usually write about villages and the grassroots people, their happiness and sorrow," he said.

Rono, a leader of the Workers' Party of Bangladesh, said, "I have objectively portrayed in the book what I have seen during my lifetime."

Manzoorul Islam said, "Eminent writer Abdul Mannan has praised my book and that is my great achievement."

Poet and novelist Bashir Al Helal, Abdul Mannan Syed and Mohammad Rafiq and Prothom Alo Joint Editor Abdul Quayum and Assistant Editor Sazzad Sharif also spoke.



Winners of the Prothom Alo Best Book award -- Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam, left, Prof Jatin Sarker, second from right, and Haider Akbar Khan Rono, right, -- pose for photograph with Prof Zillur Rahman Siddique, second from left, at the award giving ceremony at a city hotel yesterday.

OUTLAWS TRY TO REGROUP IN KHULNA Fresh combing operation launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police have launched a joint combing operation in Khulna city and district following an information that the operatives of different underground parties are trying to regroup there with a view to carrying out destructive activities, including killing missions.

According to a reliable source of an intelligence agency, armed cadres of outlawed Janajuddha faction of PBCP, New Biplobi Communist Party (NBCP), Lal Pataka faction of PBCP, Sramajibi Mukti Andolon and Gono Fouz

have penetrated in the city and other areas of the district in different guises.

They are now moving as rickshawpullers, drivers and helpers of buses and vans, shoe shiners and fish sellers, the source added.

Most of the extremists are also involved in toll collection from the owners of different shrimp enclosures in the district at gunpoint.

Members of different intelligence agencies are watching all residential hotels and slum areas in the city following another report that some top leaders of underground parties may stay there in the guise of businessmen.

Worker falls from five-story building, dies

BDNEWS, Dhaka

A construction worker died after he fell from a five-story building yesterday as he was chased allegedly by a Chinese Embassy official in the city.

The victim, Noor-un-Nabi, 25, son of Sadek Khan of Dighaldi in Bhola district, fell from an under construction building of the embassy at Gulshan at about 11:00am.

Sources said the Chinese Embassy official chased Noor following a dispute over a trilling matter.

Later, he was rushed to the Apollo Hospitals where he succumbed to his injuries at about 9:00pm.

Following the incident, the other workers became angry with the officials of the Chinese Embassy.

Noor-e-Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Gulshan Police Station, said they were going to file a case in this connection.

Obayedul Huq, deputy commissioner (DC-North) of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), told BDNEWS that "the police administration will take up the matter with the foreign ministry as a Chinese diplomat is involved with the incident."

Dowry-free mass marriage at Ijtema

UNB, Tangai

A total of 119 couples got married without dowry at the Biswa Ijtema yesterday following the tradition of marriage of Hazrat Ali (R) and Hazrat Fatema (R), an instance meant for strengthening campaigns against the social curse.

Maulana Jobair Hasan conducted the marriage solemnisation during the sermon on the second day of the mammoth Islamic congregation, explaining the urgency of the marriage.

Khurma-khejurs (dry dates) were distributed among several thousand devotees who prayed for happy conjugal life of the newly wed couples. At the time of the marriage ceremony, only bridegrooms were present. There is no provision for the presence of bride at this ceremony.

The bridegrooms will be able to meet their wives only after attending at least three chillas (one chilla equals 40 days) of Tablig Jamaat after the three-day ijtema, which concludes today with the offering of akheri munajat.

Eye camp held at Santhia

Dr Zainul Abedin Sheba Sangstha organised an eye camp at Shelonda High School in Santhia, Pabna, recently with the slogan 'Take care of eye, keep valuable eye safe', says a press release.

About 1,000 men, women and children from different places received treatment at the eye camp.

Children and women were given free spectacles and 50 underprivileged people were taken to Manikganj Uholi and Sirajganj Eye Hospital for operation free of cost.

Chairman of the Sangstha Talukder Zannat Hossain inaugurated the eye camp. Prof Abdul Daen, secretary of the Sangstha and president of Santhia press club, Talukder Zakaria Hossain, GM of Sonar Bangla Insurance Co Ltd, Talukder Zaid Hossain, assistant manager, HR & Admin., Rangs Group, Saicidur Rahman, programme coordinator of Sirajganj Eye Hospital, Abdus Sobhan, organiser, Mirza Abdul Hamid, a retired principal, and Nurul Amin, headmaster of Shelonda High School, spoke at the inaugural function.

The eye camp was conducted by Sirajganj Eye Hospital. Dr Md Shamsul Haque along with 10 other doctors treated the patients.

Lutfunnesa laid to rest, qulkhwani tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lutfunnesa, mother of Prothom Alo Editor Matur Rahman, was laid to rest at the Azimur Graveyard yesterday after a namaz-e-janaza at Lalmatia New Colony Staff Quarters Jame Mosque.

She passed away at Birdem Hospital in Dhaka on Friday night. Her body was taken to the residence of her son Dr Rezaur Rahman at Dhanmondi yesterday morning.

Leaders of political and socio-cultural organisations and members of civil society visited the residence to pay their last respects to her. Those who paid last respects include Awami League leaders Tofail Ahmed and Matia Chowdhury, State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Mahbubur Rahman MP, former governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed, The Daily Star Editor Mahfiz Anam, Qaiyum Chowdhury, Chairman of Privatisation Commission Inam Ahmed Chowdhury, Director of Transcom Group Obaidur Rahman Khan, Rashed Khan Menon, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Dilip Barua, Mujahidul Islam Selim, Pankaj Bhattacharya, architect Shamsul Wares, former BGMEA president Anisul Haq and Director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission Prof Nurul Islam.

Meanwhile, AL President Sheikh Hasina, BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil expressed condolence at the death of Lutfunnesa.

They prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Lutfunnesa, daughter of late Abdus Shaheed, a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, was born at Moshakhali village in Gafargaon, Mymensingh, in 1925.

Her qulkhwani will be held at Dr Rezaur Rahman's house, Plot # 34, Road # 15 (new), 28 (old), Dhanmondi after Asr prayers tomorrow (Monday). Her family have requested the relatives and admirers to attend the qulkhwani.

4 including 2 schoolboys killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least four people were killed and 25 others injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Munshiganj, and Barisal.

Our Staff Correspondent reports: A nine-year-old schoolboy was killed in a road accident at Naya Paltan in the capital yesterday morning.

Radid Raihan Diganta, a student of class two at Motijheel Ideal School and College, along with his father was going to his school from their Mohammadpur residence riding a motorcycle, but a speeding bus rammed the two-wheeler, throwing the boy onto the ground and running over him, police said.

Local people rushed the boy to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

His father Rafiqul Islam, an official of Partex Group, received minor injuries.

Paltan police seized the bus, but the driver fled.

Our Correspondent from Barisal adds: At least two people were killed and another 25 injured in a road accident at Bakerganj upazila of Barisal on Friday night.

Witnesses and the injured said, the accident occurred when a Kuakata-bound bus carrying about 40 passengers lost control and plunged into a road side ditch at 8:30pm at Dadurhat area on

Barisal-Patuakhali highway.

Two pedestrians, an unidentified girl aged about 13 and another man identified as Abul Hossain, 45, were killed on the spot and 25 bus passengers were wounded.

Eleven of the injured passengers were admitted to the Barisal SBMCH and Patuakhali General Hospital.

UNB from Munshiganj reports: Transport movement on Dhaka-Mawa highway was disrupted for one and half-hours yesterday as angry people put up barricade on the road following an accident that killed a primary school student.

Police said Saiful, 6, a student of class-I, was crushed under the wheels of a Dohar-bound bus at 10:00am at Keutkhali in Srinagar upazila.

Angry mob damaged a bus and put up barricade on the road for one and half-hours.

Later, transport movement resumed after negotiation between local people and police and local administration.

WEATHER TODAY graphic with sun and cloud icons.

Slight rise in temperature 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 also occur over the country, Met Office said in a forecast. It said slight rise in night temperature is expected over the country.

Highest temperature 30.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 0.9 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:43pm today and rises at 6:40am tomorrow.

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

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.



Former president Abdur Rahman Biswas launches a book titled 'Barisaler Prayash Gunijon' at the National Museum in the city yesterday.

Obituary

Fazilatunnesa, wife of Abdul Majid, a veteran politician and social worker of Agoiljhara in Barisal, passed away due to brain haemorrhage at Comfort Hospital in the city on Friday at the age of 87, says a press release.

She left her husband, six sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn her death.

Fazilatunnesa was buried at her family graveyard at Khazuria village yesterday.

Her qulkhwani will be held at her village home after Asr prayers tomorrow.

Alhaj Zahiruddin Ahmed

Alhaj Zahiruddin Ahmed passed away due to old age complications on January 26 at the age of 75, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters.

Death anniversary

CU CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 6th death anniversary of Muhammad Amin Chowdhury, a prominent lawyer of Chittagong.

On the occasion, a Quarakhani and doa mahfil will be held at his house at Anderkilla in the port city. Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the event and pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Appeal for help

Afroza Akter, a primary school-teacher at Raipura, Narsingdi, has been suffering from blood cancer, says a press release.

She was diagnosed with blood cancer while she was attending a training course at Raipura PTI.

She needs about Tk 25 lakh for her treatment, but it is not possible for her to afford such an expensive treatment.

A mother of two children, Afroza has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save her life.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Atahar Ali, Saving A/C No.- 8525, Sonali Bank, Narsingdi Sadar Branch, Narsingdi. Phone: 0188550343, 0175245790.

Md Mafizul Islam

Md Mafizul Islam, a resident of Mohammadpur in Dhaka, has been suffering from bone cancer for the last three years, says a press release.

The cancer has affected his legs and lower part of the backbone. He is now confined to bed.

Doctors have advised him to go abroad for advanced treatment which involves about Tk 10 lakh.

Mafizul, who is the only breadwinner of his family of a seven, has already spent all his savings on his treatment.

His brother Md Sirajul Islam has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save the life of Mafizul.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Md Sirajul Islam, Savings A/C No.-7045, Rupali Bank, Mahmud Mansion Branch, Mirpur Road, Dhaka. Phone: 0188005180.

Shah Alam

A mother has appealed for financial assistance for the treatment of her son Shah Alam, a resident of Kamrangir Char, who has been suffering from blood cancer, says a press release.

Shah Alam, 27, is the only breadwinner of his family of six. His family has already spent about Tk three lakh on his treatment. Now he needs a lot of money for his advanced treatment abroad.

His mother Mosammat Banu has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save the life of her eldest son.

Contributions can be sent to the following account: Account No.-1935, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Kamrangir Char Branch, Dhaka. Phone: 0192024545, 011896693.

DHAKA TODAY National anthem and Conference information.



Chairman of Dr Zainul Abedin Sheba Sangstha Talukder Zannat Hossain speaks at the inaugural ceremony of an eye camp at Santhia in Pabna recently.