

Prof Faez new IU VC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtha*

Prof Faez Mohammad Serazul Hoque has been appointed as the vice-chancellor (VC) of Islamic University (IU) yesterday.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, also the chancellor of the university, confirmed the appointment.

Prof Faez was a professor at the Department of English at Islamic

University. He was also the president of IU Teachers' Association (IUTA).

He is the 9th VC of the university. He took over yesterday.

Islamic University was experiencing a 20-day deadlock for appointing a new VC since July 19, when the IUTA in a general meeting launched a non-cooperation programme suspending all classes and examinations.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Technical College Teachers' Association forms a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday to press its 12-point demand.

UN sleuth hits Taliban over Afghan school attacks

REUTERS, *Geneva*

A United Nations investigator on Wednesday castigated "terrorist groups" in Afghanistan — a clear reference to the Taliban insurgents — over increasing attacks on schools and teachers around the country.

Vernor Munoz Villalobos, special rapporteur on the right to education for the UN's Human Rights Council, said that

this year so far there had been at least 172 such attacks against 60 in the whole of 2005.

The attacks "result in the loss of lives, destruction of already precarious infrastructures, and the closing down of schools" as well as depriving children "of their fundamental right to education," he declared.

"As a consequence, 200,000 to 500,000 children are denied the right to education in Afghanistan...I am appalled that anyone would target children and their teachers," said Munoz, from Costa Rica, in a statement issued in Geneva.

Last week, the UN children's agency UNICEF also complained about assaults on schools — widely practised in the 1980s by then Western-backed Islamic guerrillas fighting a Soviet-supported leftist government in Kabul.

But UNICEF avoided accusing any special group over the attacks, appealing only to "all parties" to stop them.

Independent reports say that in some incidents teachers have been killed in front of their pupils and that parents are warned by "night letters" distributed by insurgents to keep their children at home and teach them religion.

Munoz did not name the Taliban — who effectively shut down education for

girls and young women when they ruled Afghanistan from the mid-1990s until late 2001 — but the wording of his statement left no doubt that they were his target.

He said the attacks were systematic in some parts of the country and were staged "by terrorist groups with the apparent aim of forcing parents to refrain from sending their children to school" and at forcing the government to close schools down.

Although both boys and girls schools appeared to be targeted indiscriminately, Munoz said, the attacks affected girls most because there were fewer schools for them and parents were especially reluctant to expose their daughters to danger.

Munoz called on the Afghan government and "forces on the ground" — a clear reference to British-commanded NATO troops — to step up efforts to endure the safety of students, teachers and all educational personnel.