

DOWN TO EARTH

A New Business in College Education

By A S M Nurunnabi

The results of the last SSC examination of the four Secondary Education Boards show that a total of 4 lakh 90 thousand and 90 students have passed this year. From relevant sources, it is learnt that at the higher education level in the whole country, the total number of existing government and private colleges and other institutions is one thousand and fifty, where the total number of seats available for admission in the 11th class is 3 lakh 21 thousand and sixty. Against this background, a total number of 1 lakh 69 thousand and 30 students will be deprived of opportunity for admission in any college or institution. For obvious reasons, the government and private colleges of the Dhaka city with good name attract the largest number of admission seekers.

It is alleged that taking advantage of the lack of admission prospects of the vast number of students in Dhaka, some quarters in the private sector here are said to be adopting questionable means. In many neighbourhoods of the city, announcement of opening of new private colleges is being made. There is room for doubt that some of these new private colleges are yet to get due affiliation. Whether duly affiliated or not, sponsors of such colleges are seen to place advertisements in newspapers inviting applications for posts of teachers in such colleges. Such action on the part of the sponsors of such new colleges would have been harmless if the applicants for the posts of teachers were not asked to enclose bank draft/pay order/postal order for amounts not less than Tk 100/- in each

quarters in the private education sector. Some allege that there is a racket going on in this behalf.

In the opinion of some observers, there are some pertinent question involved in the matter. First, whether pending affiliation, it is proper to enroll students or invite applications for new posts in such colleges which give the sponsors of such colleges financial gains in the shape of admission and tuition fees from new students and also realized donations from some candidates for posts of teachers. Secondly, contingencies may arise where some of the proposed new colleges may fail to secure affiliation for some reason or another. In such circumstances, what will be the fate of the students who have been newly enrolled? And what will happen to those candidates who are appointed as teachers on payment of donation?

In the former case, some working arrangement may be made by the proposed new colleges with other private affiliated colleges in the city but in the latter case, there is risk for such candidates losing their donation money.

It is also understood that the donation-paying teachers in some such colleges are not offered any salary on the assurance given to them that they would get it as and when such colleges get affiliation. In the event of any such colleges failing to get affiliation, the new teachers might stand to lose both the donation money and their promised salary.

The authorities concerned may look into the issues raised above.

Asia Foundation chief due today

By Staff Correspondent

President of The Asia Foundation Dr William P Fuller arrives in Dhaka today for a three-day visit.

His trip coincides with the Foundation's 40th anniversary. The Foundation opened its office in Dhaka in 1954, making Bangladesh one of its oldest programmes.

Dr Fuller has been



Dr W P Fuller
President of The Asia Foundation since 1989. Before joining the Foundation, he was Deputy Assistant Administrator of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), where he was responsible for US foreign assistance in Asia and the Near East. From 1981 to 1987, he directed the USAID mission in Indonesia.

Prior to 1981, Dr Fuller served for five years as Ford Foundation Representative in Bangladesh, and as an advisor to the National Education Commission and Ministry of Education in Thailand. He also served with the World Bank-UNESCO Cooperative Programmes in Paris, and with UNICEF in Beirut, Cairo, and New York.

Dr Fuller was educated in the United States at Stanford University and Harvard University.

In Bangladesh, the Foundation currently supports projects in public policy, election administration, media development, legal services, and economic reform. The Foundation cooperates with USAID and the Ministry of Health and Family Planning to support NGOs in delivering family planning services throughout the country.

Serb military officials claimed they were advancing on government forces in northwestern Bosnia. A UN official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Serb claims of an advance over the Una River appeared to be true.

The embargo was imposed in 1991 against all parties in the conflict as Yugoslavia disintegrated and fighting began in Slovenia and Croatia.

But the ban has never completely prevented Muslim-led Bosnian government forces from getting weapons bought clandestinely or donated by sympathetic governments and smuggled across the Croatian border. US officials confirmed this week that weapons were being funnelled through Zagreb, the Croatian capital.

The Dutch soldiers were understood to include tactical air controllers who could call in and direct air strikes, a capability the Bangladeshis on the ground did not have.

The committee also decided to ask the parliamentary select committee concerned to produce its report on the proposed Zila Parishad Bill in the House during the session.

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