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Former US Congressman says Bangladesh should have strong JS body system

A former US Congressman suggested that the committee system of the Bangladesh Parliament should be strengthened to make it more effective in doing legislative business, reports UNB.

"It is necessary to build a strong parliamentary democratic system in Bangladesh," said Don Johnson speaking at a workshop on 'Legislative Work in the US'.

Speaker Humayun Rasheed Chowdhury inaugurated the four-day workshop in the conference room of the Parliament Members Club at the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar MP Hostel yesterday morning.

The Parliament Secretariat, United States Information

BAC may file

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Molla Market at Khatunganj in the port city of Chittagong at a cost of Tk 4 crore and allocating more than 32 railway plots to his relatives in between Pahar-tali and Foy's Lake in Chittagong.

The Bureau is also enquiring into the possession of 15 acres of land by the former Communications Minister at Chandanaish in Chittagong.

Col. Oli Ahmed had allegedly abused his office enabling his relatives to import materials for the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge.

The Anti-Corruption people are enquiring how former State Minister Barrister Aminul Huq had influenced the administration in appointing his brother, Asaduzzaman, Executive Director of the Barendra Development Authority, by removing 53 senior officials of the project.

They are also investigating alleged misappropriation of funds of the project and misuse of transport by the minister and his relatives during the last general elections.

Enquiry is being conducted against Amanullah Aman and Nazimuddin Alam for allegedly amassing wealth during the BNP rule.

CU probe body

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The Syndicate meeting also decided that all departments concerned would reschedule the postponed examinations, Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr Abu Yusuf Alam told The Daily Star.

The meeting with Vice-Chancellor Prof Rafiqul Islam lasted for over three and a half hours.

The meeting also formed a three-member high-powered committee to probe the September 17 violence on the campus, he said.

Today's Syndicate meeting follows a meeting of the VC with leaders of the BCL and Shibir on September 27 in a bid to restore normalcy on the campus. The DC and SP of Chittagong had attended the meeting.

ME summit

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go on to Washington, the PLO official told reporters at Cairo airport. He spoke on the basis of anonymity.

The summit is scheduled to begin tomorrow.

Mohammed Sobeh, PLO ambassador to the Arab League, had said both Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak were hesitant to attend the summit without assurances Israel was ready to make concessions in the peace process.

Netanyahu and Jordan's King Hussein left for the United States today.

Arsenic

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sent ... not easily accessible and available and moreover are costly."

Head of the Dermatology Department of Dhaka Medical College Prof M Mujibul Hoque said "contamination of the country's water by arsenic, a known kind of poisons, must be considered as the most dreaded environmental health hazard."

He said study reveals that "havoc has been wrought by arsenic contamination involving a large area of the country."

He further observed that throughout the whole of Asia, only Bangladesh and West Bengal of India have been suffering from arsenic problems.

Prof Islam, quoting reports, said in West Bengal, arsenic has been found in ground water above the maximum permissible limit of 0.50 kg per litre and has "created the biggest arsenic calamity in the world."

"I am worried that in our country, if it would not be the biggest calamity but definitely will not be the smallest one," he said.

'Haji Siraj, not Kazi Siraj MP'

Officials of the Detective Branch of Police yesterday made it clear that they did not raid the residence of any MP in connection with the recent gold haul, reports UNB.

"DB police had raided the house of one Haji Siraj, not Kazi Siraj MP," said a DB official referring to the death of a journalist over the controversy.

Chanchal Biswas, News Editor of Daily Sun, died of cardiac arrest while reportedly talking over telephone Sunday as he was frightened due to threat over publishing a news item on police raid at the residence of Kazi Siraj.

News Media despatched a news item that DB personnel had raided the house of Kazi Siraj, also the owner of 'Amin Jewellers' in connection with the Tk 7.05 crore gold smuggling.

Meanwhile, Manzur, arrested on Sunday for his suspected involvement in the smuggling, was brought under DB custody on a two-day police remand yesterday.

Round-table on water policy held

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ing a broad overview of the water resources of the country.

Minister for Water Resources and Flood Control Abdur Razzaq and Agriculture Minister Mota Chowdhury took part in the discussion.

The discussion was also participated by, among others AKM Shamsul Hoque, Chief Engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board, (BWDB); Hasanul Haque Inu of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Syed Ali Kabir, Amjad Hossain Khan, former chairman of BWDB; Tauhidul Anwar Khan, Joint Commissioner of Joint River Commission; Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud, former foreign minister and water resources minister; Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University; Barrister AKH Morshed, Chairman of BISS; Dr KB Sajjadur Rashid of Geography Department of Dhaka University; Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan, former state minister for water resources; MH Siddiky (BU), Director General of WARPO; Mosharraf Hossain and Prof Rehman Sobhan.

Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury emphasised the need for evolving a methodology so that surplus water during the rainy season could be used in lean period. She also laid special importance on planned use of ground water and dredging of rivers.

Matia Chowdhury said that the past governments did not give 'far-sighted policy guidelines' for water management, thereby aggravating the problem. In this regard she mentioned the recent water-logging in the city that caused immense sufferings to the city dwellers.

The minister also criticised some politicians who 'talk about reaching consensus over discussion on table but start issuing statements and stage agitations, contradicting earlier stands once they move out from the forum.'

The BUP Chairman emphasised immediate formulation of a national water policy noting that the country was deprived of adequate supply of the Ganges water since 1989.

"But we should decide how we shall utilise the Ganges water when we shall have different levels of supply. We can definitely make the policy on the basis of assumption instead of waiting for a water sharing agreement first," Dr Kholiqzaman said.

Stressing the need for building Ganges barrage, he said, "We must measure that at what quantum of cross-border water-flow this barrage would be sustainable."

He said, "Today we at least reached a consensus on a number of matters — firstly we need a water policy, then we need to reach a permanent or long-term water sharing accord." He also called for formulating the water policy using the 'home-grown expertise'.

Amjad Hossain Khan said the donor-driven water management planning in the past did not yield any result and added that unless a home-grown policy planning is done, the country will be doomed.

"We have reached a stage where we cannot think our own way," said Khan, "but our plan has to be drawn by ourselves. We need political will to have support for such plans."

The World Bank is now forcing the government to take faulty plans because of the lack of any water policy, he said.

He maintained that the uncertainty regarding water sharing with India must and a permanent arrangement has to be made as soon as possible.

Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan observed that due to the absence of a policy, issues like demarcation of the border could become controversial. Citing the example of Muhuri river he said construction of spurs before it enters Bangladesh had washed away our territory. He called for framing an water policy taking into account not only the Ganges issue but also the problems facing 53 other common rivers, now being 'trained or harnessed by our neighbour'.

Tauhidul Anwar Khan warned against the increasing use of aquifer to irrigate farm lands in the country as surface water decreased. "Out of an estimated 12 billion cubic metre (CMT), eight to nine CMT are currently being used. But we need to log these use and make a proper assessment of the reservoir, putting a brake on the further exploitation of the ground water", he said.

Referring to the shrinking ground water table in Dhaka city, Tauhidul Anwar noted that the capital might face a situation similar to that of Bangkok or Beijing facing a danger of over exploitation

leading to slow sinking of these Megapolises.

Stressing rationalisation of water use through an integrated approach to the harnessing of both surface and ground water, he also emphasised the need of the rivers to flush their own beds should also be taken into consideration.

He cited the example of Teesta barrage built at a huge cost to irrigate the northern plains, now limping with the construction of a similar barrage only 50 miles upstream across the border, as a point in the absence of long-term planning without visualising the all-season availability of the water.

Such a situation exemplifies the problems in the drafting of a national water plan, Khan added.

Prof Maniruzzaman Miah underlined the future problems if plans to harness the massive flows of the Brahmaputra, the source of 67 per cent of our water requirement, goes full steam across the border.

M H Siddiky, referring to the sharing of the waters of international rivers, said what was possible in 1985 has become complicated now. "We blame the foreigners but not our governments. We have been pressing the government since 1993 to do something to augment the flow of the Gori that virtually is dying," he said, pointing out the need for an integrated water policy.

Prof Sajjadur Rashid observed that we have to take into account the demand and supply of water, along with seasonal variation, before drafting a national water policy.

Barrister AKH Morshed noted that indiscriminate felling of trees in the Terai region of the Himalayas under a franchise granted to an Indian contractor by Nepal contributed to deforestation, triggering flooding downstream.

Prof Rehman Sobhan, Executive Chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said "How was it possible that after wasting millions of dollars, we did not have a national water policy. He said that despite the absence of such a policy, appropriate technology coupled with water use doubled food output in the past decades. But we must find out a way now to deal with the water, harnessing it for re-distribution during the lean period.

Hasanul Haque Inu urged the government to ensure representation of opposition political parties and professional groups in the proposed body for training a national water policy.

He observed that over the last 25 years, none took a firm political stand to resolve problems relating to water. Inu said that a national water policy should be formulated with 'home-grown expertise.' There was no scope for 'donor-driven' policy in this field, he said.

Former foreign minister Anisul Islam Mahmood noted that the water issue had been overlooked for long as it had been seen as a political problem instead of a technical problem.

He said all attention was given on the sharing of Ganges water with India, which only supplied 15 per cent of river water of the Bangladesh. Attention was not given on the water-flow of the rest of the rivers — specially the Brahmaputra which supplies 67 per cent of river waters of the country.

"A prolonged fight with the neighbour over sharing of five to ten thousand cusec of water only makes Bangladesh looser. We should look at the problem broadly," Anisul Islam Mahmood said.

He stressed on a regional agreement on water sharing.

"We must have some solution to the water problem immediately, otherwise we will face unprecedented problem," he warned adding that India was considering diverting the flow of the Brahmaputra to the drier Southern region.

New DU VC vows to rise above 'party interest'

By DU Correspondent

Prof Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury took over charge as Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University from acting VC Prof Shahiduddin Ahmed at a simple ceremony yesterday morning at the VC's office.

Prof Chowdhury while taking over charge, sought cooperation from all quarters concerned in maintaining congenial academic atmosphere in the university. It is very much possible to regain the lost glory of DU with the cooperation of all, he added.

He said he would try to act rising above 'party interest'. He was a member of the AL advisory body.

Prof Chowdhury said, "All appointments and promotions in the university would be made on the basis of merit."

Replying to a question from journalists, Prof Chowdhury said that he would try to hold the DUCSU election as soon as possible after having consultation with the student organisations.

Welcoming the new VC, Prof Shahiduddin Ahmed assured him possible help in the smooth running of the university.

The ceremony was also addressed by Prof Mostafa Chowdhury, Prof M Ershadul Bari, Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique, Dr Nurun Nahar Rahman and Dr Sirajul Islam Khan.

Those present on the occasion included the registrar, treasurer and proctor of the

university, deans, provosts, DUTA leaders and representatives of different student organisations.

The two other members of the VC panel — Prof ATM Zahurul Haq and Prof Shahadat Ali — were, however, not present.

Later he held a meeting with the leaders of different student bodies.

Prof Chowdhury said the fact that he was a member of AL advisory body would not affect his 'neutrality' as VC.

Leaders of pro-Awami League Chhatra League, pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya attended the meeting.

Tourism month begins today

Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) has drawn up various programmes on the occasion of the Tourism Month-1996 beginning today, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the month-long programme in the Osmani Smriti Auditorium at 4.30 pm today.

Girl rescued

By Staff Correspondent

Police rescued kidnapped college student Fatema Al Rahman Lipi from 143 South Paik Para under Mirpur thana and arrested Abul Fazal Nipu and Imam Hossain Mojmuder in this connection at about 12.30 am yesterday.

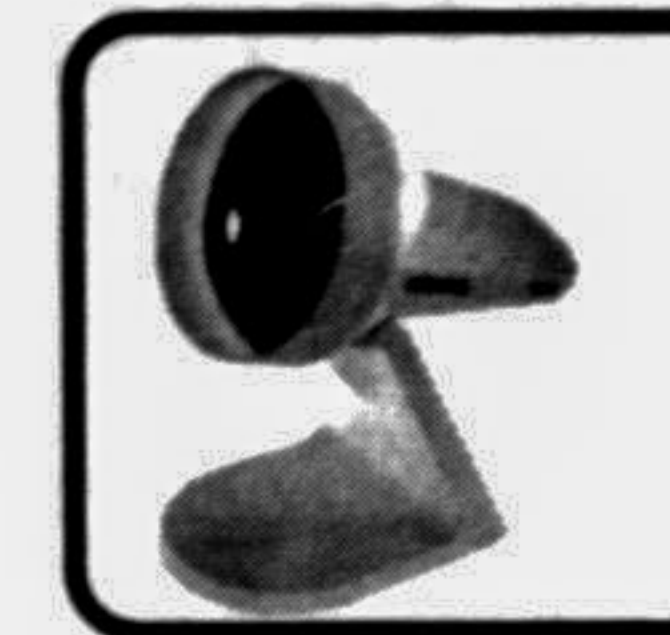
Lipi, a student of Lalmatia Mohila College, was kidnapped by Nipu from Kallanpur bus stand while she was returning home from the college at about 12.30 pm last Sunday.

23 DCs

From Page 1

Jessore, Deputy Secretary of the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry Ashraf Uddin Ahmed DC of Narail and Director of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority KM Habibullah DC of Chittagong.

Deputy Secretary of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry Mohammad Shamsul Haq has been appointed DC of Meherpur. Deputy Secretary of the Internal Resources Division M Habibullah DC of Patuakhali, Director of the Youth Development Directorate Mohammad Azhar Ali Talukder DC of Barguna, Deputy Secretary of the Agriculture Ministry AKM Delwar Hossain DC of Jhalakati and Deputy Secretary of the Banking Division ATM Zulfikar Haider Chowdhury DC of Pirojpur.



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PHILIPS

Power tariff

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consumers will be charged at the rate of Tk 3.55 per unit from today and Tk 4 from December 1.

Domestic consumers for above 700 units will have to pay Tk 4.95 from today and Tk 5.20 from December. The previous rate for domestic users above 700 units was Tk 4.50.

But small industries will have to pay a flat rate of Tk three from today and Tk 3.15 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk 2.75.

Off peak hour rate for small industries will be Tk 2.30 from today and Tk 2.40 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk 2.10.

Peak hour rate will be Tk 4.40 from today and Tk 4.60 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk 4.

For non-residential users, tariff rate will be Tk 2.45 from today and Tk 2.55 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk 2.20.

Commercial users will pay a flat rate of Tk 4.10 from today and Tk 4.30 from December 1 instead of the previous flat rate of Tk 3.70.

Off peak hour rate for commercial users will be Tk 2.75 from today and Tk 2.95 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk 2.45. Peak hours rate will be Tk 6.60 from today and Tk 6.95 from December 1 instead of the previous rate of Tk six.

Rate for rural electricity will increase from Tk 1.37 to Tk 1.55 from today.

The increase in tariff came following the Asian Development Bank's condition that the power rate would have to be increased by 25 per cent to get loans for the 9th power project.

PM appears on TV programme tonight

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will appear in a special TV programme tonight.

Bangladesh Television has announced that the programme would be telecast at 8.30 pm today on the occasion of completion of 100 days of the present government.

Prime Minister will deliver a speech at the programme to be held at BTB auditorium in the presence of a cross section of viewers and reply to questions from the audience.

BNP: Meet demands

From Page 1

armed attack of the government," he said.

He said the government was busy looking into the interest of foreign countries instead of the country's interest.

Though India is not pressing for transit facility and sale of power, the Awami League became busy for providing transit and import of power," Mannan Bhuiyan said, adding "The government is planning to import power from India, although there is enough scope for generating power at home."

He said despite utmost sincerity the BNP could not realise the just share of Ganges water, but BNP would not allow signing agreement for less than 34,000 cusec and giving any facility to India in exchange for water.

BSSP

From Page 1

insurance and instruction to the State Minister for Information to resolve the problem, said a press release.

The meeting was held at the Inquilab Bhawan with the Danik Inquilab Editor A M M Bahauddin in the chair.

The BSSP demands include equal allocation of advertisements and newsprint as per the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC), raising advertisement rates and withdrawal of VAT on import of newsprint.

The meeting observed that the letter received from the Information Ministry on September 21 was 'one-sided and far away from reality'. The letter indicated no step for fulfilment of the demands but asked the BSSP to propose five names to represent newspaper owners in the 5th Wage Board.

The meeting resolved that it would not be possible for the BSSP to participate in the 5th Wage Board till its demands are met.

3000 more return from UAE

Nearly 3,000 deported Bangladeshi workers returned home from the United Arab Emirates in 24 hours till 6 pm yesterday, reports UNB.

Immigration officials at the Zia International Airport said the illegal immigrants were brought to Dhaka by Biman Bangladesh Airlines and a dozen other foreign carriers.

Till yesterday, more than 18,000 Bangladeshi workers have been flown back to Dhaka.

Presided over by Dhaka City BNP Convener Sadek Hossain Khoka, MP, the meeting was also addressed, among others by Abdus Salam Talukder, Rafiqul Islam Miah, Mir Shawkat Ali, party MPs Amanullah Aman, Khurshid Jahan Haq, Nazimuddin Alam and Joyntul Abedin Faruque. BNP central leader Goyeswar Chandra Roy, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Habibur Rahman Habib, Moftul Hasan Tripti, Kazi Abul Bashar, Abu Sayed Khan Khokon, Mosharraf Hossain Khan and filmmaker Washimul Bari Rajib.

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Dhaka EPZ

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pleted at a cost of Taka 60 crore including Taka 20 crore from the authority's own fund.

The meeting also decided to ensure water supply to Chittagong Export Processing Zone. For the purpose, Chittagong WASA would undertake soon its interim water supply project. The meeting directed the LGED Ministry and the Planning Commission to take necessary measures in this regard.

The other decisions are development of the road from Joydevpur crossing to Gazipur export processing zone, extension of ISD telephone facilities to Gazipur and Dhaka EPZs and construction of BEPZA's own building, EPZ enterprise liaison office and a display centre. It was also decided that this office complex would be set up at the proposed World Trade Centre.

TOURISM MONTH '96 PROGRAMME

Date & Venue	Programme	Date & Venue	Programme
1-10-96 Tuesday, 4.30 p.m. Osmani Memorial Auditorium	Inauguration Ceremony of Tourism Month '96 Cultural Programme	17-10-96 Thursday, 8.00 a.m. TOAB	River Cruise on Sitalakhya
2-10-96 Wednesday, 10.00 a.m. Sonargaon Hotel	Inauguration of Monthlong Exhibition of Indigenous Musical Instrument	7-10-96 Friday, 8.00 a.m. Mary Anderson, Paglaghat	Food Festival Traditional and Cultural Evening
Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	Monthlong Chef special	9-10-96 Saturday, 8.00 a.m. Abahani Playground, Dhanamondi	River Cruise and Cultural Programme
7-10-96 Hotel Abakash	Inauguration of Monthlong Food festival	18-10-96 Sunday, 7.00 p.m. Sonargaon Hotel	Dress as You Like Competition
3-10-96 Thursday, 4.00 p.m. Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	Inauguration of Monthlong Autumn fair	21-10-96 Monday, 4.00 p.m. National Press Club Auditorium	Children's Painting Exhibition
4-10-96 Friday, 9.00 a.m. Mary Anderson, Paglaghat	Seminar relating to tourism	22-10-96 Tuesday, 11.00 a.m. Joy Restaurant, Savar	Food Festival, Cultural Programme and 3-Daylong Handicrafts Exhibition
5-10-96 Saturday, 6.00 p.m. Parjatan Motel, Rajshahi	River cruise and cultural programme	23-10-96 Wednesday, 8.00 a.m. TOAB	Indigenous Food Festival
6-10-96 Sunday, 7.00 p.m. Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	City Sightseeing on horse drawn carriage(Every Friday)	24-10-96 Thursday, 10.00 a.m. Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong	Seminar : Problems and Solutions of Development of Tourism Industry
7-10-96 Monday, 7.00 p.m. Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	Cultural Competition of School Students	25-10-96 Friday, 9.00 a.m. Mary Anderson Paglaghat	Inauguration of Week-long Handicrafts Exhibition and Food Festival
8-10-96 Tuesday, 9.00 a.m. TOAB	Dhaka City Sighseeing Tour	26-10-96 Saturday, 7.00 p.m. Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	Dhaka City Sightseeing Tour
9-10-96 Wednesday, 3.00 p.m. Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong	Children's Dress as you like competition	27-10-96 Sunday, 6.30 p.m. Parjatan Motel, Rangpur	Inauguration of Week-long Mina Bazar
10-10-96 Thursday, 7.00 a.m. Parjatan Holiday Complex Cox's Bazar	Golf Tournament ,Cultural programme and 3-Daylong Handicrafts Exhibition	28-10-96 Monday, 6.30 p.m. Hotel Agrabad, Chittagong	Children's Painting Competition
11-10-96 Friday, 7.00 a.m. Parjatan Holiday Complex Cox's Bazar	River Cruise and Cultural Programme	29-10-96 Tuesday, 4.00 p.m. Hotel Abakash	Food Festival and Cultural Programme
12-10-96 Saturday, 7.00 p.m. Dhaka Sheraton Hotel	Cultural Evening of Lalan song	30-10-96 Wednesday, 4.00 p.m. Osmani Memorial Auditorium	River Cruise and Cultural Programme
13-10-96 Sunday, 8.00 a.m. TOAB	Dhaka-Sundarbans Tour		Cultural Programme
14-10-96 Monday, 6.30 p.m. Parjatan Motel, Rangamati	Cultural Evening		Dhaka Food Street
15-10-96 Tuesday, 8.00 a.m. TOAB	Dhaka-Mainamati Tour		3-Daylong Handicrafts Exhibition and Cultural Programme
16-10-96 Wednesday, 8.00 a.m. TOAB	Food Festival, Tribal Cultural Programme and 3-Daylong Handicrafts Exhibition.		Band Show
17-10-96 Thursday, 6.30 p.m. Sonargaon Hotel	Cultural programme		Seminar : Role of Tourism Industry in Environment Development
			Closing Ceremony and Cultural Programme

For details please contact Tourist Information Centre

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