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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 Bangladeshi 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 Khatinganj 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 Pahartali 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 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 six 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, 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 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 Sobeih, 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 king 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.

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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."

Replies 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 Ershad 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 the 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 Iman Hossain Mojumder in this connection at about 12.30 pm last Sunday.

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

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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 Siddiqi, 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 Gora 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 redistribution during the lean period.

The Minister noted that because of the absence of a policy, the country could not utilise the overflowing water coming from the upstream during monsoon and suffered heavy damages due to floods.

It is necessary for us to have usual level of flood every year for the sake of soil fertility. We should also consider environmental degradation, depletion of fish resources, health hazards and other factors which are directly or indirectly linked with improper use of the water resources," Razzak added.

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 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.

Engineer M H Siddiqi said high salinity laced with effluents have produced a dangerous cocktail to drink for thousands.

He told a round table on National Water Policy in the city yesterday that the pollution of Gora water has gone up three times safety level determined by the World Health Organisation.

The round table was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad.

The Gora has become virtually a zero-flow river as the Padma has dried and it now awaits the fate of another Padma-based river, the Brahmaputra, he remarked.

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.

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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 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 4.50.

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 2.55.

The meeting was held at the Inqulab Bhaban with the Dainik Inqulab Editor A M M Bahaudin in the chair.

The BSSP demands include

equal allocation of advertisement 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 to 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.

BNP: Meet demands

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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.

Presided over by Dhaka Bhaban, MP Convener Sadek Hossain Khokha, MP, the meeting was also addressed, among others by Abdus Salam Talukder, Rafiqul Islam Miah, Mir Shawkat Ali, party MP's Amanullah Aman, Khurshid Jahan Haq, Nazimuddin Alam and Joynal Abedin Faruque, BNP central leader Goyeswar Chandra Roy, Khairul Kabir Khokon, Habibur Rahman Habib, Moqiful Hasan Triyed, Kazi Abu Bashir, Abu Sayed Khan Khokon, Mosharraf Hossain Khan and filmactor Washimul Bari Rajib.

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 LGRD 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.

Till yesterday, more than 18,000 Bangladeshi workers have been flown back to Dhaka. It was also decided that this office complex would be set up at the proposed World Trade Centre.

TOURISM MONTH '96 PROGRAMME

Date & Venue

1-10-96

Tuesday, 4.30 p.m.

Osmani Memorial Auditorium

2-10-96

Wednesday, 10.00 a.m.

Sonargaon Hotel

Dhaka Sheraton Hotel

7.00 p.m.

Hotel Abakash

3-10-96

Thursday, 4.00 p.m.

Dhaka Sheraton Hotel

4.00 p.m.

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