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BUET Syndicate to accept resignation of 13 teachers

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology syndicate has decided to accept the resignations of 13 Architecture Department teachers as they did not withdraw their mass resignations individually.

Fifteen teachers of BUET's Architecture Department had resigned en masse in March protesting a new admission test system for the department. After intervention from the education minister and eminent citizens, a consensus was reached and the teachers agreed to join their posts with the assurance that the new admission test system would be modified later.

All 15 teachers tendered their resignations in a single letter. The 11-member Syndicate asked the teachers to individually withdraw their resignations. In the Syndicate meeting held on March 16 a time limit of upto March 26 was set for the withdrawal.

BUET sources said only two of the 15 teachers withdrew their resignations. "Instead, the 13 teachers wrote a single five-page letter to the Syndicate bringing in various allegations and at the end of the letter they said they were withdrawing their resignations," said a BUET official.

When contacted, BUET Vice Chancellor Iqbal Mahmud termed the whole situation 'very unfortunate' but said that it was not a disciplinary action against the teachers.

"There is no mark against them and if they want to return to BUET their cases would be handled as per recruitment policy of the institution," the VC said.

One of the 13 teachers last night said that reason given by the BUET Syndicate for not accepting their withdrawal letter was 'ridiculous'.

"We had resigned en masse, so why can't they accept a joint withdrawal letter?" he asked.

Tk 50 cr damage suit against Nasim
A damage suit claiming a compensation of Tk 50 crore was filed yesterday against Works and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim, reports UNB.

Former minister Rafiqul Islam Miah filed the case with the 1st Court of Sub-Judge, Dhaka.

The petitioner in his complaint stated that Mohammad Nasim being a Minister made a libelous, misleading and untrue statement in respect of an agreement with Indus Valley Company for development of Gulshan Lake.

The statement was published in the Daily Ittefaq on October 16, 1997.

It was further stated that the plaintiff received a huge commission from Indus Valley Company which was harmful to the interest of the country.

The statements of Mohammad Nasim hampered the reputation, name and fame of the plaintiff, said the petitioner.

Vendor stabbed to death in Ctg
From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Apr 28: A vegetable vendor was stabbed to death by alleged muggers who snatched Tk 8,000 from him at Sholoshahar this morning, police said.

The victim was identified as Shahadat Hossain, 35. Police said that another person, Abul Kasem, accompanying him was also stabbed and injured by the muggers.

Later, other vegetable vendors held a protest rally at Sholoshahar and Pathantuli area protesting the killing.

ALPP meet May 3
A meeting of the Bangladesh Awami League Parliamentary Party (ALPP) will be held on May 3 at 9 am at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, reports UNB.

Leader of the House and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will preside over the meeting.

8 transport workers given one month detention
LALMONIRHAT, Apr 28: The district magistrate's court today ordered one month detention to eight of the 10 arrested transport workers, reports UNB.

Police arrested transport workers' leader Kalam and nine others along with unauthorised firearms on April 24.

The papers regarding the detention order have already been sent to the Rangpur Jail, police super said.

The arrested, transport workers include Rangpur District Transport Workers' Union general secretary Abul Kalam Azad and Tank-lorry Workers' Union general secretary Rahmat Ali Shukra.

Two others, however, escaped the detention order as the documents submitted against them were found erroneous.

Registration of NGO cancelled
The registration of a foreign aided non-government voluntary organisation "Shanirvar Bangla" was cancelled by the NGO Bureau under the Foreign Donation (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Ordinance, 1978, as it was functioning defying the government, an official handout said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Housewife
From Page 1
Russel, at about 7:30 pm on Monday.

Russel started beating Jahura in presence of her child inside the house following an altercation with her. At one stage Russel hit her in the head with a piece of wood, killing her on the spot, the FIR said.

Russel then took the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with the cooperation of one Mamun and left the body there, police added.

Police arrested Russel from Pallabi area yesterday. Mamun has been absconding since the incident. The body was sent to DMCH morgue for autopsy yesterday.



A deserted corridor at the Arts Building of Dhaka University on the second day yesterday of the four-day strike called by JCD. —Star photo

Greater Dhaka telephone project work begins

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government fixed a target in the Fifth Five-year Plan to ensure one telephone for every 125 people by the year 2002, reports UNB.

"And a long-term plan has been taken up to arrange one phone for every 100 people by the year 2005," she said, adding that the speedy transmission of information is essential for the acceleration of economic activities.

Inaugurating the implementation work of the Greater Dhaka Telephone Project at Chalkbazar in the old part of the city, the Prime Minister said the government has undertaken a massive plan for the development of telecommunication sector.

At present, she said, there is one telephone for every 233 people of the country.

The Greater Dhaka Telephone Project is being implemented at a cost of Tk 637 crore to install 67,500 digital lines for old Dhaka, Narayanganj and Savar. Some 54,300 lines will be installed in the old city.

The project is being aided by the Japan government under its Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF).

Hasina said during the 22 months of the present government, it has installed 1.5 lakh telephones in the country. But in the past 21 years, only 2.50 lakh phones were installed, she said.

The government will also take measures for establishing digital transmission links and renovation and expansion, she added.

CMP commissioner regrets
CHITTAGONG, Apr 28: Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Kutubur Rahman has regretted that a police handout yesterday wrongly claimed the arrest of Shahidul Islam, the accused in the murder of Shazneen in Dhaka.

"The handout was issued without my knowledge. It was wrongly claimed that Shahidul Islam was arrested in fact, he has spontaneously surrendered to Kotwali thana," the CMP Commissioner told UNB today.

"The Kotwali thana got the handout issued for taking credit of arresting the accused of a sensational murder," he said.

The police commissioner said Shahidul gave details to the police of events between 10-30 pm Thursday and 9-30 am Sunday when he surrendered.

Officer-in-charge of Kotwali thana Fazul Kabir came under severe criticism from different circles for giving a wrong information and thus trying to mislead the people about a sensational murder.

Gayoom
From Page 1
follow-up the decisions of the 9th SAARC summit held in Male last May. The Maldives President will also brief the Prime Minister about the proposed SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Colombo in June.

President Gayoom earlier visited Sri Lanka to hold talks with President Chandrika Kumaratunga, host of the 10th SAARC summit.

After completion of his Bangladesh visit Gayoom will proceed to Bhutan.

The President of the Maldives will hold official talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina tomorrow. He will also make a courtesy call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed.

The President Shahabuddin Ahmed will host a banquet for the visiting President of the Maldives tomorrow evening.

Gayoom will visit the National Memorial at Savar and hold a press conference prior to his departure on May 1.

Displaced DU students

From Page 1
The provosts were also asked to provide a list of the students who had already returned to their respective halls.

Meanwhile, on the second day of the JCD-called four-day strike at the Dhaka University, only three classes were held. The library and offices of the university were kept open though the students, officials and employees did not turn up.

Some 15 students were seen attending a class at the Arts Building, Proctor of the university Dr Nur-Un-Nabi took the class. Two other classes were taken by Prof. Saad Uddin and Prof. Sahadat Ali, campus sources said.

Most all the students who attended the classes belong to the BCL witnesses said.

JCD had called the strike protesting "police action" on its procession in the city and arrest of its president and some other activists and capture of Dhaka University Halls by BCL activists.

The transports of the university did not operate yesterday during the strike hours.

JCD activists, however, could not enter the campus yesterday to enforce the strike.

BCL brought out a procession on the campus and held a rally at the Aparajeya Bangla premises.

The rally was addressed by, among others, BCL General Secretary Ishaque Ali Khan Panna, DU unit president Bahadur Beparai and DU unit general secretary Abdul Wadud Khokon.

The speakers urged JCD activists who are "bonafide students" to come and stay in the DU dormitories. They said that there was no room for terrorists in the university.

Butcher murdered in Rajshahi
From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAHI, Apr 28: A young man was murdered at Pathanpara in the city today.

Police said, Rajshahi 24, a butcher of Shaheb bazar, was abducted by some unidentified youngmen this morning from his shop. Later his beheaded body was recovered from beside the river Padma this noon.

An uncle of Rana, Abdur Rashid, has filed a case with Rajshahi thana in this connection. No one has so far been arrested for the murder.

CU gunbattle
From Page 1
During four-hour clashes, at least 50 rounds of gunshot were fired and 40 bombs blasted. Police lobbed 40 tear gas shells to disperse the groups.

Militant Chhatra Shibir activists ransacked 18 rooms, belonging to leaders and workers of the Chhatra League and BNP-backed Chhatra Dal.

The ransacking and looting by the Shibir activists took place at Suhrawardi, Shaheed Abdur Rob and F Rahman halls. They also damaged the office room of the Provost of Suhrawardi Hall.

On the other hand, at least eight rooms of Shahjalal and Shah Amanat halls, belonging to the Shibir leaders and workers, were also damaged by the Chhatra League activists.

About a dozen of rooms at the dormitories were set ablaze during the clashes.

Two teachers were reportedly manhandled at the Arts Faculty area by the supporters of the strike.

Police raided Shahjalal, Shah Amanat, Suhrawardi and Alaul halls of the university and recovered two LGs, two guns and huge quantity of other lethal weapons.

They arrested 14 outsiders from the dormitories.

An emergency meeting of the CU Syndicate with Vice-Chancellor Abdul Mannan in the chair requested the law enforcing agency to reinforce their strength and take stiff measures against the terrorists.

It also formed a committee to probe today's incident.

Shibir activists later went on rampage at Chittagong College, Chalkbazar and Chandanpur areas in the port city to protest the university incident.

They damaged eight vehicles and eight shops, said police who resorted to lathicharge and picked up five Shibir activists.

Bad loans taken during BNP rule were used in share market: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said that the bad loans granted during the BNP regime had been used to artificially boost the country's share market, reports UNB.

Replying to a supplementary of Mosharraf Hossain (BNP-Barisal) during the PM's question hour, Hasina said her government alerted the people through radio and television to the artificial upward trend in the capital market.

She said during the five years of BNP government, the BNP people had taken loans indiscriminately and plundered bank money.

She added that after the fall of BNP government on March 30, 1996, these money were supplied to the capital market, resulting in an unusual upward trend of share prices.

However, effective steps are being taken by the government to overcome the crisis in the share market, the Prime Minister said.

3 dacoits killed as bus falls into roadside ditch

COMILLA, APR 28: A Dhaka-bound night coach fell into a roadside ditch in Katherpool area under Chandina thana in the early hours of today, killing three dacoits who were travelling in the bus in the guise of passengers, reports BSS.

Ten passengers were also injured in the accident.

Police said the accident occurred at about 3:30 am when a group of dacoits took control of the bus and one of them was driving it after overpowering the driver.

One unidentified dacoit died on the spot while two others succumbed to their injuries at Chandina hospital.

About 10 robbers boarded the night coach at Chittagong and started looting after the bus crossed the Comilla cantonment.

The other dacoits escaped soon after the accident.

Feni AL leader

From Page 1
turning home in a tempo.

Police later recovered his body at midnight from a pond in Daudpur area.

The body had marks of bullet wounds in the head and stab injuries in the abdomen.

On hearing the news last night, angry Awami League activists attacked and ransacked the houses of Abdul Malek and Omar Gani at Bhadadia village in Sonagaj. They are reportedly the supporters of opposition BNP.

The Awami League supporters also abducted a BNP leader and member of Dhaila UP Belayat Hossain this afternoon. He was, however, rescued by the police and admitted to Feni Hospital in a critical condition.

Two people were arrested for interrogation in connection with Rezaul's killing.

Rezaul was laid to rest at his family graveyard at Mukhtijan this afternoon.

Gas leakage at Sylhet

From Page 1
Haripur gas field sealed the leaks. "But it will take another couple of hours to be sure whether the evacuees should be allowed to come back," Newaz said at 11:50 pm, quoting other officials.

Manager of Lakkatura Tea Estate Daulat Islam had earlier told The Daily Star that some 5,000 workers and their family members had run away from his garden and took shelter on the premises of different school buildings.

Our Staff Correspondent in Sylhet reported that the number of people including workers of the two tea estates, who fled their homes and work places would be over 30,000. The places that were deserted were Chowkidighi, Lakkatura bazar, and airport areas.

All the fire tenders at the Sylhet Divisional headquarters rushed to the site and remained stand-by.

Occidental officials in charge of drilling at Jalalabad-1 will refuse to give any details of the incident and said, "We are observing the situation, let's us see (what happens)."

Only nine months ago, on June 15 last year, a huge explosion at Magurchhara under Kamalganj thana of Moulvibazar district wrought havoc in a well which was being drilled by the US company. The burnt-out site was sealed off on January 9 last and was abandoned subsequently.

The US company, which has been doing exploration work in the Surma basin, has sub-contracted German company Deutag for drilling. Deutag started drilling at Jalalabad-1 from the first week of this month, sources said. It was using T 78 rig.

An expert hinted that only negligence could cause such a blow-out in a well drilled before. "Jalalabad-1 is a discovered gas field and not an exploratory well. Scimitar had done drilling here previously. The geology, pressure, structure and everything else are well known here," the expert said.

"But a blow-out in this well could be dangerous and could far outweigh the impact of the Magurchhara incident," the expert said.

Under a controversial deal, Scimitar had drilled the well in late eighties. Another expert also said it was highly unusual for a 'workover well' to have such an accident.

Nigel Hopkinson, the president and CEO of Occidental Bangladesh Ltd, also confirmed late at night that the gas leakage was sealed and said people had been allowed to come back around midnight. "We had to activate the emergency alarm because it was so close to the city," Hopkinson said.

"At 7:15 there was an unexpected discharge of gas. It came out of the well where there were absolutely no reasons for such an incident," Hopkinson told The Daily Star.

Last giraffe
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port." Curator Mohammad Mahabubur Rahman said.

At around 1 pm, Zoo Officer Noorjahan Begum said that the animal was buried and its skin sent to the tannery. Asked to show where it was buried, she said that it was a 'secret zone'.

But at the back of the Zoo's animal clinic, workers were seen digging soil to bury the giraffe. Inside the clinic, others were busy deskinning the animal.

Three giraffes were given to the Dhaka Zoo as a gift by the Kenyan government in 1989. One was injured during the long journey and died shortly after arrival. The second one died in 1995 while the last one, having lived alone for three years, died yesterday. In the wilderness, a giraffe lives up to 30 years, Zoo officials said.

The Curator said that the animal would be buried in such a way that its skeleton could be retrieved for preservation. None of the country's zoos now has a giraffe.

Magurchhara

From Page 1
is no more available there, said sources adding, even the flow of the stream has now been threatened.

About 350 acres of forest land in the area have been affected due to the explosion, the officials said. Of the total affected forest area, 100 acres have been completely burnt. Bamboo groves and valuable trees like Segun, Mahogany, Ekashira have been destroyed, they said.

The World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) is likely to conduct a study in the area shortly, they added.

"We are carrying out a study on the environmental impact and rehabilitation in the area," commented Hopkinson.

Like the Haripur incident in the fifties, some land will become completely barren where no tree or plant will grow, environmental experts apprehend.

The Forestry Department in Sylhet formed a committee to assess the environmental damage two weeks after the blow-out.

Following formation of the committee, a date was fixed for a meeting but the meeting was cancelled subsequently. The committee is yet to hold a meeting since its inception almost nine months back. The Forest Officer who formed the committee was transferred to the Sunderbans within a month.

Magurchhara exploration site under Komalganj thana of Moulvibazar district was contracted out to the Occidental in January 1995.

The drilling well was sealed on January 9 and was abandoned subsequently.

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