

BUETTA seeks meeting with PM, terms Sadek's comment venomous

By Staff Correspondent

The BUET Teachers Association on the second day of their indefinite strike yesterday sought an appointment with the Prime Minister and decided not to meet the education minister because of his 'objectionable' comments at his Tuesday's press conference.

President of BUETTA Prof Abdur Razzak Akand said this while talking to The Daily Star.

The appointment with the PM, who is also the Chancellor of BUET, has been sought with the aim of ending the crisis at the university. Prof Akand noted.

BUETTA called the indefinite

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Dhaka-Calcutta bus service from May 26 likely

NEW DELHI, May 6: The first passenger bus service between India and Bangladesh may begin this month across the border in the Bongaon area of West Bengal. The Indian Express reported today, says BSS.

The West Bengal government, the report said, is keen to start the bus service between the two countries on May 26 coinciding with the birth anniversary of Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. But it is still awaiting the green signal from the Vajpayee government.

Quoting West Bengal Tourism Minister Subash Chakraborty

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Biman's bid to sell 2 ATPs flounders

By Shehab Ahmed

Bangladesh Biman's effort to sell the two Advanced Turbo-prop (ATP) aircrafts floundered, when two interested buyers offered low prices.

When the bidding ended on April 30, quotations were too low for the two aircrafts, bought in late 1990 for Tk 50.58 crore each.

Biman has since refloated the tenders on May 2, which closes on May 25, an airline official said yesterday.

The ATPs would be replaced by F-28 aircrafts. Biman operates its domestic fleet with two ATPs and two F-28s.

It had replaced an F-28 it lost in a crash landing in December with a leased aircraft. One ATP which skidded off the

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Gandhi Award for Hasina

The Oslo-based Mahatma M K Gandhi Foundation has decided to confer Gandhi Award 1998 on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her remarkable contribution towards promotion of communal understanding, religious harmony and democracy at grassroots level in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

This was communicated to Sheikh Hasina by the Chairman of the evaluation committee Prof Dr Amalendu Guha, who called on her at the Jatiya Sangsad office yesterday evening.

The foundation which came into being in 1989 launched the award in 1993.

Holiday

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed today on the occasion of 'Holy Ashura'. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper tomorrow.

TOMORROW

Read SWM's indepth cover story on Shazneen's gruesome murder. Since there is no newspaper on Friday SWM will be with Saturday's issue of The Daily Star.

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The Daily Star

Spl tribunals should be set up for loan recovery: President

Banking sector will be strangled unless influential defaulters taken to task

President Shahabuddin Ahmed has said the banking sector will be strangled unless the government enables the bank authorities to take action against the influential and manipulative defaulters and their collaborators, report agencies.

He suggested setting up Special Tribunals manned by finance and banking experts for quick dispensation of justice in bank loan matters.

The President was delivering the first Nurul Matin Memorial Lecture on Ethics in Banking, sponsored by Nurul Matin Memorial Fund and organised by Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM) at a city hotel yesterday.

The President has been set up by the BIBM with the help of the family members of former deputy governor of the Bangladesh Bank and former Managing Director of the Shilpa Bank late Nurul Matin to arrange an annual lecture.

To date, the amount of

money borrowed by the defaulters is about fourteen thousand crore taka and its non-payment has been disrupting the banking system," said President Shahabuddin.

For this, he pointed out, the genuine businessmen and industrialists are being deprived of bank loans in time.

Now, the persons borrowing 50 or even 500 crore taka not only avoid repayment, but walk tall, talk loud, influence public authorities and even threaten the bank if it presses for realisation of its dues."

As the court's procedure is cumbersome and time-consuming, the President suggested setting up special tribunals to deal with the defaulters.

Referring to the recently published defaulters' list, President Shahabuddin said it is undisputed that the big borrowers are the worst defaulters and "it is they who pose threat to the national economy."

About objections made by

authorities in the ministry and the central bank and of the bank officials as often reported in the media.

This scenario, he said, makes one wonder whether the neutrality protecting professional ethics was totally bypassed in Bangladesh in the last two decades.

President Shahabuddin urged the authorities to check "fraudulent re-scheduling" of bank loan installments in collaboration with dishonest bank officials to allow one to take part in parliamentary and other elections and suggested formulation of a law so that the provision of rescheduling of loans might not be applied in case of those contesting in parliamentary elections.

The President said with the development of technology and open market economy, the technique of fraudulent practices has also improved, with many "actors" making the

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Police chasing pickets at Naya Bazar in the city during hartal hours yesterday.

— Star photo

Gulshan Lake up for grabs-V 'Original owners' grabbing land thru' legal loopholes

By Morshed Ali Khan

A section of people have taken over 'huge' areas of the Gulshan Lake claiming its original ownership under cover of the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance 1982 which says that after acquisition, if the authorities fail to develop the land, it eventually goes back to its original owner.

In the process, these people, with the help of some unscrupulous Rajuk officials, have moved in to declare themselves as the original owners. They have occupied the lake area which Rajuk is yet to develop or demarcate as a lake.

Rajuk sources said, since acquisition of the area, there has never been a plan for a lake. But as the development continued, Rajuk felt the need for a lake and therefore 'roughly' earmarked an area to be kept for a lake. But, mysteriously, there has never been any initiative to demarcate the lake or to prepare a detailed area planning. Officials said this exposed the

lake to some 'land hungry' people who are 'still eating it up'.

The tip-off was given to this section of people from inside the Rajuk. Investigation reveals that at least two top former Rajuk officials were involved in the latest land grabbing tactic.

After acquisition of the area about 40 years ago, the owners or the affected people were duly compensated with either plots

or cash. One source, when asked to check the list of the affected people, said that the list was 'missing' from Rajuk archives.

Rajuk sources confirmed that one such 'occupier' a Road-23 in Gulshan Section-1 obtained a court order which directed Rajuk to hand over the plot to him. Mysteriously, Rajuk did not appeal against the court verdict.

They said that at present at least 30 such cases were pending with the court which involved more than 20 acres of the Gulshan Lake and its adjacent green areas.

An official source said every 'occupier' is now showing the precedence of the verdict in the Road-23 case and obtaining orders.

Though the Rajuk Chairman recently asked for reviewing several cases, officials fear that if there is no government initiative to enact a legislation, Gulshan Lake cannot be saved.

in one case, an individual

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Aid Group meet in Dhaka May 12

A mid-term advisory meeting of the representatives of Bangladesh Aid Group will be held in Dhaka on May 12, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Country Director of the World Bank Pierre Landell Mills will be the chairman of the meeting.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria will lead Bangladesh delegation to project the country's macro economic condition.

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