

Major vacancies hamper IU activities

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Vacancies for some important posts, including that of vice-chancellor (VC), at the Islamic University (IU) have slowed its administrative activities to a crawl.

The posts of treasurer, proctor, student advisor, transport administrator and press officer follow the trail of vacancies.

The immediate-past IU vice-chancellor, Professor Lutfur Rahman, resigned on November 3 under pressure of some teachers aligned with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Jamaat-e-Islami. He was appointed vice-chancellor on October 19, 2000 for a four-year term. Earlier, the BNP-backed Zia Parishad and the Jamaat-backed Green Forum had delivered an ultimatum to the IU VC to step down by October 30. The VC could not perform any duty other than routine work after take-over of power by the BNP-led four-party alliance.

The proctor resigned on October 21. Moreover, the post of treasurer has been lying vacant since September 4 and that of student advisor since August 15.

Insiders have attributed the stalemate to political crisis, which is also hampering the process of admission to the university in the first year honours.

When contacted, an influential teacher of the IU Zia Parishad said, "We met the minister and the state minister for education yesterday (Friday) to hold talks on the deadlock."

The approach of the education ministry to the issue is altogether laid-back, he claimed. "Only IU Chancellor Prime Minister Khaleda Zia can decide on the appointment of VC and treasurer."

According to the University Act, the chancellor can appoint any new vice-chancellor to any university at any time.

For the post of VC, the authorities concerned are looking for a competent and eligible person with loyalty to the nationalist party.

Meanwhile, some teachers of the IU and of other universities have started lobbying political high-ups for appointment to the important posts.

Nineteen candidates have been enlisted for the post of vice-chancellor. Among them are Prof Sahadat Hossain Mondol of the Department of Zoology, Prof Abdur Rahman Siddiqi of the Department of Sociology, Prof Faisal Islam Faruqi of the Department of Physics, Prof Kader Bhuiyan, Prof Mozammel Huq of the Department of Physics, from Rajshahi

University (RU); and Prof Mahfuz Ahmed, Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) and Prof Kamrul Ahsan Chowdhury of the Department of Sociology, Dhaka University (DU), and Prof Siddiq Ahmed Chowdhury of Department of Public Administration, Chittagong University.

Of them, either Prof Kamrul Ahsan Chowdhury, also president of the DU Zia Parishad, or Prof AKM Sahadat Hossain Mondol, also vice-president of the RU Zia Parishad, may be appointed vice-chancellor.

Files with several proposed names for the appointment of the VC have been dispatched to the prime minister's office for the fourth time, with the last one proposing Prof Kamrul Ahsan Chowdhury.

Earlier, Sahadat Hossain was rumoured to have been appointed vice-chancellor.

The Zia Parishad homed in on BNP-aligned, progressive persons like Sahadat Hossain, while the Jamaat-aligned teachers belonging to the IU Green Forum are interested in someone like Prof Kamrul Ahsan.

About five teachers including Prof Kamrul Huda and Prof Idris Ali are lobbying for the post of treasurer.



President Shahabuddin Ahmad placed a wreath at the Flame Eternal in the Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

5,000 BDR personnel to be recruited

BSS, Dhaka

Home Minister Air Vice Marshal (Rtd) Altaf Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said that 5,000 personnel would be recruited in the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) to make the paramilitary border security force a disciplined and strong one.

"The government will take every step to increase technical and strategic capabilities of the BDR in line with developments in today's modern world," he said this while addressing the BDR officials and soldiers at its Darbar Hall.

The Home Minister said a disciplined and strong BDR force can only be formed by ensuring advanced technology, proper training and sufficient equipment for them.

He said BDR could achieve people's confidence by carrying out their duties with honesty and sincerity although their main job is to guard the frontiers and curb smuggling.

Lauding the role of BDR soldiers in protecting national sovereignty, he said they fought against the enemies during the War of Liberation in 1971 joining hands with the members of armed forces, police, Ansars and common people.

He also mentioned the BDR operations for protecting the Naf frontiers, Padua border and Roumari border in the recent past.

State Minister for Home Affairs Muhammad Lutfuzzaman Babar, Director General of BDR Major General Muhammad Abu Ishaq Ibrahim PSC and other high officials of the Home Ministry and BDR attended the programme.

The Home Minister placed wreath at the Shaheed Minar at BDR headquarters at Peelkhana to pay his respect to the BDR soldiers martyred during the War of Liberation.

Earlier, he inaugurated the Rifles Square -- the four-storied shopping complex of BDR adjacent to its headquarters.

Council of JP (Anwar) on Jan 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party faction led by Anwar Hossain Manju, MP, formed a 61-member committee yesterday to make the central council of the party on January 1, 2002, a success.

JP presidium member Sayeed Tareq and joint secretary general Sadek Siddiqui have been made convener and member-secretary of the committee respectively, says a press release.

A meeting of this committee will be held on November 16 at the party's central office at Lalmitia.

JBIC assistance sought for development in power sector

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Power Iqbal Hasan Mahmud has sought financial assistance from Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for implementing various development projects, particularly in the power sector.

Iqbal made the request when JBIC Director General Junichi Hasegawa, now in Bangladesh on a three-day visit, called on him at his office yesterday.

The minister said the government was taking up an integrated development and reform project in the power sector in two years or three to ensure uninterrupted power supply across the country.

Junichi Hasegawa said JBIC

has finalised some recommendations based on its recent studies on the development and reforms of the country's power sector.

He assured the minister that a JBIC delegation would arrive here soon for more discussion on financial assistance for the development and reform of the power sector in Bangladesh.

During the meeting, they discussed the progress of different power sector projects being implemented with assistance from JBIC.

Dhaka urges total ban on N-tests

BSS, New York

Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, has made a strong plea in support of a total ban on nuclear tests.

Ambassador Chowdhury was speaking at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that opened here on Sunday.

He stated that Bangladesh, among the first signatories of the CTBT and among its early ratifiers, has invested heavily into the efforts to achieve its objectives. He also mentioned Bangladesh's contribution as a member of the Treaty's first Bureau. He called upon other states to ratify the treaty soon.

He said that the "vision of a nuclear-free world is practicable." He also assured the conference of Bangladesh's total support.



The Samajtantrik Chhatra Front formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday protesting "indulgence of Eden University College administration for terrorists" and harassment of students.

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