



PHOTO: STAR

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina exchanges views with the editors and journalists at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday.

'Some pvt varsities flout govt guidelines'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Prof M Asaduzzaman yesterday said some private universities were running their academic activities flouting the government formulated guidelines.

"The role of private universities in ensuring higher education in the country is the reality of the day but some private universities are violating Private University Act 1992 for commercial purposes," said the UGC chairman at a roundtable in the city.

The roundtable on the 'Role of Private Universities in Higher Education' was jointly organised by

Leading University and The Independent at the CIRDP auditorium.

"The UGC blacklisted some private universities for violating the rules but no action has been taken against them so far," said Prof Asaduzzaman.

He alleged that academic activities in public universities are being hampered as their teachers are giving more time to private universities.

"The UGC does not like to interfere in the activities of private universities but we have no other way but to interfere whenever we find any irregularities there," he added.

"It is premature to assess the success of private universities in the

country as they need more time to flourish," he noted.

Prof Muniruzzaman Mia, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University, said private universities were established due to severe session jam and campus unrest in public universities.

Sonali Bank Chairman Prof Mahubul Alam said only computer science and business-related subjects in private universities would hardly be able to create enlightened persons in the society.

Former vice-chancellor of National University and current Vice-Chancellor of Prime Asia University Prof Abdul Momin Chowdhury suggested a cooperative system for the exchange of knowledge among the public and private universities.

Former vice-chancellor of Open University and current Vice-Chancellor of South East University Dr Shamsheer Ali said the government has to be more cooperative towards private universities.

Editor of The Independent Mahubul Alam said there should be a ceiling of tuition fees in private universities.

AL conspires against democracy: Tariqul

DU CORRESPONDENT

Information Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday said the opposition Awami League (AL) has been conspiring against the democracy in the country.

He was speaking as chief guest at the reception of former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders of Dhaka University (DU) to mark its silver jubilee celebration.

The minister said the coalition government led by the BNP has come to power with the mandate from two-thirds people of the country. So, how the AL could ask the government to step down by April next, he wondered.

Tariqul asked the AL leaders to refrain from delivering such kind of speech in the interest of democracy and development.

He also called on the JCD leaders to become aware of the problems of the country and contribute their might to build a happy and prosperous nation.

Addressing as special guest, State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon said the BNP has become more united and stronger than before under the guidance of its Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman.

He said none can force an elected government to step down.



PHOTO: STAR

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon speaks as special guest at the reception of former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leaders of Dhaka University at the Teachers Students Centre auditorium yesterday.

Death anniversary of Aatur Rahman today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 24th death anniversary of M Aatur Rahman, an anti-British movement veteran and one of the organisers of the liberation war.

He also took part in the Tebhaga, language and anti-Ayub movements.

Born in 1925 at Charghat in Rajshahi, Aatur Rahman started his political career at only 15 with his participation in the anti-British movement.

He was the convener of the organising committee of Gonotantrik Jubo League in 1947, a platform for democratic movement in the then East Bengal. He was also elected an MNA in 1954 from jail.

One of the founders of Rajshahi Press Club, Aatur was the publisher and president of the panel of editors of a Rajshahi-based weekly 'Natun Kal'.

A lawyer, he was the senior vice-president of National Awami Party (Mozaffar).

Eleven noted personalities in a statement yesterday paid tribute to the late leader, terming him a political institution.

He made significant contributions to all progressive movements of Bangladesh, they said.

The signatories to the statement are Prof. Sardar Fazlul Karim, Prof. Mozaffar Ahmed, Prof. Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Mustafa Nurul Islam, Abul Kashem Chowdhury, Begum Aziza Idris, K G Mustafa, Xi Nurul Islam Chowdhury, Begum Amena Ahmed, Foyez Ahmed and Muzahidul Islam Selim.

Prof. Abdul Matin

The 18th death anniversary of Prof. Abdul Matin, one of the founders of the Central Women's College, was observed in the city on January 6, says a press release.

A discussion was held at the Central Women's University, with litterateur Shawkat Ali as chief guest.

Students of the university recited from Prof. Matin's book 'When the Grass was Green'.

After the discussion, students and faculty members took part in Doa-e-Magferat.

The Central Women's College also organised a similar programme on January 4 to mark the day.

Srikanta Raxmit murder case Charges to be framed tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal, Chittagong yesterday fixed January 13 for charge framing in the sensational Srikanta Raxmit murder case.

The date for charge-framing was fixed after the appellate division of the Supreme Court stayed the high court order to exempt Awami League lawmaker ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, one of the accused of the case, from the charge, sources said.

Srikanta Raxmit was abducted from his city residence at Hazari Lane under Kotwali Police Station on the night of April 19 last year. His beheaded body was recovered from Hathazari upazila the following day.

Srikanta's mother Shikha Raxmit filed a case with Kotwali police accusing eleven people in this connection.

Police submitted the charge sheet on August 12, accusing 17 people, including Fazle Karim Chowdhury.

Though not named in the FIR, Fazle Karim and five other people were included in the charge sheet.

Over 1,200 held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,277 more people, including four identified criminals, during their ongoing countrywide drive in last 24 hours ending at 6.00am yesterday.

They also recovered four firearms, four other weapons and three bullets. Three cases were also filed against six people under the Arms Act, said a PID handout.

US introduces finger scan

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It said many of the ongoing procedures are already familiar to international travellers. The US customs and border protection officer will take a digital photograph and use an inkless digital 'finger scanner' to capture electronically two 'finger scans' of arriving visitors holding visas.

Biographic and 'finger scan' data collected will be used to verify the identity and bona fides of the visitor. These procedures should reduce the risk of fraud, identity theft, or other bases of illegal entry, the press release added.

In addition to the procedures now in place, the US will inaugurate early this year a departure confirmation system that involves automated, self-service kiosks where visitors with visas will be asked to scan their travel documents and repeat the inkless digital 'finger scanning' process.

The press release went on to say the new entry and exit procedures will allow the travellers to confirm compliance with the US immigration law for future visits to the US.

The US-VISIT has been designed to be convenient to the travellers and easy to use. A recent pilot programme at Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport involving about 20,000 visitors to the United States has shown that the process takes only a few more seconds than the average inspection.

While the implementation of the US-VISIT has required some changes in the entry and exit procedures, many things have not changed. The United States of America is still a nation where diversity is celebrated and people from across the world are welcomed, the press release said.

The US, as is the case with most other countries, is working to maintain secure borders while safeguarding fundamental freedoms. By retrieving vital arrival and departure data from those with visas, the US-VISIT programme will enhance the security of American citizens and visitors to the US while expediting legitimate travel and trade.

Although separate from the US-VISIT, the National Security Entry

Exit Registration System (NSEERS) remains in effect. Individuals subject to the NSEERS will continue to be registered under the programme when they enter and will be required to report when they depart.

Failure to comply will result in a presumption of visa ineligibility or inadmissibility for re-entry.

There is, however, no longer any requirement for the NSEERS registrants in the US to reregister periodically or for persons already in the US to register for the NSEERS.

Compliance with the requirements of the US-VISIT will not satisfy the requirements of the NSEERS and persons subject to the NSEERS must go to the special checkout station dedicated for the NSEERS checkout.

Persons subject to the NSEERS checkout requirements are not required to undergo a separate checkout at the US-VISIT kiosks.

Details about the US-VISIT can be found on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website, www.dhs.gov/us-visit. Further information is also available at the Department of State website for visa information, www.unitedstatesvisas.gov and the website of the US Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh, www.usembassy-dhaka.org.

Obituary

Rowshan Ara Chowdhury, mother of Director General of BDR Major General Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, died of old-age ailments at the BDR Hospital in the city on Saturday night at 68, says a press release.

She is survived by her husband, two sons and four daughters.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Kusumpur village under Sirajdikhan thana of Munshiganj district.

Her qulkhani will be held at the official residence of BDR DG at Pilkhana after Asr prayers on Wednesday.



Mamun Rashid, Citigroup Country Officer for Citibank Bangladesh, hands over the formal letter of grant from Citigroup Foundation to Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk in the city yesterday.



Temperature may rise

UNB, Dhaka

Dry weather may continue over the country in the next 12 hours till 6.00pm today.

Light to moderate fog may occur in the morning and night temperature may rise slightly, Met office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 29.0 degree Celsius was recorded at Cox's Bazar and the lowest of 9.5 degree at Chuadanga.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:30pm today and rises at 6:44am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature In Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.2	13.0	82	74
Chittagong	28.4	13.7	84	67
Rajshahi	25.4	11.3	87	64
Khulna	25.5	11.7	89	--
Barisal	26.0	11.6	89	81



Executive members of America-Bangladesh Friendship Society welcome US Congressman and Co-Chairman of Congressional Caucus on Bangladesh Joseph Crowley on his arrival at Zia International Airport yesterday.

FNB election in March

Election to the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB) and its districts committees will be held in March, says a press release.

The decision was taken at the first extraordinary general meeting of the FNB at the conference hall of IDB Bhaban in the city on January 8.

Presided over by Chair of FNB Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, the meeting formed an election commission and an election appeal board.

Coordinator of Nijera Kori Khushi Kabir was made chief of the election commission. Abdul Mannan, executive director of CDS, and Shamsul Huda, secretary of ADSC, are the members of the commission.

The appeal board will be headed by Fazle Hasan Abed, founder and chairperson of BRAC. Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury, coordinator of Gonoshasthaya Kendra, and SM Al-Hussainy, chairman of Swanirvar Bangladesh, will act as

Citigroup grants \$ 3.5 lakh to Asian University for Women

Citigroup Foundation, the holding company of Citibank NA and the world's largest financial institution, made a grant of 350,000 US dollars to the Asian University of Women (AUW), says a press release.

Mamun Rashid, Citigroup country officer for Citibank Bangladesh, handed over the formal letter of grant to Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk in the city yesterday.

Rashed Maqsood, head of Global Transaction Services, and Mahubur Rahman, head of Financial Institutions, were also present.

The university will be constructed at Pahartali in Chittagong.

As a center of excellence, the university will provide unparalleled opportunities for women to become leaders in emerging fields including information technology, environmental engineering and sustainable development, management, education and public policy.

Dr Osman Farruk thanked the Citigroup Foundation for contributing towards this noble cause and help establishing the regional university dedicated to educating women.



Sub-editors Council executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The installation ceremony of the newly elected committee of Dhaka Sub-editors Council was held at its Segun Bagicha office yesterday, says a press release.

Kaikobad Milon (Ittefaq) and Shah Muhammad Mutasim Billah (Janakantha) have been elected president and general secretary of the Council recently.

Other office-bearers are Ashrafur Alam - vice president; Mukul Talukder - joint secretary; Sumon Islam - treasurer; Masum Billah - organising secretary; Tanjimul Nayan - office secretary; Idris Madrazi - publicity and publication secretary; Al Mamun - training and research secretary; and Khandokar Mostak Ahmed - sports and cultural secretary.

And the members are Zia Hassan, Rezaul Kabir, M Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan, Tarin Anwar, Muhammad Sanaullah, Abdullah Ferdous, Zakirul Islam and Zahidul Haq.

DUTA distributes blankets among destitutes

UNB, Dhaka

Members of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) distributed 250 blankets among the destitute in the capital on Saturday.

The teachers distributed blankets to the poor on the DU campus and at different points in the city from midnight to 3.00am.

DUTA President Prof. Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique and General Secretary Dr M Akhteruzzaman took part in the distribution.

Sergei Paradjanov Retrospective
Zahir Raihan Film Society, in association with Russian Cultural Centre, will screen two films to mark the 80th birth anniversary of Sergei Paradjanov, the Georgian filmmaker. These are 'The Legend of the Suram Fortress' (1984) and 'Ashik Kerib' (1988) by Sergei Paradjanov. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm and 6.30pm.

Film show
Academy Film Society will screen an American film titled 'Dead man walking'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Seminar
A seminar on 'Eye tracking for human robot symbiosis', organised by the University of Comilla, will be held. Venue: Dhaka campus of the university, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.00pm.

Conference
International Farakka Committee Inc, NY, USA organises a national conference on 'The impact of upstream water diversion from the international rivers, Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna'. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre, Sher-e-Banglanagar. Time: 11.00am.

BIDS seminar
A seminar on 'Employment growth, unemployment and labour market: Linkages with poverty alleviation', organised by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), will be held. Venue: BIDS conference room, Agargaon. Time: 10.00am.

Muktijoddha rally
A rally of Muktijoddhas (freedom fighters), organised by Jatiya Samajantrik Dal, will be held. Venue: Purana Paltan. Time: 10.00am.

Roundtable
A roundtable on the 'Role of political parties in resisting repression on

women', organised by Naripakkha, an organisation for women, will be held. Venue: Ward Commissioner Office, Mirpur-10. Time: 10.00am.

Course
The inaugural session of a two-week training workshop on 'Modern public relations and public relations techniques', organised by Bangladesh Institute of Communication Studies and Public Relations, will be held. Venue: Conference room of the institute, Elephant Road. Time: 5.00pm.

Discussion
Vivekananda Shiksha O Sangskriti Parishad will hold a discussion to mark the 141st birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda with Information Minister Tariqul Islam as chief guest. Venue: Shaheed Zia auditorium, National Museum. Time: 4.30pm.

The inaugural ceremony of a group art exhibition by reputed artists of the country will be held with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman as chief guest. 128 art works by 87 artists will be on display. Venue: Saju Art Gallery, Gulshan-2. Time: 4.30pm. The exhibition will remain open till February 12 from 10.00am to 8.30pm daily except on Friday.

Film show
Academy Film Society will screen an Italian film titled 'The tree of wooden clogs'. Venue: Society auditorium, 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Discussion
A discussion on 'Energy scenario of Bangladesh: Problems and critical issues', organised by Notundhara, a movement for change, will be held. Venue: Seminar room of the Central Public Library, Shahbagh. Time: 4.00pm.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon speaks as special guest at the reception of former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leaders of Dhaka University at the Teachers Students Centre auditorium yesterday.