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# Textbooks miss the session

Students of IX, X await English grammar, social science, history books

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The students of classes IX and X are unlikely to get their English grammar book this month as the National Curriculum and Textbook Board is yet to finalise the script.

Two more books for the classes -- on social science and history -- have also not seen the daylight yet, 17 days into the academic year 2005.

These three textbooks for classes IX and X are among the seven the government decided to outsource

this year from the private sector, apparently to upgrade the curricula and ease the pressure on the board.

Private sector publishers submitted at least 15 scripts for the English second paper textbook on December 30 and the board is expected to finalise the script by the end of this month, a printer involved in the process said.

Previously, the board would not publish any English second paper textbook and students would follow one of the many textbooks found in

the open market.

In case of the social science and history textbooks, it is alleged the textbook regulator held the books for several months in a bid to doctor certain historical accounts, particularly those related to the father of the nation and proclamation of independence.

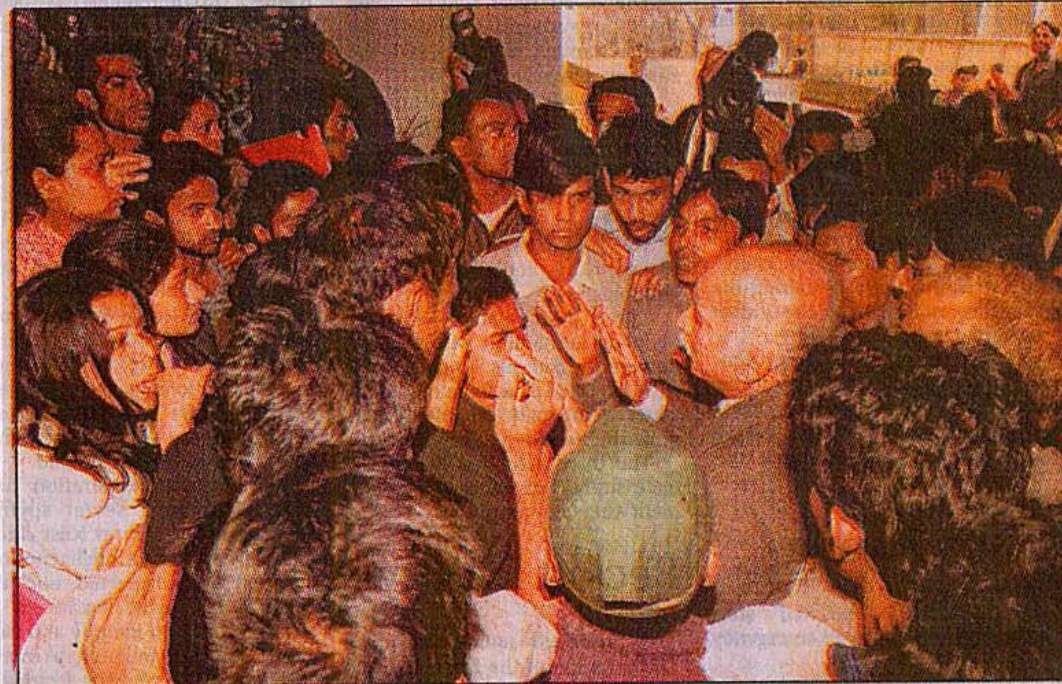
Failing to set a standard on the two sensitive issues, the board later asked the printers concerned to follow the contents of the board-

approved textbooks for the previous year, sources said.

Of the seven privatised textbooks, the board so far has approved six -- algebra, general science, social science, physics, history and business studies.

The chairperson of the board, Dilara Hafiz, could not be reached for her comments.

The board will delegate the task to print 71 textbooks to private sector in phases in 2006 and 2007.



Students of Dhaka University surround Vice-chancellor SMA Faiz at his office yesterday to protest against the 'assault' of a female student by three policemen on the campus Sunday.

## 3 cops closed for harassing female DU students

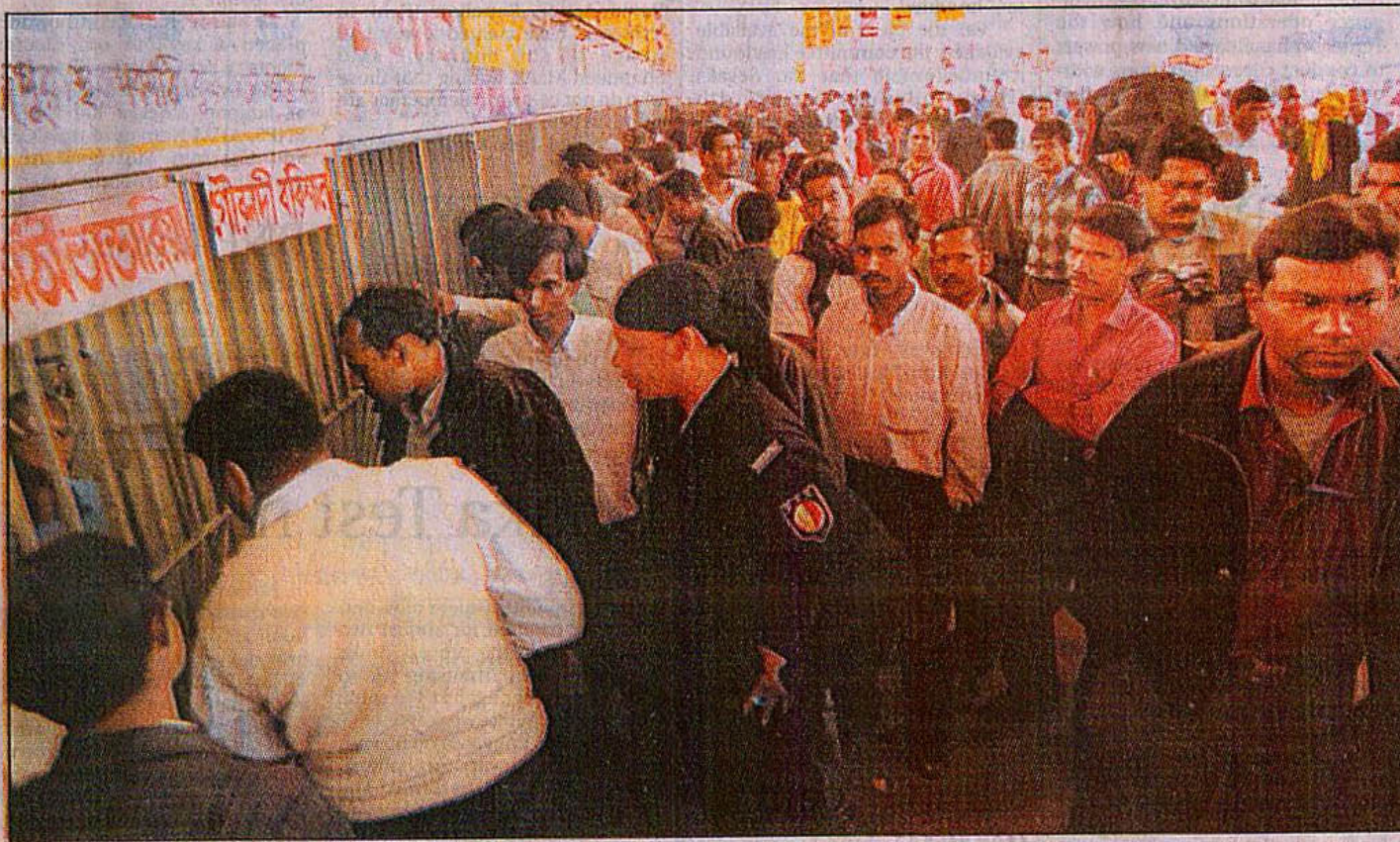
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police authorities yesterday closed three policemen for assaulting a female student on the Dhaka University campus.

Deputy Commissioner (South) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Khan Sayed Hossain in a meeting with vice chancellor, other university high officials and the students assured them of taking departmental action against the three policemen and regretted the incident.

Students of Music and Dramatics Department demonstrated in front of Aparajeyo Bangla demanding suspension of the three policemen, apology from them and withdrawal of police from the campus.

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A Rab member keeps an eye on counters at the Gabtoli Bus Terminal to ensure bus operators sell Eid tickets to homebound people at normal prices.

## WBMD reassures support

UNB, Dhaka

The World Bank (WB) yesterday reaffirmed its continued support to Bangladesh's efforts to build a brighter future as the donor agency noticed 'immense potential' of the country for attaining prosperity.

The assurance came when the visiting Managing Director of the World Bank, Shengman Zhang, called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office.

"Bangladesh has immense potential, and if it is properly utilised, prosperity of the country will reach new heights," Shengman said.

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## 4 die as bus skids off Dhaka-Aricha highway

UNB, Savar

Four people died and 12 were injured as a bus skidded off the Dhaka-Aricha highway and fell into a ditch at Bhakurta in the upazila on Sunday night.

Three of the dead were identified as bus driver Josim Sikder, 45, of Muradnagar in Comilla, Bijoy Sarker, 30, of Rajful Bazar and Raju, 28, of Ballapur in Savar. Identity of the other could not be known.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at 11:30 when the driver of the Dhamrai-bound bus from Dhaka lost control over the steering.

On receiving information, police rushed to the spot, retrieved the bodies and rescued the injured with the help of locals.

Of the injured, three were admitted to Dhaka Pangu Hospital, three to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital and the rest to local clinics.

## Removal of fish plates led to train accident

UNB, Chittagong

Unidentified miscreants removed fish plates and fish bolts of the rail tracks to engineer Sunday's train accident on the Laksham-Chandpur route, according to preliminary findings.

Bangladesh Railway (BR) said yesterday preliminary investigations revealed that the fish plates and fish bolts of the rails were not found near the spot.

"It is believed that miscreants merely stole the fish plates and fish bolts or removed those with the ill-motive of sabotage," said a BR release.

A four-member committee has been formed to investigate the cause of the train accident.

Divisional transport officer of Bangladesh Railway has been made

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## UNKNOWN KILLER DISEASE

# Samples sent to US for identification

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health directorate yesterday sent human tissue, blood and urine samples to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, US, to determine the cause of an 'unknown' disease that has broken out in three villages in Basail upazila of Tangail, claiming 11 lives since January 6.

The Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) in cooperation with the Centre for Health and Population Research (CHPR) and the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital collected the samples from the suspected carriers of the disease that has created panic in area.

Experts said people thought to be attacked with the disease have high fever, headache, respiratory distress, vomiting, convulsion and in some cases, unconsciousness.

A team of six experts on epidemiology -- three each from the IEDCR and CHPR -- is now conducting an investigation and collecting relevant information from people of the area.

"We are yet to confirm the nature of the illness. IEDCR lacks facilities to identify specific clinical features of the organism that caused the disease and we have only taken precautionary measures to prevent further spread of the illness," said Prof Mahmudur Rahman, director of IEDCR.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is providing technical

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## Zhao Ziyang passes away

AP, Beijing

Zhao Ziyang, who was ousted as China's Communist Party leader, after sympathising with the 1989 Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests and became a symbol of the era's shattered hopes, died yesterday after 15 years under house arrest. He was 85.

The cause of death wasn't immediately announced, but the official Xinhua News Agency said Zhao suffered from multiple respiratory and cardiovascular ailments and

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## Poor legal system reason for increasing crimes

Asma Jahangir at discussion meet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International human rights activist Asma Jahangir yesterday said poor criminal justice and legal system in the region including Bangladesh is the root cause of increasing crime and urged the governments to revamp the system to address the issue.

Asma Jahangir, the UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief, was addressing a discussion on 'Human Rights: Local and

Global Perspectives', organised by Manusher Jonno, a human rights and good governance initiative, as part of its a three-day conference on the issue.

"There is a complete lack of capacity in the existing system of criminal justice and questions have been raised about its effectiveness," Asma said.

"Under the existing system some people get impunity while some others are beyond the justice or they

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## 616 gas field fire victims get Tk 5,000 each

Tariqul demands more in compensation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six hundred and sixteen affected families of two villages adjacent to the Tengratila gas field in Sunamganj were given Tk 5,000 each in immediate compensation yesterday, which instantly drew fire from Minister for Environment and Forest Tariqul Islam.

Local lawmaker Kolim Uddin Milon handed over the money in presence of the deputy of Sunamganj and officials of

Canadian company NiKo, which is exploring gas at Tengratila.

The money was given as 'token compensation' for one month for the fire at the gas field, a NiKo official said.

In Dhaka, Tariqul Islam came down heavily on NiKo for giving only Tk 5,000 per family, and asked it to enhance the compensation and rehabilitate the people displaced due to the inferno at the gas field.

At a meeting with NiKo officials at

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## Reckitt factory damaged in fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A devastating fire broke out at the Reckitt Benckiser mosquito repellent manufacturing factory in the Nasirabad Industrial Area on Sunday morning, causing property damage worth approximately Tk 1

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## Iraq attacks kill 18

AGENCIES, Baghdad

Insurgents detonated a suicide car bomb at police headquarters in the Iraqi town of Baiji yesterday, killing at least 10 people, and shot dead eight Iraqi soldiers at a checkpoint in attacks ahead of Jan. 30 polls.

Witnesses said burned bodies were scattered in the compound in Baiji, an oil refining town in the Sunni heartland north of Baghdad. A police official said at least 20 people were wounded, mostly police.

Near Baquba, another guerrilla stronghold northeast of the capital, gunmen opened fire on a checkpoint and killed eight soldiers, a National Guard officer said.

Iraqi security forces have borne the brunt of insurgent attacks as the polls approach. Election officials have also been repeatedly targeted and threatened, and voting centers -- many in schools -- have been hit by insurgents.

Police in Basra said mortars were fired overnight at three schools in the city that will be used as voting centers. They said nobody was wounded.

Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, is in the mainly Shia south of the country where support for the

elections is strong.

Iraq's 60-percent Shia majority expect the polls to cement their dominance in Iraqi politics after years of oppression during the rule of Saddam Hussein.

But many Sunni Arabs, who make up around 20 percent of the Iraq's nearly 26 million people and from whom Saddam drew most of his ruling class, want the vote to be postponed.

Guerrilla violence and intimidation in Iraq's Sunni Arab heartland means that even many Sunnis who want to vote are too afraid to do so.

Several major Sunni Arab parties say they will boycott the polls after their calls for a delay were unheeded.

A series of attacks targeting Shias in Iraq has raised concern that Sunni insurgents want to take advantage of sectarian disagreements over the election to try to provoke more

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

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Prayer Timing		
January 18		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:40	5:44
Esha	7:00	7:30
Source: Islamic Foundation		



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## Postponement of the Seminar

The seminar of the **International Air Express Association of Bangladesh** scheduled for January 19, 2005 at the Ball Room, Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel is postponed due to unavoidable circumstances.

We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to our respected guests. The new date and time of the seminar, once finalized, will be communicated to all the invitees.