



PHOTO: STAR

Sammilita Ainjibi Samannay Parishad forms a human chain in front of the Supreme Court yesterday protesting the killing of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria and four others in a grenade attack in Habiganj on January 27.

# Finance ministry yet to disburse fund for ICT internship project

Mustak Hossain

The finance ministry has been sitting on the ICT internship programme for over six months now despite allocation of fund in the annual budget for the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, a thrust sector of the country.

The three-year internship programme undertaken by the science and ICT ministry is aimed at developing skilled ICT practitioners and professionals and facilitating the growth of Software & ITES (IT Enabled Services) industry.

The government has also allocated the fund for the project, but the finance ministry is yet to disburse it to run the programme.

Due to non-availability of Tk 2.5 crore, hundreds of computer science graduates are being deprived of firsthand work experience, a prerequisite for job at home and abroad.

Due to lack of skilled manpower in the sector, many leading software firms have been hiring workers from neighbouring India.

Currently, 4,000 ICT students are graduating from eight government and 52 private universities a

year and many of them are facing difficulties in entering professional life because of lack of experience.

Under the internship programme, different IT organisations, specially software companies, will provide internship opportunities to fresh graduates and post-graduates for a period of six months.

The objectives of this programme are to expose the students to the practical field when they finish their formal education, enhance the prospects of employment and to boost the export of software by developing skilled manpower.

The government has announced the ICT industry as a thrust sector and has a vision to earn US \$ 2 billion from this sector by 2006.

The Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) was nominated as co-ordinating body for the government part while Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Service (BASIS) was given the responsibility for co-ordination among its member organisations to hire interns as the demand for skilled professionals has increased in the country as well as across the world.

"The Ministry of Science and ICT have reminded the finance ministry of disbursement of the fund but we are yet to receive any response," said Dr AM Choudhury, executive director of BCC.

Each intern will get Tk 6,000 in remuneration per month. The government will pay 60 percent of the amount i.e. Tk 4,000 while the rest 40 percent will be paid by the software firm.

"If the funds were disbursed in time, at least 500 interns could gain real experience in IT field in the last six months," said Jahidul Hasan Mitul, an official of BASIS.

"Only academic degree is not enough to get a job nowadays," said Mitul, also the executive director of

Business Automation Limited, a software firm.

He said many IT firms were interested in taking interns in their firms but they finally hired manpower from India as the project is being delayed.

Students under 27 years who have graduate/post-graduate degree in computer science or computer science and engineering having and completed 16 years of formal education can take part in the programme.

**DHAKA TODAY**

National Press Club. Time: 10.30am.

**Roundtable**  
A roundtable on 'Mutual benefits of Indo-Bangla power interconnections' will be held with eminent Indian energy expert Dr K K Govil as guest speaker. Venue: Lake Castle Hotel, Gulshan-2. Time: 9.30am.

**Poetry evening**  
Muldhara, a forum of writers, journalists and artists, organises an evening of poetry. Venue: House-15, Road-7, Dhanmondi. Time: 6.00pm.

**Film show**  
The High Commission of India will screen a film titled 'Pinjar'. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, House-25, Road-96, Gulshan-2.

**Publication ceremony**  
The publication ceremony of 'Minar Samagra' will be held with Information Minister M Shamsul Islam as chief guest. Venue: VIP Lounge of the

# HAZARDOUS CLINICAL WASTE Pvt organisation to come to the rescue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the cooperation of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), private organisation PRISM Bangladesh is going to launch a hazardous clinical waste management project on a pilot basis in two wards in the capital by March.

The two wards are ward no-49 in Dhanmondi where some 40 private clinics and pathological laboratories are located and ward no-57, an area including Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) and its adjacent areas.

This was said at a clinical waste management training programme jointly organised by DCC and PRISM Bangladesh, a project in agriculture, rural industry, science and medicine at the DCC auditorium yesterday.

Some 160 participants from 25 private clinics and diagnostic centres of the city took part in the training.

DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, attending the post-training discussions as chief guest said through coordination with the owners of private clinics and pathology centres, DCC will be able to manage the hazardous medical wastes scientifically.

"We should have thought about the clinical waste management long before. However, we have started and hopefully, now we are on the right track," he said.

Speaking as special guest Dr Maniruzzaman Bhuiyan, president, Bangladesh Private Clinic and Diagnostic Centre Owners' Association, which represents more than 700 members, said they will extend their all-out cooperation in management of hazardous clinical wastes.

DCC has allocated to PRISM Bangladesh one acre of land for clinical waste dumping at its Matuail dumping site and is pre-

paring the land for the purpose, PRISM Bangladesh Executive Director Khondaker Anisur Rahman said.

"We expect to start our activities by March after finishing our primary works including a series of training to the hospital staff," he added.

PRISM will collect the waste from the clinics and dump it at the Matuail site, using separate vehicles.

Anisur Rahman pointed out some limitations to run the project, such as, lack of proper rules for waste management and limitations in case of state-run hospitals' participation in the project.

Some 200 tons of clinical wastes is generated daily in city's hospitals, clinics, pathologies and diagnostic centres which is very little compared to 3500 to 4000 tons of daily produced solid wastes in the capital, he said.

Presided over by DCC Chief Executive Officer Dr M A Momen, the discussion was attended, among others, by Chief Conservancy Officer Sohel Farouque, Chief Health Officer Azizul Haque and representatives from different organisations including Japan International Cooperation Agency.

## Indian HC visa section to remain open

The visa and consular wings of the High Commission of India will remain open from February 3 to 7, says a high commission press release.

## Three arrested over killing of rickshawpuller

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives of Cobra team of police arrested three people yesterday on charge of bombing a rickshawpuller to death during Saturday's hartal hours at Mirpur in the city.

They also seized a petrol bomb from the house of Faruque, an arrestee, at about 10:00am acting on his statement, police said. The two others are Mohammad Habib and Moktar Hossain.

Police said the three had admitted their involvement in the incident. Rickshawpuller Mafizul Islam was killed in the bomb attack when he was waiting for passengers at Darus Salam Road at about 10:00pm on Saturday.

# Bus set on fire: Five injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Passenger buses came under attack by unknown hoodlums in different areas of the city last night, ahead of today's hartal.

One person suffered burns and at least four others were injured as a gang of hoodlums set fire to Tongibound minibus at Bijoynagar at around 8.00pm.

Most of them were hurt while hurriedly getting off the blazing vehicle, sources said.

The bus coming from Jatrabari was damaged partially before the firefighters managed to extinguish the blaze.

"When the bus reached in front of the Royal Tower, I saw a few people setting fire to it," said Al-Amin, a passenger who suffered burns.

Another passenger Mahmuda Begum, 25, broke her leg when she jumped out of window of the bus.

Amin, 27, is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) while

Mahmuda was admitted to National Institute of Traumatology & Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor), sources said. Other injured received first aid.

Buses also came under attack in Jatrabari, Nilkhet, Gulistan, Purana Paltan and Agargaon areas.

Two people were injured when the hoodlums hurled brickbats at the speeding vehicles.

## Pubali Bank donation for tsunami-hit children

UNB, Dhaka

Pubali Bank Ltd has donated US \$ 25,000 (equivalent to Tk 15 lakh) to Unicef to provide support to tsunami-hit children in Asia.

Chairman of the bank EA Chaudhury handed over a cheque to Unicef Representative Morten Giersing at a simple ceremony at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Giersing thanked the bank management for their generous support and assured that the assistance would be used for education and other immediate needs of children in tsunami-affected countries.

Managing Director of the bank Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled and Deputy Managing Directors Helal Ahmed Chowdhury and Shahadat Chowdhury were also present.

Pubali Bank made this contributions following Unicef's global appeal for US\$ 144.5 million to support urgent humanitarian aid for an estimated 1.5 million affected children in South Asia.



Pubali Bank Chairman EA Chaudhury hands over a cheque for Tk 15 lakh to Unicef Representative Morten Giersing at the National Press Club yesterday while Pubali Bank Managing Director Khandker Ibrahim Khaled looks on.



release.

A specialist in agro-climatology, resource management, environment, environmental perception and management, natural hazards and geography of education, Dr Islam did his M.Sc. in geography from the University of Dhaka in 1956 securing first position in the first class.

He did his Ph.D. in 1964 from Clark University, Worcester, USA.

Professor Dr M Aminul Islam, former vice-chancellor of Bangladesh Open University, has taken over as vice-chancellor of Prime University, says a press