



President Iajuddin Ahmed gives away a certificate to a student at the 5th convocation of American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) in the city yesterday.

Redesign edn system

President tells AIUB convocation

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday suggested redesigning the education system to establish linkages between business and education at all levels, saying that this is how a nation rises and maintains its superiority.

The competitive nature of the global economy and the digital divide which "pose a challenge for us" can be faced only by harnessing skilled human resources, he said.

"University education, which falls at the tertiary level, is important for every country as this sector is directly related to creation of knowledge, wealth and value of a nation," the president said at the 5th convocation of American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Convention Centre.

He said the university education in Bangladesh is still at a nascent form as a very few fortunate ones can get admission and still fewer can finish their degrees. "This education has become costly and is offered to only a few fortunate ones."

The president emphasised that the private universities as well as the government institutions need to redirect their efforts and means toward restoring democracy of options and opportunities into the vision for the future of higher education system.

Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk, Vice-Chancellor of the AIUB Dr Carmen Z Lamagna, President of Rangsit University of Thailand Arthit Ourairat also spoke at the convocation.

5th national debate festival begins

DU CORRESPONDENT

The 5th National Debate Festival began in the city yesterday with a call to build a better Bangladesh.

Poet Shamsur Rahman inaugurated the two-day event at the auditorium of the National Museum, Organised by the Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF).

The poet urged the young generation to pick and choose only good things from the society in order to build a prosperous and livable country.

BDF President Bulbul Hasan delivered the welcome address at the festival, sponsored by the Prothom Alo, a leading Bangla daily.

Anisul Haque, deputy editor of the daily, said not everything has gone to the hands of the evil forces.

"As long as one freedom fighter is alive, one flower blooms and the sun rises, we would not let the country go to the devil's hand," he said.

"We want such a Bangladesh where bomb blasts will not take place as we sing or speak. And we want a country where people of different faiths will live together in harmony," he added.

The festival began with a parliamentary debate with the motion 'The time to change the day is yet to come'. Debashis Sarker and Sanjib Saha spoke for the motion while their opponents were Prasun Biswas and Biplob Kumar Datta.

Justice KM Sobhan presided over another debate session where teachers and students debated the motion 'Weapon of logic is stronger than the logic of weapon'. MM Akash and Dr Ainun Nishat spoke for the motion while Khademul Karim Iqbal and Khaleda Akther Rozi against it.

Former debaters took part in another debate with the motion 'Today Ekush is a failed festival' where Shamim Alamin, Hasan Mahmud, Dr Shamsul Kabir Banu and Al Mamun spoke for the motion. Their rivals were Harunur Rashid Swapan, Masud Chowdhury, Rubana Haque and Abdur Noor Tushar.

Three poets, Anisul Haque,



Poet Shamsur Rahman speaks at the inaugural session of the debate festival.

Mahamuduzzaman Babu and Tokon Thakur, will face media personalities Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, Sumona Sharmin and GE Mamun at an interesting debate at 3:00pm today, with the motion 'Poets are never defeated'.

Dhaka elected to UN committee on child rights

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh candidate Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui has been elected to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Dr Siddiqui, principal secretary to the prime minister, secured 133 votes in the election held at the UN Headquarters on Wednesday. Of the countries elected to the committee, Bangladesh ranked third, with Qatar securing 136 votes and Norway 134 votes.

The others elected candidates are from Switzerland, South Korea, Uganda, Kenya, Canada, Serbia and Montenegro.

The winners will serve a four-year term on the committee.



Former advisor to a caretaker government Shahjahan Khan gives away prizes among the winners of the 'Book Reading Competition' organised by Bishwa Sahitya Kendra in the city yesterday. On his right are Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed and journalist Anisul Haque.

5,000 students get Bishwa Sahitya Kendro prizes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day prize giving ceremony, organised by the Bishwa Sahitya Kendro (World Literature Centre) for its book reading programme 2004, concluded in the city yesterday with the resolve to build a good nation through reading books.

Around 5,000 students of 100 city schools received the prizes at the function at Bakultala of the Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University.

Some 1,25,000 students take part in the book reading programme every year, which was launched for school and college students across the country 21 years ago.

In his welcome address, Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, founder of the centre, said, "We want all of you to become enlightened persons, but that is not enough. You will have to protest injustice and oppression with your brave hearts."

"A man is not bad by birth, but becomes bad because of his environment. So, it is your duty to change the environment with the light of knowledge," he added.

"There is no alternative to a good book. It is the life-long friend of a person. The book is the only means to develop a country," said ASM Shahjahan, a former advisor to the caretaker government.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star, said, "I do not know anything better than books that can help bloom the creativity of a person."

Anisul Huq, deputy editor of the Prothom Alo, hoped that Bangladesh will be a proud nation when it is led by our enlightened students in the next 20 years.

Novelist Imdadul Haque Milon called on the students to inspire their fellow brothers and sisters to read books alongside their own reading.

Obituary



Dr M Shamsul Islam, a former consultant surgeon of Princess Royal Hospital of the UK and the president of South England Surgical Association, passed away on Friday due to a brain stroke. He was 69, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son and three daughters. He will be buried at his family graveyard in Tangail on Tuesday.

Dr Islam hailed from Charbilash of Tangail district. He was a student of the first batch of Dhaka Medical College. He did his FRCS in Edinburgh.

He also served as a consultant physician to the king of Saudi Arabia.

Death anniversary



Today is the first death anniversary of Alhaj Sultan Uddin Ahmed, former deputy director of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, says a press release.

A doa mahfil will be held at his village home at Benpur in Gazipur and food will be distributed among the students of an orphanage in Dhaka.

Relatives, friends and colleagues have been requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Marium Shameem



The first death anniversary of Marium Shameem, former country manager (Nepal) of Bangladesh Biman, will be observed today, says a press release.

She was a reciter and cultural activist.