

Politicisation destroys education sector

Speakers tell AL seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Politicisation, irregularities and corruption in appointing teachers in different educational institutions have destroyed the country's education sector, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They said the BNP-Jamaat-led alliance government has destroyed the entire education system through appointing political loyalists, less qualified and corrupt persons as teachers, officials and employees from primary to higher level of education.

The seminar titled 'Crumbling condition in education sector during BNP-Jamaat alliance government' was organised by the main opposition Awami League (AL) at the Jatiya Press Club in the city as part of its series of seminars on the failure of coalition government in different sectors.

Discussants at the seminar criticised the government's move to introduce unified system of education at the secondary level and said it would retard the progress of students.

The AL leaders said if voted to power, they would cancel the 'political appointment' in different educational institutions and reward the meritorious who were deprived by the present government.

Commissions would also be formed to punish the corrupt teachers, officers and employees in public universities, they pledged.

Former education minister AHSK Sadeq presided over the seminar while former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AK Azad Chowdhury



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil speaks at a seminar titled 'Crumbling condition in education sector during BNP-Jamaat alliance government' at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

presented a keynote paper.

Prof Azad said the alliance government ousted VCs, Pro-VCs, and treasurers from 11 public universities and relieved more than 2000 teachers and officials immediately after assuming the office.

They have appointed a total of 735 teachers and 3545 employees politically in seven public universities in last four years, he added.

The former VC pointed out different problems prevailing in education sector under the alliance government including politicisation, killing of and threats to progressive teachers, attack on students, session jam, distortion of history, question leakage, corruption in admission, irregularities in publishing examination result and reduction

of teachers' facilities.

The keynote paper also put forward 13 recommendations to get rid of the situation. These include keeping educational institutions out of politics, taking necessary steps to get rid of session jam, resisting fundamentalism in education sector and dissemination of true history of the country.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil urged people to be united for a free, fair and neutral election to save the country from the grip of anti-liberation forces.

He said the standard of education has reached to its lowest ebb during the present regime.

Al presidium member Tofail Ahmed said the coalition government has been taking revenge of the defeat

in 1971 by taking the country to a dilapidated condition.

He said Public Service Commission, Election Commission and the universities have been destroyed by the coalition government.

Another presidium member Suranjit Sengupta said they would cancel all the private universities functioning commercially and oust the disqualified, corrupt and politically appointed teachers and officials from all public universities, colleges and schools if they can come to power again.

Former state minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said they would reapportion the meritorious teachers and officials who were ousted by the present government and punish those responsible for the distortion of history if they voted to power.

Dhaka University Teachers' Association President Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said the total education system has been collapsed due to political appointment, corruption and irregularities at all levels of education sector.

President of Bangladesh Economics Association Dr Kholiquzzaman, Prof Habibur Rahman of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Dr Anupom Sen of Chittagong University, Chief Co-ordinator of Jatiya Shikkhak Karmochari Front Principal Farook Ahmed and Convenor of Bangladesh Shikkhak Karmochari Front Principal MA Awal Siddiqui also spoke at the seminar.

Int'l confce on women and development begins in Bangkok

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international conference on women and development kicked off in Bangkok yesterday with more than 1600 participants, mostly women, from all over the world.

The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), an international organisation, has organised the four-day conference, according to information received from Bangkok.

The AWID has nearly 6,000 individual members and over 250 institutional members in over 100 countries, particularly in the global South, Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The conference titled 'How does change happen?' brought together feminists, development practitioners, human rights activists to debate on how institutional policy needs to change in order to end gender discrimination and also to look at ways feminists are addressing priorities and practices.

The idea is to analyse how the world has changed and how women have been a part of that change.

The conference is scheduled to conclude on October 30. A plenary session will be held each day, followed by workshops on issues ranging from domestic violence to unfair trade practices and globalisation.

About 35 men and women from different non-governmental organisations in Bangladesh are taking part in the conference.

Road User Charges to be introduced

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is going to introduce Road User Charges (RUC) for maintenance of roads and highways as it lacks adequate funds for this purpose, said the speakers at a workshop yesterday.

The workshop titled 'Socio-Economic impacts of Road User Charges' was organised by Roads and Highways Department (RHD) and Ministry of Communications at Brac Centre Inn in the city.

RHD Chief Engineer A K M Faizur Rahman said a levy of just Tk one on fuel would raise around Tk 250 crore which could be used for road maintenance.

"We want to ensure that the money is used efficiently for the betterment of the roads," he added.

A study conducted in different areas of Dhaka, Noakhali and Mymensingh revealed that 75 percent of rural, 60 percent of urban and 88 percent of Dhaka City roads are in good and fair condition. A total of 70 percent people expressed their willingness to pay Tk one as fuel levy and Tk 0.25 as bus fair increase.

The study conducted on three hundred people also revealed that people are concerned over the usage of their extra payment, as there is much corruption in this sector.

The study report presented by Social and Poverty Expert Priyanthi Fernando also revealed the rationales of introducing Road User Charges that included a well connected road network, contribution to poverty reduction, achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sustainable mechanism for road maintenance.

Chaired by Chairperson of Road Fund Advisory Committee Selima Ahmed, the workshop was also addressed by Prof Hafiza Khatun of Dhaka University, Executive Director of Resource Integration Centre Abool Haseeb Khan, Additional Chief Engineer of RHD Abdul Matin and Marcos Gomes of Bangladesh Truck Owners Association.



Chehlum

Chehlum of Prof Bashira Mannan, former director of Social Welfare Institute of Dhaka University, and her son-in-law Dr Md Khalilur Rahman will be held at 3/1 Lake Circus, Kalabagan after Juma prayers today, says a press release.

Both of them passed away due to cardiac arrest in a span of a week last month.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the chehlum and pray for salvation of the departed souls.

BIPLOB MURDER

Six get death in Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A court here yesterday sentenced six youths to death in sensational Biplob Murder case.

Judge Md Motaah Hossain of the Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, Manikganj handed down the sentence.

The convicts are Shaheen, 20, son of Tazumuddin of Diara Bhoanipur village, Al-Amin, 21, son of Zamir Uddin and Masud 21, son of Chan Mia of Garakul village, Swpan, 22, son of Fazlu of Kamar Dia village, Lebu Mia, 24, son of Late Nurul Islam of Angutia village in Manikganj Sadar upazila and Apel, 21, son of Lutfor Rahman of Partilli village in Satturia upazila.

Of them, Al-Amin is tried in absentia and his punishment will be effective from the day of his arrest or surrender, the judge said.

The judge said the prosecution had no witness but was able to prove

charges on the basis of circumstantial evidences and confessional statements of the five accused.

The court recorded statements of 22 prosecution witnesses.

According to the prosecution, the accused took Biplob, son of Kuzrat Ali, to a paddy field near the Dhalaswari Bridge from his house at Garakul village under Manikganj Sadar Police Station on June 3, 2003 and chopped him to death.

Biplob was killed as he asked the youths to give him back Tk 1,00,000, which they took from him promising to send him abroad for job.

Victim's brother Channu Mia filed a case with Manikganj Sadar Police the next day.

Assistant Public Prosecutor Md Golam Mostofa appeared for the state while advocates AKM Kayser and Devendra Nath Poddar defended the accused.

‘Cancel decision to introduce unified edn system’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Shikkha Andolon Mancha yesterday at a press conference in the city demanded of the government to cancel the decision of introducing so-called unified education system and initiate a dialogue involving the educationists to reach a consensus.

They said there should be a national debate on the issue and a concrete decision be taken based on the opinions of the majority of the citizens.

Prof Ajoy Roy, president of the Association, said the government's initiative to introduce an integrated curriculum in the secondary level keeping the discriminations in regard to socio-economic and gender issues cannot be recognised as unified education system. "But the government is propagating it unified", he added

He also said the objective of introducing unified science education is not clear as most of the schools in the villages do not have adequate science teachers and laboratories.

While reading out the keynote paper, Prof Roy said in the proposed system the higher maths has been

excluded from the curriculum and the lessons of natural and social sciences have been weakened making the religion and business studies compulsory in the name of unified education.

Though the objective of the proposed system is to build the students complete citizens but it ignores the aesthetic subjects as it keeps the music and arts an optional, he observed.

Prof Akmal Hossain, vice president of the Association, said we want to create a mass awareness about the issue but if people accept the government's proposal we will go with them.

In their next programme, they will hold a discussion with the teachers and educationists on the issue on November 11.

Vice president of the Association Prof HKM Arefin, Joint Secretary Saifur Rahman Tapan and General Secretary Ashraf Uddin Akash were also present at the press conference.

The main objective of the Shikkha Andolon Mancho, an association for establishing universal education, is to establish a universal, equal, scientific and secular education system in the country.

Gulshan SI, 7 others sued for demanding toll

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A man filed an extortion case against a Sub-Inspector (SI) of Gulshan Police Station and seven others with a Dhaka court yesterday.

The accused are SI Golam Rahman, six unknown constables of the same police and their accomplice Abul Hossain Mollah alias Kalu.

Mohammad Tamizuddin Master, secretary of Mahakhali Sattala Basti (Slum) Development and Bazar Executive Committee, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

In his complaint, Tamiz said SI Golam Rahman along with Kalu went to the shops of the Sattala Slum area and demanded Tk 20,000 from the shopkeepers on July 7 this year. The SI and Kalu beat them when they refused to give tolls. Moreover, the SI and Kalu took some of them to Gulshan Police Station and released them after taking a huge amount of money, the complainant said.

At about 9:00pm on October 23, the SI, Kalu and five to six unknown constables went to the Sattala Slum and told the slum dwellers to give Tk 50,000 as tolls on account of the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr by that night. If they refused to oblige, they would be implicated in murder cases.

The SI and some of his constables went to his (complainant) residence at about 1:00am on the same night and demanded Tk 50,000 as tolls. The accused snatched away Tk 5,000 from his (complainant) pocket, kept for his daughter's college fee, Tamiz added.

After hearing, Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Mizanur Rahman directed the Additional Inspector General (AIG) of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to take necessary steps against the accused on an investigation into the matter.

Advocate Atiur Rahman moved the case on behalf of the complainant.

DU vacation extended

Dhaka University authorities have extended vacation for six days from November 8 to 14 and postponed all the scheduled examinations during this period, says a press release.

The classes will resume on November 15.

The fresh dates for the postponed examinations will be announced later.

Biharis protest Pak envoy's comment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stranded Pakistanis Geneva Repatriation Committee (SPGRC), Bangladesh yesterday protested a comment of Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Alamgir Babar Khan, who recently in a TV talk show termed stranded Pakistanis as 'Bangladeshi Biharis'.

M Shoukat Ali, general secretary of the SPGRC, in a statement said the Pakistan envoy's comment is 'highly sarcastic, unfounded, illegal and ill motivated, and deep rooted conspiracy to damage the whole cause of stranded Pakistanis by branding them as Biharis'.

He said it has hurt the feelings and sentiments of common stranded Pakistanis who are languishing in squalid camps of Bangladesh and struggling peacefully to reach their homeland for the last 34 years.

"No doubt Pakistan has miserably failed to implement both Delhi Agreement of 1974 and Rabita Agreement of 1988 and never allowed Rabita Trust to become functional," he said in the statement.

The statement also said Pakistan has failed to keep her promises and assurances given during the last several decades and made stranded Pakistanis dupe of tomorrow.

"The assurance given by Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf on July 30, 2002 during his visit to Bangladesh was also not fulfilled," Ali said.

On October 25, Pakistan High Commissioner Alamgir Babar in a talk show aired in a private television channel denied Pakistan nationality of the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh and called them "Bangladeshi Biharis".

Make Nov 15 grand rally a success: Bipu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Keraniganj

Nasrul Hamid Bipu, assistant secretary of central sub committee of Awami League (AL) and convenor of Keraniganj upazila committee, called upon the people of Keraniganj to make November 15 grand rally a success.

He was speaking at a discussion and Iftar party as chief guest organised by the local Awami League at a local Community Centre yesterday.

Dhaka District AL President Benjir Ahmed and General Secretary Mahbubur Rahman were special guests.

Hazi Abu Siddique, Dhaka district AL organising secretary, demanded withdrawal of the false cases filed against the Keraniganj Awami League leaders and workers.

AL leaders Yusuf Ali Chowdhury Selim, Abdul Jabbar, Shahajahan, Hazi Selim Ahmed, Hazi Mahbubur Rahman, Hazi Nizam Uddin, Hazi Bulbul Hossain, Sechchasebok League leaders Ansar Ali and Mahmud Alamand, Chhatra League leaders Dr Habibur Rahman Habib and Syed also spoke at the Iftar party.

Trader beaten to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A trader was beaten to death allegedly by his partners at Sutrapur in the capital on Wednesday night.

Syed Mohammad Ali Noke Tanvir, 35, a resident of Ring Road in Shaymoli, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) on Wednesday night after three youths admitted him there at 9:30pm.

One of his friends and business partners made a phone call to him at his house at 11:00am on Wednesday and asked him to go to one of his friend Mahmud's house at Swamibagh in Sutrapur to settle some business matters, family sources said.

"As he did not return for some hours, we made a phone call to enquire about him," said the family

source, "His friend asked us to go to Dhaka Medical Hospital as he has been admitted there."

The family then rushed to the hospital and found him dead at 10:30pm.

The morgue sources said the body had marks of bruises in the hands, legs, head and chest.

Tanvir's father Syed Mostafa Kamal filed a case with Sutrapur Police Station against 14 of his friends and business partners.

Police raided Mahmud's house but could not arrest anyone.

The family also said that Tanvir had business feud with his partners for more than a month and they had filed a general diary with Mohammadpur Police Station in this regard.



No change in temperature likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Barisal, Chittagong and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakund and lowest 20.5 degree Celsius at Dinajpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:22pm today and rises at 6:03am tomorrow.

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	31.7	24.8	63	70
Chittagong	32.8	24.0	80	70
Rajshahi	30.4	21.3	78	79
Khulna	31.0	24.4	81	77
Barisal	32.7	23.0	80	90
Sylhet	31.7	23.2	74	83
Cox's Bazar	32.2	25.0	83	83



PHOTO: STAR

Minister for Science and ICT Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan hands over the Best Photography Award for covering the BCS Computer Show 2005 to Syed Zakir Hossain, photojournalist of the Daily Star at a function in the city yesterday. On his left are BCS chairman SM Iqbal and General Secretary Ali Ashfaq.