



Workers dig a road at Sukrabad in the city yesterday for the laying of gas pipeline, causing suffering to passers-by as well as passengers. PHOTO: STAR

Uni-track education system to encourage militancy

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The uni-track education system, proposed to be introduced at the secondary level in the coming year, will encourage militancy by giving more stress on religious studies, said the speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They said the new curriculum of the unified system would further downgrade the quality of education as less stress has been given on science subjects.

The discussion was organised by Samajik Protirodh Committee (Committee for Social Resistance) at Sufia Kamal Bhaban auditorium in the city.

The speakers urged all people concerned to unite against the proposed system for the greater interest of the nation as well as maintaining standard of education.

"Around Tk 500 crore has been wasted in the name of formulating the uni-track system, when there are ample talents in the country to design a suitable education system free of charge," said Convenor of the National Committee to Resist Proposed Unified Education Prof Mohammad Zafar Iqbal.

"A teacher's authority to give 30 percent marks in examination will

open a floodgate for commercialisation of education," he observed.

He also stressed the need for expediting the ongoing movement to force the government to withdraw its decision.

Dr Sushanta Kumar Das said, "Without changing madrasa and English medium education, the move to change the secondary education systems will create more discriminations among the students."

He said the proposed system would make the religious studies compulsory for all students while keeping the study of information technology (IT) as an optional subject.

Referring to the distribution of marks for the subjects under the new curriculum, Principal Kazi Faruk Ahmed said the students of Bangla medium would study a science subject like physics or chemistry only for 37.50 marks whereas English-medium students will study the same subject for 200 marks.

It will create more discrimination between the two mediums, he added.

"Without consulting the teachers, students, guardians, or educationists, the education ministry has initiated the steps to bring

about such an extremely important change in the secondary education," he said.

Prof M Akhtaruzzaman, former president of Dhaka University Teachers' Association, said religious fanatics have been conspiring to turn the country into a fundamentalist state and the proposed system will only help them in achieving their target.

He said madrasa education should be improved but the government's plan, which will bring down the standard of secondary education, simply cannot be accepted.

Besides, neither the authorities have preparations for the new system nor the teachers have the necessary training to adjust with it, he added.

Dr Yasmin Haque said business studies has been made compulsory though half of the schools in the country do not have the teachers of that particular subject while the students of 1,500 schools, who cannot take science due to lack of teachers, will now have to study

science without any subject-based teachers.

"Fundamentalism will be further encouraged if the government introduces the unified education system where religious and business studies have been given more importance," said Selina Khalek, president of Bangladesh Mahila Samity.

The government took such a crucial decision unilaterally, they did not consult with the educationists, said Prof Hayat Mahmud of Combined Social Movement.

Advocate Sultana Kamal of Ain O Salish Kendra, said the new education system is nothing but part of a process to divide the nation in every sector.

"We have started a strong movement so that all ill motives against the progress of the country can be defeated," she said, adding, "We will win in our movement as most of the good people are with us."

Representatives of Udichi, Karmojibi Nari, the Hunger Project, Mukti Joddha Prajanma Command and Dhaka Development Forum also took part in the discussion.

PCJ ultimatum to CU authorities

CU CORRESPONDENT

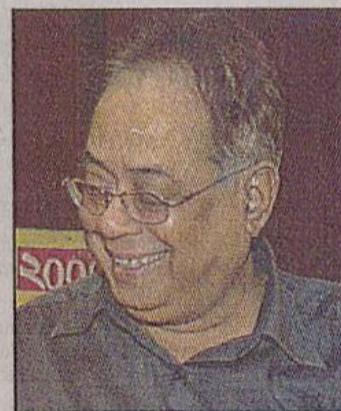
Progratishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ) Chittagong University (CU) unit yesterday gave a 24-hour ultimatum to the university authorities demanding arrest and punishment to the Shibir cadres involved in the attack on a procession of the general students on Saturday.

The PCJ submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor in the afternoon in this regard.

Later, the student leaders at a rally with Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) CU unit President Mehedi Hasan Tamal in the chair, warned of a tougher movement if their demand is not fulfilled within the deadline.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union CU unit President Ahsanul Hoq Nipun, SCF General Secretary Kanchan Sarker, Suchanda Chowdhury and Helal Uddin spoke at the rally.

The Shibir activists attacked a procession brought out to protest police action on the general students at Barodighirpar area in front of Social Science faculty on Saturday.



Condolence meeting on Shahadat Chy today

A citizens' condolence meeting in memory of Shahadat Chowdhury, a freedom fighter and editor of the Shaptahik 2000, will be held at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city at 3:30pm today.

The Sammilita Sangskritik Jote has organised the condolence meeting, says a press release.

BOMB BLASTS Australian HC discusses situation with Hasina

UNB, Dhaka

Outgoing Australian High Commissioner Lorraine Burker made a farewell call on Awami League President Sheikh Hasina at her Sudha Sadan residence in the city yesterday.

The Australian High Commissioner discussed the prevailing situation triggered by bomb blasts and necessity of free and fair general elections with the Leader of the Opposition.

Awami League leaders Kazi Zafrullah MP, Syed Abul Hossain MP and Saber Hossain Chowdhury were present at the meeting.

Diploma engr found dead in city

DMCH CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of a young man in the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Mirza Hamdul Hossain Babu, 28, who recently completed diploma in engineering from Tangail.

The body was recovered from a bush near the railway line at Gulbagh under Motijheel Police Station in the morning.

The victim's neck had superficial injury believed to have been caused by a rope found tied to his neck.

A mobile set was found inside a bag left alongside the body. To trace his identity police called back to a phone number that was dialed last.

The family members identified the body kept inside the police station.

According to family sources, the victim travelled to the capital on Friday along with Tk 2 lakh to pay for his further journey to Australia.

Earlier, two fellow villagers Mintoo and Kitab Ali acting as middlemen, promised him to arrange his travel abroad and had already realised Tk 1 lakh as advance a year ago to prepare relevant documents for the journey.

Prior to his travel to the capital on Friday, the brokers called Hamdul and instructed him to bring Tk 2 lakh more in cash to pay off the final bill.

Elder brother of the victim lodged a murder case without accusing anyone in this regard.

Criminal killed in shootout with cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A notorious criminal was killed on Saturday midnight in a shootout between his accomplices and police in Khulna city.

Ajmol Hossain alias Togar, 30, son of Ahmed Ali, was killed at Shaikhpara in Sonadanga thana.

He had six criminal cases against him, five filed with the Sonadanga Police Station and one with Rupsha Police Station.

Assistant Commissioner (AC) Zahur Chowdhury of Detective Branch (DB) said the shootout took place when DB police came under fire from Ajmol and his accomplices during a raid.

Ajmol opened fire from the rooftop of his father's house and the police retaliated firing five shots at him, the AC said. He received bullets in his chest and nose and died on his way to Khulna Medical College and Hospital (KMCH).

AC Zahur also said Ajmol was planning a criminal operation with his accomplices at 1:30am at Shaikhpara area. The bomb he hurled at the police injured none, the AC added.

Ajmol's father alleged DB police murdered his son after they had dragged him out of his bedroom. "I will file a case against DB police for murdering my son," he said.

One pipe gun, one gun cartridge and a used shell of rifle were recovered from the spot.

Lawyers demand resignation of govt, protest bomb attacks

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Lawyers staged demonstrations across the country yesterday in protest against the November 29 bomb attacks in Gazipur and Chittagong.

Responding to the Supreme Court Bar Association's call, the lawyers staged protests on different bar association premises, association Joint Secretary Advocate Mohammad Salim told the BDNEWS.

At the end of countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal on Thursday, the association announced the agitation programme as part of its

continuous protests against the bomb attacks on courts.

At a protest meeting in Dhaka yesterday, The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) demanded immediate resignation of the government for its failures in running the country.

Terminating the government's dialogue offer on the issue of militancy a farce, SCBA President Advocate Mahbubey Alam said the government has convened the dialogue only to cover up the links between the ruling coalition leaders and the religious militants.

"Dialogue can be held on the question of amending the consti-

tution and reforms of the caretaker government and the election commission but not on the militancy issue as the government itself is involved in the militancy," he said.

The SCBA leaders also demanded Tk 50 lakh compensation for each of the families of the victims of suicide bomb attacks in Gazipur, Chittagong and Jhalakathi.

Former SCBA presidents Abdul Baset Majumder, Ozair Farooq, Nurul Islam Sujan, KM Saifuddin, SCBA Joint Secretary Mohammad Salim and ASM Mesbauddin also spoke.



Supreme Court Bar Association forms a human chain in front of the High Court in the city yesterday protesting bomb attacks on courts and demanding resignation of the government. PHOTO: STAR

Russian Actress, Chulpan Khamatova

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