

# UGC needs power to make it effective

ASHIQR RAHMAN

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has demanded amendment of relevant laws to make it an effective body to regulate the activities of public and private universities.

Under the present act, the UGC has no authority to take or implement any major decision turning it to an organisation for making relevant recommendations and assessments, said UGC Chairman Prof M Asaduzzaman.

"People raise questions about the efficiency of UGC, but what we can do if our recommendations lay idle in the ministry" he posed the question.

Many important proposals of UGC like Uniform Recruitment Rules for Teachers and Employees of Public Universities, Uniform Financial Rules and Accounts Manual for Public University, and Amendment of Private University Act 1992 have been gathering dust in the ministry for long, UGC officials said, adding that these could be implemented if the UGC would have decision making power.

Besides, an important recommendation of the UGC for shutting down eight out of 53 private universities for violating rules and regulations has so far not been implemented due to undue influences of the government, they said.

Citing the examples of Pakistan and India, the UGC chairman stressed the need for giving the post of UGC Chairman a status of the cabinet minister so that the UGC can take the decisions and implement them independently.

Quoting the recommendations made in UGC's 20 years strategic plan for higher education, he also laid emphasis on appointing a distinguished academic as its chairman.

In its Annual Report 2004, the UGC also stressed the need for restructuring the organogram of the commission to make it time worthy. Different recommendations for public and private universities have also been put up in the report.

The UGC recommended necessary steps for stopping the abuse of autonomous power of public universities in recruiting and promoting

teachers and employees and increasing tuition fees without discussing with the government.

It also recommended that new departments will not be opened and new teachers will not be recruited in public universities without the approval of the UGC.

The UGC also called for increasing the public universities' own income like many other universities of the United Kingdom, the United States, India and Pakistan.

The recommendations emphasised on increasing the government grant and scholarship for higher education.

The annual report also suggested a number of recommendations for private universities for filling up different posts including vice-chancellors, registrars and examination controllers and taking steps to make their examinations and evaluation of answer scripts more transparent.

The UGC annual report published on February 2 and its 20 years strategic plan for higher education will be submitted to the Prime Minister soon.

## Journo Mukul passes away

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Eminent journalist, columnist and freedom fighter Shafiqul Aziz Mukul passed away due to cardiac arrest at the Labaid in the city on Friday at the age of 60.

Awami League leaders and former student leaders in the sixties, Mukul was the executive editor of the now-defunct Banglar Bani. He had been associated with the daily since its inception.

Mukul, who was involved in all the progressive movements in the sixties, was a presidium member of Awami Jubo League and AL cultural and information secretary. He used to write columns in different dailies. The latest article was published in the daily Amar Desh on the day he died.

As his body was taken to his Moktarpur residence in Sirajganj at 11:00pm on Friday a pall of gloom descended upon the area.

Later, his body was taken to his district AL office where people from all walks of life pay their last respect.

District AL President Abdul Latif Mirza, General Secretary Advocate KM Hossain Ali Hasan paid their last tribute on behalf of the district AL to the late journalist.

His body was also taken to the Sirajganj Press Club where Press Club President Zakiur Islam, General Secretary Harunur Rashid Khan Hasan placed wreaths to pay homage to Mukul.

He was buried at the Malshapara graveyard in Sirajganj after the namaz-e-janaza on Friday night.

Earlier, his namaz-e-janazas were also held on the Central Shahid Minar, the National Press Club and the Awami League (AL) office premises.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina, ministers and leaders of various political parties condoled the death of Mukul.

Hasina in her message said, "In his death, the nation has lost a journalist, who devoted himself to upholding press freedom and contributed a lot for the cause of journalists.

In another condolence message AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP, Joint General Secretary Obaidul Kader prayed for salvation of the departed soul and conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

Leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), Jatiya Press Club also condoled the death of Mukul.



Actor Zahirul Islam

Actor Zahirul Islam passed away on Friday morning at the age of 62, says a press release.

Zahirul Islam was involved in performing arts for the last 40 years and acclaimed through his performance in stage and TV drama, advertising and documentary films.

Zahirul Islam, founder of 'Bahu Bachan,' left behind his wife actress Dolly Zahur, one son and a host of friends, co-artists and fans to mourn his death.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the Dhamondi Bhuter Goli Mosque and was laid to rest at the Banani graveyard.

At night he and his associates Delwar and Tutul alias Foysal took her to a nearby field and killed her with sharp weapons.

Locals nabbed Delwar and Tutul and handed over them to police while Suvash managed to

flee the scene.

Kawsari married Suvash nearly one and a half years ago after the death of her first husband around 10 years back leaving two sons and three daughters.

She handed over to Suvash all the money that her previous husband left for her.

A quarrel ensued between them a few days ago when she wanted to know the account of her money, sources said.

Helena, sister of Kawsari, filed a case with Fatullah Police Station in this regard.

Husband stabs wife to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Husband stabbed his wife to death following a feud over money in Narayanganj on Friday night.

Suvash Mondol of Doyaganj in Dhaka took his wife Kawsari Begum, 45, to Nandalalpur in Fatullah in the name of a visit to the area in the afternoon.

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