

DU urged not to invite Yunus as convocation speaker

DU CORRESPONDENT

Chhatra Sangram Parishad, a combine of 14-party-backed student organisations, yesterday urged the Dhaka University (DU) authorities not to invite Nobel laureate Prof Dr Muhammad Yunus as the convocation speaker to the 43rd convocation of the university scheduled for February 28.

Prof Yunus has disqualified himself from being the convocation speaker by announcing the formation of a political party, Parishad leaders said at a meeting at Shaheed Asad Auditorium in the city.

In the past, those who delivered the convocation speech at DU were non-partisan and acceptable to all, they said, adding that but Prof Yunus has already made himself controversial by floating the political party.

Presided over by Bangladesh Chhatra League President Mahmud Hasan Ripon, the meeting was attended by JSD BCL President Shariful Kabir Swapon, General Secretary Ali Hasan Tarun, Bangladesh Chhatra Maitree President Rafiqul Islam Sujan, General Secretary Mukter Hossain Nahid and Jatiya Chhatra Dhara General Secretary Jewel Ahmed Khan, said a press release.



Hanufa Bibi, 80, a resident of the city's Khilgaon area, came to the Anti-Corruption Commission office yesterday to lodge a complaint against former minister Mirza Abbas. She alleged that the former minister and his relatives have occupied about 34 bighas of lands belonging to her and her relatives for a long time. The lands are located at Khilgaon, Sabujbagh, Momenbagh, Basabo and Shajahanpur areas.

Govt firm to build up strong armed forces

President tells certificate giving ceremony of graduating officers

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday said the government, despite limited resources, is determined to modernise and build up efficient and strong armed forces through better training and regular field level exercises.

Addressing the certificate awarding ceremony of the graduating officers of Defence Services Command and Staff College at Mirpur, he said obtaining a PSC degree from this renowned institution is a matter of pride for any member of armed forces.

The president termed the armed forces as the symbol of national independence and sovereignty.

He said alongside discharging the noble responsibility of protecting sovereignty, the members of 'our patriotic armed forces are also making significant contributions' in the fields of tackling natural disasters, construction of infrastructures, socio-

economic development, maintaining law and order, providing healthcare services and spreading education.

Iajuddin hoped that their positive roles in these areas would be expanded in future for the welfare of the people.

"Not only within the country, the members of our armed forces have also earned fame and name in the outside world by discharging the duties with honesty, dedication, sincerity and efficiency," he said.

They are working to restore peace in the conflict-ridden regions of the world through their assignments in UN missions, he added.

The President said they are also making valuable contribution in transition to democracy, social development, management of education, healthcare and reconstruction of countries in some of the missions after securing peace.

He said the image of Bangladesh has been immensely brightened

throughout the world because of their achievements.

"In the backdrop of the changed security scenario in the present day world, the roles of the armed forces have become multi-dimensional. In my view, this should be reflected realistically in the education and training programmes of the armed forces."

He hoped that the Defence Services Command and Staff College has attached due importance to this issue in its training curricula.

Later, president distributed certificates among the graduating students and officers.

Commandant of the College Major General Mohammad Abdul Mubin gave a welcome address on the occasion.

Major General Mubin welcomed the President on his arrival at the College ground.

A total of 142 students-officers,

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Electricity and Port yesterday called on the caretaker government to remove the obstacles to making the Chittagong Port vibrant and free from corruption, rather than taking any initiatives to privatise it.

Expressing concern over Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus's advocacy of privatisation of the port, Prof Anu Muhammad, member secretary of the committee, said the Chittagong Port is not merely an economic institution, it is an important national institution in terms of safeguarding national security.

Some international forces are trying to take over the Chittagong Port as it is strategically located in the South Asian region, he said, adding that privatisation of the port may jeopardise the national security.

"The statement of Prof Yunus about privatisation of the port worries us, as development of the country is not possible through distributing our own assets to another (foreign countries) or handing over operational management of the port to foreigners," he said at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) auditorium.

He also demanded withdrawal of the statement of Prof Yunus regarding handing over the port operation to foreigners.

Reading out a written state-

ment, Prof Anu Muhammad also said some vested quarters are hatching conspiracy to hand over the country's mineral resources to foreign companies as the Asia Energy is again trying to take up a lease on Phulbari coalmine by changing its name to 'Global Coal Management'.

These quarters are now trying to

follow the coal policy initiated by the previous government with a view to giving the country's coal resource to foreign companies, he said.

He called for formulation of an energy policy for the greater interest of the people of the country.

He also came down heavily on the previous governments, saying that they had signed a number of

anti-people agreements with multinational companies.

The committee leaders called for cancellation of the agreements which go against national interest.

They also called for taking necessary measures to implement the agreement signed between the previous government and the

people of Phulbari for the greater national interest and ouster of the Asia Energy.

Engineer Sheikh Muhammad Shahidullah, convenor of the committee, Justice Golam Rabbani, Nur Mohammad, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Nazrul Islam and Zonayed Saki were also present at the press conference.



Guests hold copies of a book titled 'Born in Bengal' written by Nurun Nabi at a publication ceremony at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. From left are Nurun Nabi, Dr Zafar Iqbal, Dr Anwar Hossain, Rashed Khan Menon, Dr Sanjida Khatoon and Mashiur Rahman.