

Most Sylhet colleges face student crisis

43,200 seats in 136 colleges in the division while 15,270 pass SSC under Sylhet board

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Most colleges in Sylhet division face a serious crisis of students this year.

A total of 15,270 SSC examinees passed this year from schools under the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE), Sylhet while 136 colleges in Sylhet division have 43,200 seats, sources said.

This will keep 27,930 seats vacant in the colleges this year, they said.

Officials of Sylhet education board and teachers said most colleges, will face a 'great crisis' during 2007-08 academic session. Especially, colleges in rural areas will be the worst sufferers.

Four reputed colleges in Sylhet city have a total of 1900 seats. A good number of students

with better results will be absorbed in the four colleges.

This year, 713 SSC examinees got GPA-5 and another 2411 got Grade- A. Most of them will be interested for admission to the four colleges at the divisional headquarters, teachers said.

It will cause a great blow to the rest 132 colleges, which will vie for 100 students each, putting their existence at risk, some teachers of non-government colleges told this correspondent.

Board sources said there are 136 government and non government colleges in the division. They include 60 in Sylhet, 19 in Habiganj, 28 in Moulvibazar and 29 in Sunamganj districts.

The 60 colleges in Sylhet have a total of 20,850 seats in Science, Arts and Business Studies faculties.

In Sunamganj, 28 colleges have 8700 seats while the number is

10,050 in 29 colleges in Moulvibazar and 7,050 in 19 colleges in Habiganj.

Due to shortage of students, most of the seats in these colleges will remain unfulfilled.

The colleges in four districts in the division have a total of 20,400 seats in Science group but only 5566 students passed in the group this year. So, 14,834 seats will remain vacant.

In Arts group, there are 14,400 seats colleges in the four districts while only 8463 examinees passed in the group. A total of 5937 seats will remain vacant in Arts group in the colleges.

In Business studies group, there are 11,805 seats, while the number of successful students is

1241. There is possibility of 10,564 seats remaining vacant.

Four reputed colleges for Science students-MC College, Sylhet Government College, Sylhet Government Mohila College and Madan Mohan College--will enroll 1250 students, leaving each of the rest 132 colleges vying for only 33 students on an average.

In Arts group, each of the 136 colleges will get only 63 students.

In 2006-07 academic session, nine colleges in Sylhet did not get any student.

With start of admission, most eligible students are going to the good colleges.

MC College has 300 seats, Sylhet Government College 800, Government Mohila College 600 and Commerce College has only 200 seats.

3 outlaws arrested

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested three alleged members of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBPC) in Sirajganj and Khulna yesterday and the night before.

Tarash thana police in Sirajganj in a drive arrested alleged outlaws Onil Kumar, 35, and Zohurul Islam, 26 from Dewgram village in the upazila, our correspondent reports.

Acting on a tip off, police raided their houses in the morning and arrested them.

Police said they were accused in several criminal cases including a murder.

In Khulna, Rab arrested alleged outlaw Zahidul Islam alias Fantu Zahid, 24, Tuesday night from Khalispur housing estate in Khulna city, our staff correspondent reports.

Zahid hails from Harirampur upazila in Manikganj district.

Rab recovered ten grams of heroin from his possession. He is an armed cadre of Janajuddho faction of outlawed PBPC, a Rab press release said yesterday.

2 held with arms making tools in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested two alleged notorious terrorists of South-Western region from a hotel at Dakbunglow Road in Khulna Tuesday night.

The arrestees were identified as Md. Mehedi Hasan alias Feroze Gazi, 26 and Md. Abdul Wadud, 32, both hailing from Digholia upazila in Khulna district.

Acting on their confession, Rab recovered a revolver, a shutter gun, a pipe gun and some arms making equipment from the house of Feroze Gazi yesterday.

A Rab press release said the two arrested terrorists gave sensational information about network of underground organisations and illegal arms trade in south-western region of the country.

The two were wanted in several criminal cases including murders. They were also involved in supplying illegal arms to pirates in the Sundarbans, the press release said.

Tk 16 lakh smuggled powder milk seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police yesterday seized a fishing trawler and recovered Indian smuggled goods worth Tk 16 lakh from the trawler.

On a tip-off, police seized 25 sacks of banned powder milk and seven electric fans from the trawler anchored on the bank of the Lawkathi.

However, police could not arrest anybody from the trawlers.



PHOTO: STAR

A vegetable farmer at Gaidghat village in Bagherpara upazila of Jessore district taking care of a pheromone trap in his field that kills pests without use of pesticide.

A 'silent revolution' in safe pest control faces setback

Acute crisis of pheromone hinders cultivation of insecticide-free vegetables

HOSAIN SERAJ, back from Jessore

The inspiring initiative by Jessore-Magura farmers to produce insecticide-free vegetables faces a major setback.

With cooperation from BARI (Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute), they bade goodbye to pesticides and used 'Pheromone trap' and bio-agent (beneficial insects) instead of harmful pesticides.

But the 'silent revolution' in pest control may die down soon as pheromone, the principal ingredient used in the process is missing. It is yet to be imported on commercial basis, farmers told this correspondent.

This correspondent visited Gaidghat village in Bagherpara upazila, Nongorpur in Jessore Sadar and Pearpur in Shalikha upazila recently and talked to farmers.

They are still growing vegetables like brinjal, snake-gourd (Chichinga) and balsam apple (Korola) without use of pesticide on about 324 bighas of land.

They said they want to continue the new pest management system as it is less costly, beneficial and hygienic.

But they are facing crisis of pheromone as in local markets.

Sazzad Ali Khan at Gaidghat village said vegetable production using pesticide is at least eight times costlier than using pheromone trap and beneficial insects.

However, farmers also use some beneficial insects supplied by BARI.

Mohammad Razul Hasan Mondol, Scientific Officer of RARS (Regional Agricultural Research Institute) under BARI in Jessore said, beneficial insects like Bracon, Habator, Trichogramma, Chilonis and Chrysopa eat up harmful insects. Senior Scientific Officer (SSO) of BARI's Entomology Division Dr. Syed Nurul Alam said pheromone-based technology can eliminate use of pesticide in vegetable cultivation.

BARI took up Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme in 2001 to discourage farmers from using harmful pesticide. The programme assisted by DFID, UK, achieved a great success. The National Resources Institute (NRI) in UK and Asian Vegetable Research and Development Centre (AVRDC) in Taiwan cooperated in the research, officials said.

NGO worker commits 'suicide' in Patuakhali

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

An NGO worker has allegedly committed suicide at her Puran Bazaar residence in Patuakhali town.

Anamika Datta, 25, field supervisor of Speed Trust, an NGO, working for sex workers, committed 'suicide' in the early hours on Tuesday.

But the victim's husband Moloy Datta claimed that her wife had committed suicide following sex harassment by the project manager of Speed Trust, Kazal Baran Das. He lodged a complaint to this effect with Sadar Police Station.

On contact, AHM Shamsul Islam

Dipu, team manager of Barisal office of Speed Trust said Anamika took four days leave from office on July 22. She and her husband went to Khulna for a personal work.

On their return from Khulna on Monday, Moloy left his residence. In his absence, Kazal came to his residence at about 10 pm, Moloy claimed.

He stated that he had come back to his residence early next morning only to find his wife's dead body. On the night, their six-year-old child, Prorel, was sleeping at the residence, Moloy said.

Police got two pieces of papers from the spot where Anamika wrote something.

Police recorded an unnatural

death (UD) case in this connection. After the incident, Speed Trust formed two probe bodies to find out the cause of the incident.

Dr Sunil Baran Halder, chairman of the Trustee Board of Speed Trust is leading a three-member committee while the other two-member committee is led by Asadur Rahman, programme officer of Barisal office of Speed Trust.

Members of both the committees visited Patuakhali yesterday. It will submit reports within three days, said Dipu, Barisal office team manager of Speed Trust.

The body was cremated after autopsy Tuesday night.

'Dredge Kobadak river'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Leaders of Kabodak Bachao Andolon Samannay Committee (coordination committee to save Kabodak) at a press conference in Jessore yesterday urged the government to re-excavate Kabodak river to save over 50 lakh people in three districts from recurring flooding.

The Kabodak is the lifeline for over 50 lakh people of 77 villages in Jessore, Khulna and Satkhira districts. The silted river can not retain water, causing recurring floods and directly affecting over 10 lakh people living near its banks, they said. As flood water can not flow out through the silted river, water-logging has become a

problem for people in the river basin areas, seriously affecting agriculture and other means of livelihood, they said.

"This problem persists in the region. Whenever there is rain there is water-logging as the river is silted up", Anil Biswas, convenor of the Samannay Committee.

Over the years, encroachment of the riverbank by land grabbers and obstruction of its flow by fish farmers hastened its death.

Biswas demanded immediate government steps to remove the encroachments and obstructions and dredging of the river. Restoring Kabodak's link with Mathabanga by re-excavating it would solve the problem to a great extent, he said.

7.5X3

4X2

5X3