

Govt high school to be set up at each upazila: PM

Textbooks to be printed at district level

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister (PM) Sheikh Hasina announced that textbooks will now be printed at district level and distributed among the students by local authorities, as the present book-supply procedure creates perennial problems.

Under another major step in the education sector, government high schools will be established in every upazila of the country and quality education will be ensured in these schools.

The PM disclosed the plans when a six-member delegation of the University Grants Commission (UGC) led by its Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam called on her at the PM's Office yesterday morning.

Hasina expressed disappointments over the degrading standard of education from primary to university level.

"The fall of the standard of education is alarming," she told the executives of the UGC.

About the book publication affairs Hasina further observed that many students have to suffer for delays in

receiving textbooks as all books are printed centrally in the capital city.

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed the newsmen after the meeting, explaining the new measures being taken to resolve the problems in the education sector.

Azad said the CDs of the books will be sent to the district authorities and the textbooks will be printed at a time to rid the students of long wait for textbooks while time of the academic year passes by.

The premier said the quality of education at the university level fell to an alarming level as permission was given to set up many private universities without maintaining proper rules and regulations during the last BNP-led four-party alliance government.

She emphatically said her government would not compromise anyway on the question of restoring the lost standards of education in the universities as the government attaches the highest priority to the education sector.

The PM informed the UGC delegation that the authori-

ties concerned are working to update the existing education policy in line with modern science and technology.

Hasina also felt that country's educational institutions are suffering from a lack of qualified and well-trained teachers. "Scarcity of well-trained teachers will be removed," she assured.

The UGC chairman apprised the PM of the overall situation of private and public universities of the country and demanded government steps to give the UGC more freedom for conducting its activities smoothly.

The premier assured the UGC members of government's earnestness in solving every problem facing the UGC in conducting its activities effectively for the sake of educational development.

As the role of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in spreading education came up during the discussion, Hasina deplored that some 300 students of various levels who depend on financial assistance of Bangabandhu Memorial Trust had to stop their studies as the immediate past caretaker govern-

ment seized the trust's bank account.

She said these dropout students will be brought in the sphere of education again by the Bangabandhu Memorial Trust which bears education expenditures of some 1,000 poor and physically challenged students of various levels.

The UGC chairman gave special thanks to the prime minister as her government has decided to set up Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur to give a boost to the educational arena in the backwater northern region of the country.

Prof Nazrul presented the PM a set of books, including 'Education in Science and Education in Bangladesh' published by the UGC.

The UGC chairman also expressed deep shock at the death of noted nuclear scientist and prime minister's husband Dr MA Wazed Miah and prayed for salvation of his departed soul.

Adviser to the PM for Education, Social Development and Political Affairs Dr Alauddin Ahmed and PM's Office Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman were present.



PHOTO: BNP
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia offers munajat during a discussion marking the 28th death anniversary of former president Ziaur Rahman at the Diploma Engineers' Institute Auditorium in the city yesterday. Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal organised the event.

EBL-St Gregory Nat'l School Debate ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Eastern Bank Limited-Saint Gregory National School Debate Festival came to an end on Sunday.

The debate competition was organised by the Gregorian Debating Club at the St Gregory's High School on May 15-17.

The three-day competition was inaugurated by former president Dr AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed was present at the concluding session as the chief guest, says a press release.

Former adviser ASM Shahjahan, senior journalist of the Daily Ittefaq Shaheen Reza Noor and Chief of Marketing of Eastern Bank Limited Nazim A Chowdhury were present as special guests while the session was presided over by the Headmaster of the school Brother Robi Purification.

Obituary

RU CORRESPONDENT

Shorupendu Sarker, a poet and father of Dr Shoroches Sarker, associate professor of Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Rajshahi University, passed away due to old-age complications at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday at the age of 70.

He left behind his wife, son and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

His cremation will be held at Charbariari village in Bagerhat today.

Abdul Majid Talukder

METRO DESK

Abdul Majid Talukder, a veteran political personality and father of Prof Rahim B Talukder, vice chancellor of Eastern University, passed away at his Gulshan residence in the city on Saturday at the age of 109, says a press release.

He left behind his six sons and one daughter to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard.

Md Abdul Hakim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Md Abdul Hakim, a freedom fighter, passed away due to old-age complications at a hospital in Chittagong on Sunday.

He left behind his wife, son and two daughters to mourn his death.

He was buried with state honour at his family graveyard under Nawabganj upazila in Dinajpur on Monday.

One killed in shootout with Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

them to retaliate for the sake of their lives.

After the gun battle, the Rab men found one of the criminals lying on the embankment with bullet injuries.

The other criminals managed to flee the scene.

Monir Hossain, brother of the deceased, said Mokhtar came out of the jail on bail eight months ago after serving seven years.

Then he opened a laundry shop at Monirpur, Monir said, alleging that the Rab personnel picked him up from Shah Ali shrine on May 17 and since then he remained missing.

Switzerland keen to invest more in pharmaceutical sector

Says envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outgoing Swiss Ambassador Dora Rapold yesterday said Switzerland is keen to make more investments in the pharmaceutical sector in Bangladesh.

She said this during a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Hasan Mahmud at his office yesterday.

The envoy also assured the state minister of increased support for development activities in Bangladesh.

Welcoming the foreign investment, State Minister Hasan Mahmud said the

government will extend full cooperation in this regard.

During the meeting, Dora Rapold thanked the government for its cooperation extended to her during her tenure in Bangladesh.

Dr Hasan Mahmud

requested the outgoing ambassador to play the role of an envoy on behalf of Bangladesh in her country.

Dora Rapold also assured Dr Mahmud of playing a strong role in favour of Bangladesh so that Switzerland provides more assistance, said a press release of the foreign ministry.

ASIAN UNIVERSITIES DEBATING ENDS

Debate helps strengthen democracy

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday said debate, which is a battle of thoughts, opinions and ideas, can help strengthen democracy and ensure human rights.

Debate can also play an effective role in settling cases outside the court through an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) system, he added.

The minister said this while speaking as the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the 5th Asian Universities Debating Championship-2009 at a city hotel last night. The East West University organised the event.

The minister also said the present government has been working hard to institutionalise democracy.

He also congratulated the winners and participants of the debating contest.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hasan Mahmud, cultural personality Aly Zaker, Prof Mohammad Sharif and Jalaluddin Ahmed, president, Board of Directors of East West University, also spoke.

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