



Winners of the national cultural competition of Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Mela pose for photograph with President Zillur Rahman and other guests at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 3)

UNIVERSITY ADMISSION

Existing method to be followed Says education minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the existing method would be followed in the admission to the country's public and private universities for higher education.

He assured that everybody would get the chance to pursue their higher education and there would be no seat crisis in the higher education institutions.

The minister said this after a meeting with vice chancellors (VCs) of different public universities at Secretariat office in the city.

Every year, the students and their guardians pass an anxious period after the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations as they need to go through a stiff competition to gain their admissions into the desired institutions.

Against this backdrop, the education ministry held the meeting with the VCs, University Grants Commission chairman and others concerned to find out a way.

After the meeting, Nahid said, "A total of 4,42,389 students passed the HSC and equivalent exams under 10 boards this year and we have a total of 4,37,171 seats in all public and private education institutions which means a shortage of 5,258 seats."

Since many universities are autonomous, it would not be proper to impose any decision on them, the minister mentioned.

"There would be no seat crisis if all the universities increase 10 seats," he said, adding that some 5,000 seats would be increased, if necessary.

Nahid said the existing admission process in different higher education institutions

would be followed this year and if the institutions want to develop or ease the process, they can sit together to find out a way.

Students lose a huge time after passing their HSC exams, he said, urging the universities to discuss the matter mutually to bring forward the dates for the admission tests and decrease the fees.

The minister also called on the universities to fix their admission dates closer and make the process easier so that the students do not face any harassment.

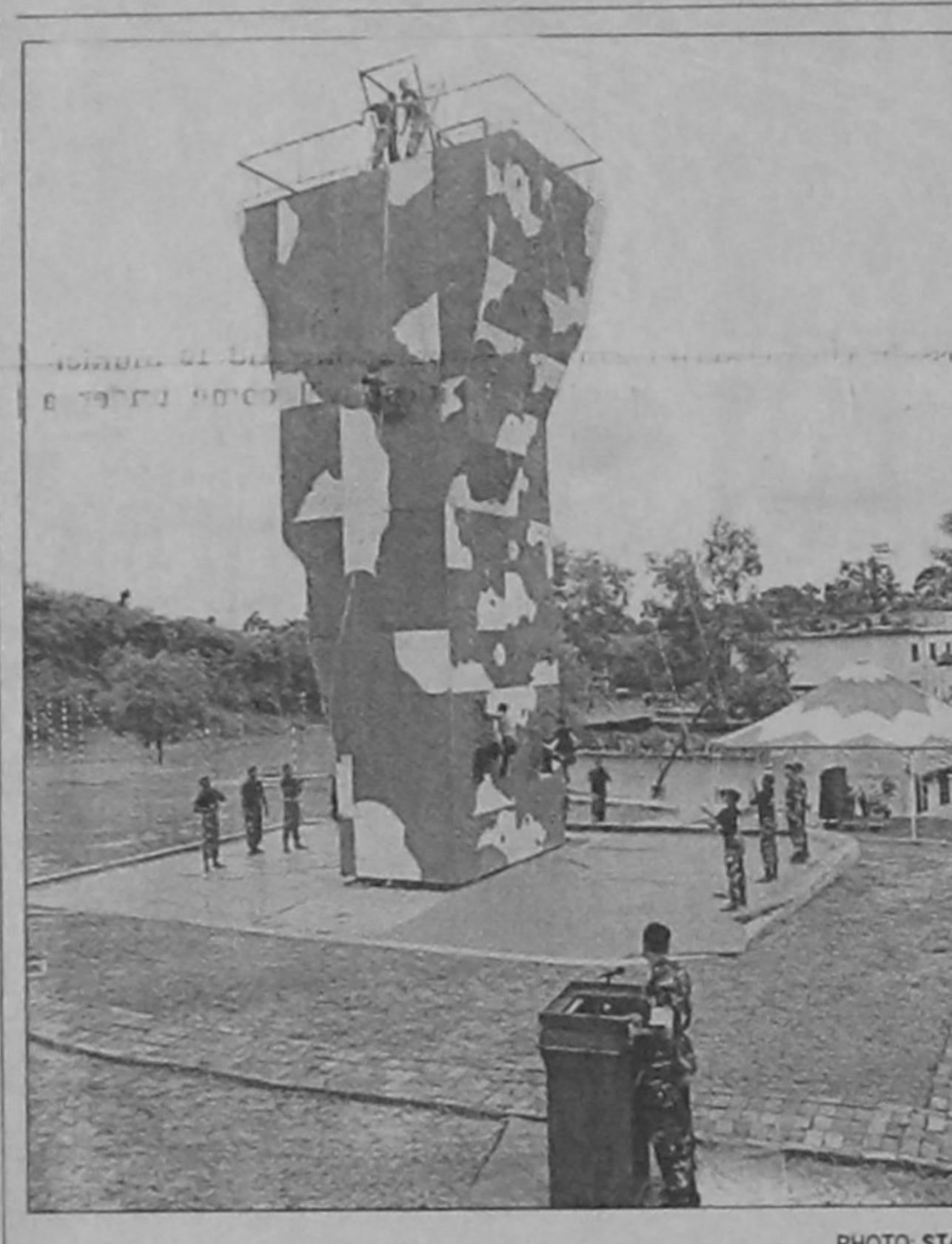
It was told in the meeting that there are 35,886 seats in 29 public universities while

the number of seats in 51 approved private universities is 64,063.

There are 2,394 seats in 18 public medical colleges, 3,055 in private medical colleges and 910 seats in public and private dental colleges, while there are 1,76,005 seats in 19 honours colleges under National University (NU) and 1,53,338 seats (pass course) in 1,474 colleges under NU.

The number of seats in colleges of leather technology and college of textile technology is 455.

As many as 20,136 students under the 10 education boards secured GPA (grade point average)-5 this year.



Members of the armed forces climb an artificial rock wall during the handover ceremony of the wall at Jalalabad Cantonment in Sylhet yesterday.

India won't divert water

FROM PAGE 1
This is a significant development against the backdrop of worries in Bangladesh that the possible effects of the Tipaimukh project would have on flow of water in the Barak and consequently the Surma and the Kushiya and the Sylhet region.

The Bangladeshi MPs raised a number of queries regarding the project and articulated their concerns over certain areas, to which the Indian power minister and officials responded.

Emerging from the meeting, delegation and senior Awami League leader Abdur Razzak told reporters that, "India has once again assured us that no irrigation project would be constructed upstream or downstream of the Tipaimukh project.

Referring to his meetings with Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna Wednesday evening and Shinde yesterday morning, Razzak said both the leaders have assured that India would not do anything which would harm the interests of Bangladesh.

"Whatever they [India] do, they will do through discussions with Bangladesh," he said, adding, "All issues can be resolved through talks."

They said New Delhi has been very transparent by inviting the parliamentary team from Bangladesh and sharing with it the data on the Tipaimukh project and allowing it to visit the project site.

This was done as a "gesture of goodwill" towards the new government in Bangladesh, they said.

India is ready to share more

information on specific aspects of the project if Bangladesh wishes, said the officials.

The meeting with the Indian power minister was the high-point of the second day of the five-day visit of the delegation which later left for Guwahati in Assam where they will have a night's halt before flying to Tipaimukh project this morning.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at most places over all the six divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over the country in next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 7:42pm today and rises at 6:28am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 34.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sathkhira and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Sandwip and Rangpur.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage
Max	Min	Morning
Dhaka	30.3	24.8
Chittagong	27.4	24.4
Rajshahi	31.3	25.2
Khulna	33.5	25.4
Barisal	32.0	24.8
Sylhet	30.9	24.6
Cox's Bazar	28.4	25.0
		Evening
		93
		98
		91
		89
		96
		93
		94

Eminent psychologists are expected to address the occasion, says a release.

WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

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Indian envoy hands over rock climbing wall to army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty yesterday said India has no military ambitions beyond its borders.

"Rather, as the world's largest democracy, we want to continue the good neighbourly and friendly relations to all concerned," he said at a ceremony at the Commando Training Centre, School of Infantry & Tactics (SI & T), at Jalalabad Cantonment in Sylhet.

At the ceremony, the Indian high commissioner handed over an artificial rock climbing wall, presented by the Indian Army, to the Bangladesh Army.

Chief of General Staff Maj Gen Abdul Hafiz received the rock wall.

The Indian envoy said the long-standing friendship between Bangladesh and India is deeply rooted in strong foundation. "We are also partners in the rapidly changing world by now."

He also stressed the need to further strengthen the bilateral relations through frequent interactions between the professionals and institutions of both the countries.

According to a press release of the Indian High Commission, Indian Army Chief Gen Deepak Kapoor, during a visit to Bangladesh in July 2008, announced the gift of the rock climbing wall to the Bangladesh Army.

The construction of the rock wall was completed within 120 days at Jalalabad Cantonment by a private firm deputed by the Indian Army.

With a vertical height of 12 metres, the rock climbing wall is a training aid for troops to carry out rock climbing, slithering and other aspects of commando and mountain training.

A demonstration of speed climbing on the rock wall was also held at the ceremony.

Commandant of School of Infantry & Tactics Brig Gen Abdul Hakim Aziz and Military Attaché at the Indian High Commission Brig RN Nayar were present.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG ARMS HAUL

Three police officials interrogated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

The investigators interrogated the then deputy commissioner (DC) and assistant commissioner (AC) of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) port zone and the first investigation officer of the sensational Chittagong arms haul case here yesterday.

The police officials denied allegation of providing abetment to those involved in the smuggling of the deadly consignment.

They however gave details on the seizure of 10 truckloads of firearms and ammunition at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited (CUFL) jetty in the early hours of April 02, 2004.

The three police officials are former DC (port) Abdullahe Bakri, now OSD as SSP of Special Branch in Dhaka, former AC (port) Mahmudur Rahman, now OSD as DC at Sylhetrange, and the first IO and the then officer-in-charge of Karnaphuli Police Station Ahadur Rahman, now the OC of Sathkhira Police Station. They appeared for interrogation here at 11:00am.

A team of investigators led by IO Muniruzzaman A Chowdhury, a senior ASP of CID Chittagong zone, interrogated them at Dampara Police Line till 7:30pm.

The investigators also inquired into the allegation of helping five unidentified people to flee the scene.

They were suspected to be members of United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).

Matin also former home adviser to the last caretaker government, has denied his involvement in any irregularity in awarding the contract to Ishak Brothers.

He said the probe body also found evidence against Motahar and seven others. It, however, did not find any proof that Matin took bribes to

award the deal to the company, Ishak Brothers.

The sub-committee formed by the main body

found that the tender was not floated in line with the government rules. Besides, the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) did not hold any board meeting before awarding the contract.

Then shipping secretary Motahar, acting shipping secretary Masud Elahi and other senior CPA officials on June 29 appeared before the sub-committee and accused the former adviser of mounting pressure on them to award the deal to Ishak Brothers, which had no prior experience in doing the job.

Matin, also former home adviser to the last caretaker government, has denied his involvement in any irregularity in awarding the contract to Ishak Brothers.

He was the first adviser to the last caretaker government

to face corruption charges brought by the parliamentary standing committee.

Former housing and public works adviser Mainul Hosein was the other to come under parliamentary scrutiny for allegedly awarding public land to his wife and son in violation of government rules.

The parliamentary standing committee on housing and public works ministry has been scrutinising the graft allegation against Mainul.

Both Matin and Mainul were very critical of politicians for 'corruption' after the declaration of the state of emergency on Jan 11, 2007.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on the LGRD and cooperatives ministry on Wednesday raised corruption allegation against former LGRD adviser to caretaker government Anwarul Iqbal and formed a sub-committee to investigate the allegation.

Earlier, a one-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the memory of Hena Das.

Include biography of Hena Das in textbooks'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a condolence meeting yesterday urged the government to include the biography of Hena Das in textbooks, as she worked for establishing the women's rights.

They said Hena Das also played a significant role in the historic nankar movement, anti-British movement and the liberation war.

The government should include the biography of leading women's rights leaders in the academic curriculum to encourage the young generation," said Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP).

The meeting was organised by BMP at the auditorium of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the city.

BMP Vice President Dr Fawzia Muslim said Hena Das was a leader who always stood for deprived people.

Hayat Mahmud, a researcher and educationist, said the country now needs a leader like Hena Das who worked for underprivileged section of people.

BMP General Secretary Maleka Banu, President of Bangladesh Mahila Samity Selina Khaleq and daughter of Hena Das Champa Zaman also spoke at the condolence meeting.

BMP Vice President Khaleda Mahbub read out the condolence message while Editor of Ganamadhyam Kazi Sofia Akhter presented the biography of Hena Das at the meeting.

Earlier, a one-minute silence was observed to pay homage to the memory of Hena Das.

Obituary

METRO DESK

Faizul Huda Khan (Firoz), a retired officer of American government emigration department, passed away after a prolonged illness at a hospital in America on July 29 at the age of 72, says a press release.

Firoz, who hailed from Balia village in Manikganj, left behind his mother, wife, two daughters and a host of relatives and friends to mourn his death.

He was laid to rest in America.

Nirmol Nag