

Redesign varsity curriculum

Says Prof Gowher Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has to redesign the curriculum and teaching approaches in the universities to help students become worthy citizens in pluralistic societies and learn skills to face the daunting global challenges, eminent educationist Prof Gowher Rizvi said yesterday.

"We have to design a curriculum that is innovative and in which the pedagogic choices are student-centred," he said while delivering a lecture on 'Reinventing Universities: Higher Education in a Global Society'.

organised the lecture at its auditorium in the city to mark its 58th anniversary.

Prof Rizvi, an adviser to the prime minister on international affairs, said single disciplinary training is an inadequate preparation for students to face the complexity of today's world. Inclusion of multi-disciplinary insights, therefore, is of utmost importance.

Compulsory participation in civic and voluntary activities will be partial requirement for successful completion of a degree, he said.

Teachers must encourage students to volunteer in rural areas. By such

activities, students will be exposed to the real life problems and be able to address problems, said Prof Rizvi, also a former vice provost for International Programmes at the University of Virginia, USA.

Less importance on researches is given in the universities here, he said referring to a recent survey of Bangladesh publications in the Library of Congress in Washington DC that overwhelming number of publications in the field of social sciences over the last two decades consisted of reports to donor agencies by the consultants.

"None of our universities have

found their way into the top 100 world-class universities of Asia or into the top 500 in the world," Prof Rizvi said.

Faculty members who do not research cannot be effective as teachers, he said, adding that the government must ensure their accountability and quality.

He also said the universities can surely get funding from the corporate bodies without being influenced by them.

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh President Dr Sirajul Islam and General Secretary Prof Mahfuza Khanam also spoke at the programme.

Iajuddin hospitalised

UNB, Dhaka

Former president Iajuddin Ahmed was admitted to Apollo Hospitals in the city early yesterday.

Hospital sources said Iajuddin was hospitalised at about 2:00am as he was suffering from cold and fever.

"He is now undergoing treatment at the ICU (intensive care unit) of the hospital," said a source.

DEFAMATION CASE

Amar Desh acting editor, 2 others get bail

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail for three months to Acting Editor of the Amar Desh Mahmudur Rahman, Publisher Hasmat Ali and special correspondent M Abdullah as they surrendered before it in a defamation case filed against them amid a row over a report on graft.

Passing the interim orders, a High Court division bench of Justice Syed M Dastagir Husain and Justice M Rais Uddin also issued a rule upon the government to explain why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail in connection with the case filed in Magura.



PHOTO: STAR

Supreme Court Bar Association leaders present a bouquet to Chief Justice Md Tafazzul Islam, second from left, at a reception ceremony at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in the city yesterday.

Corruption at court starts from the listing of cases

Says attorney general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bench officers of courts indulge in corruption due to inefficiency and carelessness of judges concerned, said Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday.

Corruption at court starts from the listing of cases on the cause lists (cases that are due to be dealt with on a particular day) and it continues until files are sent to the section concerned of the court, he said.

"I believe that if a judge remains cautious, the court officials or staff will not be able to indulge in corruption," the attorney general said.

Mahbubey Alam said this at a function held to felicitate new Chief Justice Md Tafazzul Islam

at the Supreme Court yesterday morning.

He urged the chief justice to take some steps to protect the image and dignity of the court.

The attorney general and Supreme Court Bar Association president AFM Mesbahuddin hosted the felicitation programme for the new chief justice.

Chief Justice Tafazzul said collective and coherent effort and commitment of judges and advocates are absolutely imperative to making the independence of the judiciary meaningful.

He said, "I would like to ensure justice for a significant number of poor people who have been waiting for justice for long and failed to get it due to obstacles created by a vested quarter who use loopholes in the laws."

Freedom Party's EC registration at stake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Freedom Party, formed by some convicted killers of Bangabandhu, may lose its registration with the Election Commission (EC) as it informed the EC about its inability to submit its ratified charter before the deadline.

If a party fails to ratify its constitution by holding council and submit it to the EC on or before January 24, its registration will be cancelled as per the provision stipulated in the Representation of the People Order (RPO).

The EC earlier informed the Freedom Party about the deadline and the consequence if it fails to meet the time frame.

Syed Tareque Rahman, son of Syed Farooq Rahman, a convicted killer of Bangabandhu, last week in a letter informed the EC that it is not possible for his party to hold the council to ratify the party charter by January 24 deadline.

In the letter he sought an extension of the deadline.

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakawat Hossain yesterday told reporters that further extension of deadline is not possible. If any political party fails to submit its ratified constitution to the EC within the timeframe its registration will be cancelled, he added.

With the support and blessings of HM Ershad the coup leaders of Aug 15 Farooq Rahman, Khandaker Abdur Rashid and Bazul Huda -- floated the "Freedom Party" on November 7, 1987.

Workshop on info literacy begins

METRO DESK

A twoday workshop on information literacy began at East West University (EWU) for its faculty member and students, says a press release.

The workshop was inaugurated at EWU auditorium where Prof Jagtar Singh, head of the department of Library and Information Science, Punjabi University, India, facilitated the proceedings as the resource person.

It was aimed at promoting awareness of information literacy, providing hands-on training experience on when and why information is needed and where to find information.

Md Dabirul Islam, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on science and ICT ministry information and communication technology, was present as the chief guest.

Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government, and Prof Mohammed Sharif, vice chancellor of EWU, spoke at the programme coordinated by Dilara Begum, joint librarian.

A total numbers of 60 faculty members and students are participating in the workshop.

Annual general meeting of DU '69 batch

METRO DESK

The annual general meeting and picnic of the '69 batch of Dhaka University will be held on January 15 at Bitopi Chhaya of Mia Bari Road (opposite Malancha Gate of National Park) at Gazipur, says a press release.

For details, interested members can contact the following persons: Salehin (01713001753), A Sattar (01825028414), Dolly (01715186059), Ziaunnahar (01720208905), Rais Khan (01199865998) and Rafia Dolly (01720205054).



PHOTO: STAR

Winners of 'EBL- DUAA Inspiration', a five-year grants programme of Eastern Bank Ltd (EBL) and Dhaka University Alumni Association (DUAA), pose for photograph with Dr Mashur Rahman, economic adviser to the prime minister, at the award giving ceremony at the university's Nawab Nabab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan yesterday.

IGP to be elevated to 3-star general

Says Sahara

UNB, Dhaka

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday endorsed the plea for elevating the Inspector General of Police to the rank of three-star general, equivalent to Lieutenant General of the army.

"It's a logical demand. I think it should be upgraded... the government is scrutinising the proposal," she said.

The rank badge of the IGP was of 3-star general, but it was downgraded during the regime of president HM Ershad. The Police Headquarters recently sent a proposal for upgrading the rank badge of the IGP to 3-star general in the present context.

The home minister expressed her view while talking to reporters after an evaluation meeting on the Annual Development Programme projects under the Ministry.

She also disclosed that the country's 599 police stations will get at least two pickup vans and two motorcycles each by June this year.

"We have taken a special project of Tk 487 crore to buy

police vehicles, including protection car, pickup van, motorcycle, engine boat and speedboat," the home minister said.

The project is now under consideration of the planning ministry.

Sahara Khatun said her ministry has taken 30 projects for its nine departments for this fiscal year. The meeting reviewed the progresses of the projects.

Fifty percent of the projects have already been implemented, the minister said.

Replying to a question, she said that the proposed Machine Readable Passport (MRP) and Machine Readable Visa (MRV) will be introduced within April.

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder said tender for the MRP and MRV project is now under consideration of the government's purchase committee.

Work order will be given for introducing the MRP and MRV after getting approval of the purchase committee.

State Minister for Home Advocate Shamsul Haq Tuku and senior officers attended the meeting.

106 students get EBL grants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 106 Dhaka University (DU) students, including 29 students with disabilities, were awarded financial grants yesterday for their outstanding academic results in 2009.

Eastern Bank Ltd (EBL) in cooperation with Dhaka University Alumni Association (DUAA) awarded the grants as part of its five-year programme styled 'EBL-DUAA Inspiration'.

All the 106 students received a onetime grant of Tk 2,500 and a Certificate of Excellence at the programme at the Nawab Nabab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan on the campus.

Speaking as the chief guest, Dr Mashur Rahman, adviser to the prime minister, urged the DUAA leaders to act as a bridge to connect the former and present students of DU to maintain a healthy relation.

EBL Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ali Reza Iftikhar, DUAA President Syed Manzur Elahi and Secretary General Raquibuddin Ahmed were present at the award giving ceremony.

M Nazeem A Chowdhury, head of marketing of EBL, said they will provide the award recipients with career counselling in future after the completion of their academic life.

Reshuffle in judiciary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a latest reshuffle in judiciary, 20 lower court judges have been transferred in consultation with the Supreme Court, said an official handout yesterday.

Abdul Majid, district and sessions judge of Faridpur, has been transferred to Dhaka as divisional special judge and Golam Mortuja Majumder, divisional special judge of Dhaka, has been transferred to Tangail as district and sessions judge.

Fazle Khoda Md Nazir, additional chief judicial magistrate of Jamalpur, has been appointed as judge (joint district judge) of land survey tribunal in Dhaka while Md

Mokbul Ahsan, joint metropolitan sessions judge of Chittagong, has been made joint district judge of Dhaka, Ahsan Tareque, joint district judge of Kurigram, made joint district judge of Bogra, Arunabh Chakravarty, joint district judge of Khulna, as joint metropolitan sessions judge of Dhaka and Noor Md Shahriar Kabir, joint district judge of Kishoreganj, as joint district judge of Kurigram.

Amlan Kusum Zishnu, special magistrate (joint district judge) of DESCO, has been shifted to Bhola as joint district judge while Md Shariful Islam, joint district judge of Meherpur, has been made joint district judge of Dinaipur, Md Mizanur

Rahman, joint district judge of Dinajpur, made joint district judge of Naogaon and Iftikhar Bin Aziz, additional chief judicial magistrate of Pabna, made joint district judge of arbitration court in Dhaka.

While Md Abdus Salam Khan, additional chief judicial magistrate of Bagerhat, has been transferred to Magura as joint district judge, Md Kamrul Hasan, additional chief judicial magistrate of Gopalganj, made special magistrate (joint district judge) of DESCO, Md Monir Kamal, joint district judge of Netrakona, made joint metropolitan sessions judge of Dhaka and Md Rostam Ali, joint district judge of Nilphamari, has been transferred to Kishoreganj as joint district judge.

Md Mohiuddin Khan, joint district judge of Chandpur, has been made joint district judge of Nilphamari, SM Nasim Reza, additional chief judicial magistrate of Satkhira, made joint district judge of Meherpur, AKM Mozammel Haque Chowdhury, joint district judge of Sylhet, made joint district judge of Patia Chauki of Chittagong, Md Alamgir Kabir, additional chief judicial magistrate of Munshiganj, made additional chief judicial magistrate of Gopalganj and Md Faruk Ahmed, joint district judge of Brahmanbaria, made joint district judge of Habiganj.



PHOTO: APOLLO HOSPITALS

Chief Executive Officer of Apollo Hospitals Dhaka Michael S Potter and other officials cut cakes at a function welcoming the New Year 2010 on the hospital premises in the city on Saturday.



PHOTO: AFP

A picture shows Burj Dubai, the world's tallest tower, in the Gulf emirate on Sunday. Dubai prepares to inaugurate today the world's tallest tower, a symbol of its unbridled ambitions of recent years, amid continuing fears over cash problems facing the emirate which narrowly escaped a financial catastrophe last month.

Dubai ruler's global vision reaches skywards

AFP, Dubai

Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashed al-Maktoum, who on Monday inaugurates the world's tallest tower to mark his fourth year in power, appears determined not to let debt woes dampen his vision for Dubai's future.

The emirate's British-educated ruler has been the driving force behind the spectacular rise of the Gulf emirate into a boom town, and strives to project the image of a modern Arab leader.

An avid horse-racing fan, Sheikh Mohammad has placed little Dubai firmly on the world map as a business, IT, leisure and tourism hub, creating a modern city where 50 years ago there was mostly sand.

Monday's official opening of Burj Dubai is on the fourth anniversary of his accession following the death of his elder brother Sheikh Maktoum on January 4, 2006.

Sheikh Mohammad, 60, has long pushed his vision of elevating Dubai to the status of global city, but the opening of the world record-breaking skyscraper comes amid a slump in investor confidence over the emirate's debt problems.

Hundreds of other building projects are in mothballs, and plunging property prices and weak demand had already put a damper on new schemes even before November's shock announcement by state-owned giant Dubai World that it wants to halt debt payments for six months.

Despite the emirate's financial problems, Sheikh Mohammad has kept both his cool and his confidence in Dubai's future.

"I'm a Bedouin, and the Bedouins like to accept challenges," he told journalists recently inside his marbled Dubai

palace.

Sheikh Mohammad carefully crafted his role as national leader after also succeeding his brother as vice president and prime minister of the seven-member United Arab Emirates federation that includes Dubai.

In February 2007, he unveiled an economic plan for Dubai aimed at maintaining double-digit growth, achieving a gross domestic product of 108 billion dollars and increasing per capita GDP to 44,000 dollars by 2015.

Economic aims set out in 2000 for the next 10 years "have been realised in half the time," with GDP reaching 37 billion dollars in 2005, he boasted.

Over the course of 20 years, Sheikh Mohammad transformed Dubai, an emirate of 1.4 million inhabitants where natives form just around 20 percent of the population, into a popular tourist destination, particularly with Europeans.

His decision in 1985 to arm Dubai with an airline, Emirates, was the first crucial move in a strategy to develop the desert city state into a business and tourism centre.

In the following years, countless mega projects -- ranging from the Burj Dubai tower to the three-kilometre (two mile) long Palm Jumeirah artificial island -- were launched and specialised free zones were created.

Even with the current debt crisis, Dubai remains a bustling city full of eye-catching sights.

Grandiose ventures, including a "Dubailand" planned as a Middle East version of Orlando and an indoor ski resort, have ensured a steady stream of visitors.

Sheikh Mohammad has led the charge to model Dubai -- where Asians are by far the largest group of expatriates, followed by Arabs and Westerners -- as a haven of tolerance.

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