

E-textbooks spark huge interest among students

NCTB website crashes several times due to heavy traffic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

E-textbooks of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has sparked so much interest among the students and guardians that its website has crashed several times due to an overload of incoming traffic in the last two weeks.

For the first time in the history of the country, the NCTB has uploaded 83 textbooks of both primary and secondary school subjects in its official website (nctb.gov.bd), from where they can be downloaded by anyone from anywhere in the world.

NCTB officials said they have been 'overwhelmed' by the people's interest in the books, which forced the website to collapse within 76 hours of its opening for downloads on January 4.

A record number of 3,000 people from over 40 countries hammered the website to force the collapse, followed by three more crashes over the next two weeks. However, the website was revived each time.

While many parents, students downloaded the books and printed them out, many could not gain access to the website as it remained collapsed for several days in intervals.

NCTB Chairman Prof Md Mustafa Kamaluddin said they had had hundreds of inquiries about the books. "The

response has been totally overwhelming," he said.

"We expanded the website's bandwidth limit up to 110 GB for expected increase in demand for the books. But the bandwidth limit was exceeded within a few days as more people tried to visit the website to download the books," he said.

According to NCTB sources, from January 7 to 18, another 11,629 people visited the website, consuming a total of 438.81 GB of bandwidth. A staggering 6,86,720 hits came from within the country while 55,214 hits from the USA and 40,176 hits from Saudi Arabia.

Bandwidth refers to the amount of data that can be passed along a communications channel in a given period of time.

According to sources at Internet hosting companies, 95 percent of websites in the Bangladesh rarely ever need 10 GB of bandwidth in a whole year. However, NCTB website have exceeded 438.81 GB of bandwidth within two weeks, making it a crashing record for any website of the country.

"The servers have been on meltdown," said Murshid Aktar of NCTB, who is responsible for maintaining the website.

"We never expected this sort of response. Hopefully things will be better

and less inconvenient for everyone next year," he said.

According to Murshid, the decision to upload the books on the website was taken in August last year. A total of 33 books of primary level education, and another 50 for higher-level education was modified, digitalised and uploaded to the website.

Works on editing and uploading another 23 books of higher-level education level is underway, said Murshid Aktar, research officer (curriculum wing) of NCTB.

According to the sources, the organisation do not have any designated department or people to look after the website. Due to the lack of technical know-how and experience in technological matters, the organisation was not adequately prepared to face such a situation.

The sources added that website is maintained by only one official although it does not even fall under his responsibility.

It was the first time the NCTB has experimented with making books available online and it was a good learning curve for us, an official said, adding that the organisation needs an ICT department.

NCTB Chairman Prof Md Mustafa Kamaluddin said they are planning to form an ICT department soon.



Alliance for Women Workers' Rights forms a human chain at Mukhtangan in the city yesterday demanding steps to stop sexual harassment of women at workplaces.

Build ramp for persons with disability

HR lawyers, activists appeal to CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights lawyers and activists appealed to the chief justice to redesign the infrastructure of the Supreme Court building to facilitate the movement of persons with disabilities in order to increase their accessibility to the judicial system.

In a letter sent to the chief justice on January 7, they mentioned that the persons with disabilities are one of the most marginalised segment of society. They often face various barriers to seeking justice, one of

which is limitations to their mobility.

They called for construction of ramps and setting up of elevators at the Supreme Court building for the persons with disabilities to ensure their access to justice.

They pointed out that as a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Bangladesh has special obligation to ensure the rights of these marginalised people.

They also stressed the need to sensitise court officials to the needs of the persons with disability.

The signatories to the letter included

Barrister Sara Hossain, Dr Faustina Pereira, director of Brac Human Rights and Legal Services, Advocate Ruhul Kuddus Babu, Advocate Fazul Haque, executive director of Madaripur Legal Aid Association, Advocate Nesar Ahmed, Barrister Kazi Mainul Hossain, Barrister ABM Siddique Rahman Khan, Advocate Farida Yasmin, assistant director of BLAST (Legal), and Md Noor Khan, director (investigation), Advocate Nina Goswami, assistant director (mediation), and Advocate Abu Obaidur Rahman, convener (legal advocacy) of Ain O Shalish Kendra.



Police arrest 12 Shibir activists and seize arms, bomb-making materials and jihadi books from their mess at Mistripara in the port city of Chittagong yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Make world beautiful by good deeds

Chief justice urges all

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice (CJ) Md Tafazzul Islam yesterday said human beings can make the world beautiful and living worthy through their good deeds, as the service to the mankind is the best virtue.

The human beings are known by their deeds, not by caste or creed, he said, adding that evil spirit inside mankind spreads envy and jealousy in society.

The CJ said this as the chief guest at a meeting on the occasion of Bijoya Punarmilani 2009 organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association Bijoya Punarmilani Parishad

Fog blankets most parts

FROM PAGE 16 maximum and minimum temperatures varied greatly.

According to the Met Office, the lowest nation-wide temperature was in Jessore, where it was 9.3 degrees Celsius.

In Sylhet a maximum of 27.8 degrees was recorded.

In Dhaka it dropped to 12 degrees and reached a high of 16.4 degree Celsius.

The average maximum temperature for this time of year is 25.2 degrees.

A Met Office official said the upper wind and fog caused the unusually cold temperatures in Dhaka yesterday.

The skies in Dhaka were so overcast that the sun was not visible.

The mild cold wave is also blowing over Barisal and Khulna divisions and the regions of Srimangal and Comilla.

Barisal and Chittagong divisions also experienced the foggy conditions.

The Met Office said that the fog, which many parts of the country have experienced for the past week, will start to lift from tomorrow.

The ferry service of Paturia-Daulatdia route was suspended for around five hours from 2:00am yesterday, causing immense sufferings to passen-

gers.

Ro Ro Ferry Amanat Shah and K Type Ferry Karabi anchored mid-river for around five hours while other ferries sat out at Paturia Daulatdia ghats.

Nearly 250 vehicles, including goods laden trucks, were lined up at Paturia and at Daulatdia ghat at 7:00 am nearly 200 were waiting.

Ferries plying the Mawa-Kewrakandi route were suspended for around eight hours from 3:00am, leaving around 300 vehicles stranded on either side of the ferry ghats.

Four ferries were also forced to anchor in the Padma River.

In Gopalganj the dense fog disrupted travel on various roads, including the Dhaka-Khulna highway.

The poor weather conditions has also disrupted academic activities at Rajshahi University for the last few days.

Students who live off-campus said that attending classes in morning is difficult because the weather is disrupting the road networks.

Medical sources said that cold-related illnesses such as pneumonia, asthma and influenza have increased among the students and many are being treated each day at the university Medical Centre.

BNP leaders in the dark

FROM PAGE 1

allegation raised by Chairperson Khaleda Zia during her media briefing on Sunday, even the matter had not come up during discussions in the national standing committee, the highest forum of the party.

Still they feel the government should clear the issue, since the leader of the opposition raised such a serious allegation.

Referring to newspaper reports, Khaleda, in the media briefing about her reaction to the outcome of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India, alleged that a 'secret security deal' had been signed between the two countries during the premier's visit there. She also demanded a clear cut statement on the matter from the government.

Khaleda, also the leader of

the opposition in parliament, however, did not disclose the name of the newspapers in which she had read the news.

While talking to The Daily Star, a member of BNP standing committee said, "In fact I first heard about it during the press conference. Later I tried to know more about it, but did not find anything."

Asked how BNP confirmed that a 'secret security deal' had been signed, Dr RA Gani, the senior most member of the standing committee, said the chairperson raised the matter giving reference of newspapers. "We saw it in newspapers," he said when asked whether BNP is sure that such a deal had been signed.

Asked whether his party tried to confirm the authenticity of the published news, prior to demanding a disclosure from the government, he said, "No."

A national Bangla daily, Naya Diganta, on January 16, published a report claiming that a 'secret security deal' had been signed between the two countries during the premier's visit to India.

Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, a former minister also a senior member of BNP standing committee, said the news was published in a national daily, which the government has not protested yet, and that is why they believe the news is authentic.

"The people want to know the contents of all the deals signed during the prime minister's visit to India," he said adding, the premier had the opportunity to discuss in the parliament all matters related to her visit, but she did not do that which created a public confusion.

Former army chief also BNP

Standing Committee Member Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman said he does not know anything about the 'secret deal' either, but the government should clear its position, since the leader of the opposition raised the issue publicly. "There is no scope for ignoring it. If it is a security deal that has been kept secret, it should be made public, as it could be dangerous for the country."

Another Standing Committee Member Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah said the issue did not come up in the discussions in their committee, but he would not be surprised if the grand alliance government had signed such a deal.

"I also saw the matter in newspapers. Madam [Khaleda] quoted newspapers, but the government has not denied the allegation till now. And that is tantamount to an admission," he said.

PM for quick release of \$10b fund

FROM PAGE 1

Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Bangladesh government jointly convened the talks.

Finance ministers, government high-ups, researchers and academicians from 15 LDCs in the Asia-Pacific region and other nations attended it to share their experiences on social and economic issues. The number of LDCs in the world now stands at 49.

Dr Noeleen Heyzer, under-secretary-general of the UN and executive secretary of ESCAP, said despite impressive progress, this region is still home to 980 million people, who live on less than \$1.25 a day and suffer from many non-income deprivations. "Latest reports suggest that the incidence of poverty in the

region could increase by an additional 35 to 40 million people due to the global economic crisis of 2008 and 2009. Most of these poor and vulnerable people are in the LDCs. For them progress has been too slow," Heyzer said.

She also called for a balanced financial system, investment in small and medium enterprises and exploitation of regional trade potentials.

The international community must come forward to respond to the financial crisis.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith said the development challenges that Bangladesh faces are identical for all LDCs.

"The LDCs face challenges including lack of resources, poor governance and limited market access to the developed countries," Muhith said.

Some LDCs have performed very well in areas like poverty reduction and investment, Muhith said.

Bangladesh has had a success in reducing poverty substantially from 58 percent to 40 percent of the population in the last 13 years.

Surendra Pandey, Nepalese finance minister and representative of the Chair of the LDC Group, said the number of LDCs has not reduced in the last few years.

The issues of trade, tourism, financial crisis, flood and coastal erosion should be addressed collectively for the development of LDCs, the Nepalese finance minister said.

"We need greater market access to developed countries," he said.

Cheick Sidi Diarra, under-secretary general at UN-

OHRLS, called for an increased participation of civil society and representatives from the private sector people for the development of LDCs.

Most Millennium Development Goals set for the LDCs could not be achieved due to energy, food and financial crises over decades, he said.

The fourth conference of the LDCs in Turkey in 2011 will give them an opportunity to find out ways to achieve the goals, Cheick Sidi Diarra said.

Finance Minister of Vanuatu Sela Molisa said it is essential to devise effective national policies, increase efforts, develop infrastructures and strengthen regional cooperation to ensure development of the LDCs.

The Brussels Programme of Action for the LDCs for the decade 2001-10, was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/279, said Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, secretary of the Economic Relations Division of Bangladesh.

It represents a time-bound comprehensive poverty reduction strategy with 30 internationally agreed development goals, he said.

The ERD secretary said seven commitments including duty-free and quota-free market access and removal of trade barriers were made in the Brussels Programme of Action.

'India has lost astute politician at death of Jyoti Basu'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political parties, socio-cultural organisations and individuals yesterday condoned the death of former chief minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in a message to the Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna said that India has lost an astute politician and statesman at his death.

His death would not only create an exceptional vacuum in Indian politics but also in the Bangladesh-India relationship continuum.

Dipu Moni said Basu would be remembered in Bangladesh in the highest of esteem for his sagacity and for his unqualified friendship for the people of Bangladesh.

He has been a source of

strength for Bangladesh over the decades and has been a bulwark in shaping of warm bonds of friendship and cooperation between Bangladesh and India.

She conveyed sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and hoped they would have strength to bear irreparable loss.

In separate statements, Narayananj Chamber of Commerce and Industries, 11 parties, Gonotontri Party, Jatiya Gonotantrik League, Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jot, Ain O Salish Kendra, Sammilita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad, Zaker Party, Jatiya Gonotantrik Sramik Federation, Jatiya Front, Revolutionary Workers Party of Bangladesh and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad also expressed deep shock at the death of Jyoti Basu.

Join Stamford University

Stamford University Bangladesh invites application from eligible candidates to fill up the following positions:

Civil Engineering Lecturer (01)
Pharmacy Lecturer (04)
Pharmacy Lab Assistant (02)

Eligibility:
The candidate should have a 4 years Bsc (Engg.) degree in CEN from a recognized university. Should have first classes or equivalents all throughout.

The candidate should have a Bsc (Hons.) & Masters degree in Pharmacy from a recognized university. Should have first classes or equivalents all throughout.

Lab Assistant:
The candidate should have a Bsc (Hons.) & Masters degree in Pharmacy from a recognized university. Should have minimum second classes or equivalents all throughout.

Last date of Submission: January 27, 2010

Application addressing "The Registrar" with a detailed CV, 2 copies recent color photographs and photocopies of all academic marks sheets & certificates has to reach Human Resource Division, Stamford University Bangladesh, 744 Salmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1208 or CV can be e-mailed to registrar@stamforduniversity.edu.bd. Please mention the name of the post on the top of the envelope. Serving applicants should apply through proper channel. Only short listed candidates will be called for interview. Incomplete application will not be accepted. Any kind of persuasion will be treated as disqualification.

STAMFORD UNIVERSITY
BANGLADESH (Govt. Approved)

Renowned Endocrinologist & Diabetologist
Dr. Abdul Mannan Sarker
is now in Apollo Hospitals Dhaka

Dr. Abdul Mannan Sarker is one of the few Endocrinologists of the country, covering all areas of Hormone Disorders. After completion of his MBBS in 1981, he did his Diploma (DEM) in 1992 and MD in Endocrinology and Metabolic Disorder from BIRDEM, Dhaka in 1996. He has served in different Govt. Medical Colleges and Hospitals of the country. Furthermore, he boasts of a glorious career of 5 years in King Fahad Specialist Hospital, Saudi Arabia as Consultant Diabetologist and Endocrinologist from 2003 to 2008. At the same time he was also attached with Qassim University College of Medicine, KSA as Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Endocrinology and Diabetology.

Other than management of Diabetes and Thyroid disorders, he has expertise in managing other hormonal problems like Growth Disorders (Short & Tall Stature), Hirsutism, Gynaecomastia, Obesity, Infertility etc.

Before joining Apollo Hospitals Dhaka, Dr. Abdul Mannan Sarker was working as Associate Professor & Head of the Department of Endocrinology and Diabetology in Sir Salimullah Medical College & Mitford Hospital, Dhaka.

Dr. Abdul Mannan Sarker
MBBS, DEM (DU), MD (Endocrinology)
Coordinator & Consultant - Endocrinology & Diabetology

Emergency Hotline: 10678

Appointment: (02)-8401680, (02)-8845242

Emergency: 01911-555555 | Ambulance: 01714-090000

Plot 81, Block E, Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka-1229, Bangladesh

Master Health Check: (02)-8401600 | **Fertility Centre:** 01713-041283

Info Centre: Chittagong: (043)-4485861, 01713-064555

Sylhet: (0409)-4116111, 01713-047461 | **Bogra:** (0644)-5191069, 01713-229888

Info@apollohaka.com | www.apollohaka.com

sts group

Apollo Hospitals
DHAKA

touching lives

LEAD AUDITOR COURSE ON ISO 14001:2004
(ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM)

For the Survival of Mother Earth!

Date: 01 February 2010 to 05 February 2010

Registration by 28 January 2010

Bureau Veritas (Bangladesh) Private Limited

Contact Person: Syed Anwar Hossain. Email: anwar.hossain@in.bureauveritas.com

Tel: 01714 069177, 01730 427224, 02-9146113, 8143387 & 031-2525403