

20,000 Bangladeshi students to get scope for edn in US a year

Says US Under Secretary Judith A Mchale

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US will provide education to 20,000 Bangladeshi students in its colleges and universities every year, US Under Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy Judith A Mchale said yesterday.

ture and people," she told reporters after a lecture at the Senate Bhaban of Dhaka University.

According to the American Centre in Dhaka, only 2,700 Bangladeshi students are currently studying in the US colleges and universities.

Judith delivered the lecture on 'Building Bridges through Studies in the US'. US Ambassador James F Moriarty, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique and Pro Vice

Chancellor Harun Ur Rashid were also present.

Judith said there are many US educational institutions, which are interested to recruit students from Bangladesh. From now on, the American Centre in Dhaka will prepare more tools to inform the students of financial and other facilities the US institutions offer.

She, however, did not mention anything specific on quota or scholarship for Bangladeshi students.

The US under secretary said the recent global economic downturn has proved that the world is very much interconnected and problems of a country affect the whole world. The world is facing even more challenges, so more understanding of public issues is of critical importance, she noted.

"This requires open-mindedness to work together. But it always does not depend on diplomatic channels, but people-to-people contact. Therefore, we are expanding our education to more international students," she added.

Judith, who is visiting Bangladesh for the first time, said Bangladesh and the US maintain a long history of cooperation and will continue it for the betterment of people.

"I am confident that Bangladesh's future leaders will have more opportunities than ever before to experience firsthand the friendship of the American people," she said, adding that more US students will also be coming to Bangladesh to study.

Asked about the deportation of Lt Col (ret'd) AM Rashed Chowdhury, a convicted killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, US Ambassador James F Moriarty said they would not comment on this issue because it is a judicial matter.



PHOTO: STAR

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique presents a crest to US Under Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy Judith A Mchale at a lecture at the Senate Bhaban of Dhaka University yesterday while Prof Harun Ur Rashid, extreme left, and James F Moriarty, second from left, look on.



PHOTO: STAR

Lawmaker and human rights activist Tarana Halim and others console her sister Samia Halim, who lost her son Saif Ahmed to a road accident two months ago, when she burst into tears during a human chain programme in front of the Willes Little Flower School in the city yesterday. Guardians, teachers and students of the school formed the human chain demanding punishment to the killers of Sheikh Hamim, a student of the school, who was killed in a road accident on Wednesday. (Story on Page 2)

'Ensure housing for urban poor'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Slum dwellers of Dhaka city held their first convention yesterday with a call to the government to ensure adequate housing facilities for four million urban poor.

The speakers at the convention said the urban poor are playing an important role in the economy as the core workforce and poverty alleviation will not be possible without ensuring their basic rights.

The convention was held at the LGED auditorium in the city under the platform

Nagar Doridro Bostibashir Unnyan Sangstha (NDBUS).

University Grants Commission Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam in his speech said the main problem behind the misery of the urban poor is that they have no ownership of the land that eventually creates the housing crisis and poor living condition. He stressed the need for land reform as key to poverty alleviation.

Speaking as the chief guest KM Mozammel Haque, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the minis-

try of land, said state must ensure safe housing for the urban poor.

He said it has been a practice of all governments to distribute khas land to the wealthy or create luxurious housing project for them instead of distributing it to the poor.

UPPRP National Project Director Engineer Ali Ahmed, Centre for Urban Studies Treasurer Salma A Shafi, NDBUS President Abdul Hamid Fakir and General Secretary MA Rashid Khan also spoke at the convention.

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ India to help prepare dredging plan

Says Indian high commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Indian team will help prepare a plan very soon on the dredging of rivers in Bangladesh, as the neighbouring country had agreed to support the government's project to dredge rivers for flood control and smooth navigation.

Indian High Commissioner Rajeev Mitter told this to reporters yesterday after a meeting with Finance Minister AMA Muhith.

A dredging team from India came to Bangladesh last week and they visited the areas where dredging would be carried out, Rajeev Mitter said, adding that the team will now prepare a list of

the areas for dredging.

As per the joint communiqué signed between the two countries during the recent visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India, the prime minister of India agreed to support the river dredging project. India indicated that it would provide nine dredgers. The two prime ministers also agreed to take steps for the dredging of Ichhamati and some other rivers.

During yesterday's meeting, the finance minister and the Indian envoy discussed ways of implementing provisions of the joint communiqué.

"We have discussed how we can go ahead with our commitments," the Indian envoy told reporters. "This time is

not for mere promises. We are trying to implement them."

He also said technical work on the supply of locomotives, passenger coaches and buses as well as dredgers has already started.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith told reporters that the process of implementing the commitments made in the joint communiqué has already started.

"First, we will give priority to the import of power and the dredging of rivers. Then we will work on other issues," he said.

"When the import of power will start, we will realise that the real implementation of the joint communiqué has started," he added.

Jahanara granted bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Prof Jahanara Begum, former adviser to the primary and mass education ministry, in a case filed for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information from the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Judge ANM Bashir Ullah of the Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order upon a bond of Tk 1 lakh with two guarantors. Earlier on January 31, the same court sent Jahanara, also secretary general of Liberal Democratic Party, to jail after she along with her lawyers surrendered before the court and sought bail in the case.

Moving the bail petition, Jahanara's lawyers told the court that their client was sent to jail as she could not surrender to the court within the time limit set earlier by the High Court. Their client had been suffering from different ailments. So, they prayed for granting her bail.

The prosecutor, on the contrary, told the court that the accused had violated the HC order that directed her to surrender before the court within eight weeks. So, the prosecutor opposed the bail petition.

After hearing both the sides, the judge granted bail to Prof Jahanara and fixed February 18 for hearing on charge framing against her.

Mahbubul Alam, assistant director of ACC, filed the case with Ramna Police Station, on February 12, 2008, against Jahanara for amassing wealth illegally and concealing wealth information in the statement she had submitted to the commission.

In the case statement, the complainant mentioned that Jahanara amassed wealth worth Tk 2.34 crore beyond her known sources of income and concealed information of wealth worth over Tk 2 crore.

Work for poverty alleviation

Abed urges former students of Brac University

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brac Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed yesterday urged the former students of Brac University to work for poverty alleviation in the country as well as across the globe.

"All the alumni of the university should participate in the move of poverty alleviation," he said while speaking as the chief guest at the launching ceremony of the Alumni Association of Brac University at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Describing the activities of Brac, he also called upon the alumni to help develop the nation.

The Brac chairperson pointed out its various development activities, including early childhood development, education, health, micro-finance and small-scale entrepreneurship development.

He also said Brac is operating at least 30,000 pre-schools and 40,000 primary schools in Bangladesh as well as about 8,000 primary schools in Afghanistan, 400 in Uganda and some schools in Punjab of Pakistan.

Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, vice-chancellor of the university, the alumni association can cooperate any activities of the university through providing financial

assistance, ensuring participation in social and cultural activities as well as mentoring present students. He mentioned that there are many universities in North America, which run various activities, including scholarships for poor and meritorious students, with the financial assistance from their alumni.

President Shoeb Ahmed and Vice President Shamim Ahmed of the association also spoke on the occasion.

Members of the governing board, academic council and faculties, graduates and senior officials of the university attended the programme followed by a cultural soiree.



PHOTO: STAR

Brac Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed launches Alumni Association of Brac University by cutting a cake at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. Brac University Vice Chancellor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, second from right, was present on the occasion.

MPO application on website

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The education ministry has published the application form and a guideline for Monthly Pay Order (MPO) on its website for bringing new non-government educational institutions under MPO.

All concerned can download the 60-page guideline from the website www.moedu.gov.bd, said an official handout.

Educational institutions should submit their applications to the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, technical institutions to the Directorate of Technical Education and the madrasas to Madrasa Education Board while other institutions should submit applications to the respective deputy commissioners by

Lawyers, DC office staffs clash: 10 hurt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 people were injured when the employees of deputy commissioner's (DC) office and lawyers of nearby judge court in the city clashed yesterday over a trifling matter.

Sources said the clashes began at the DC's office around 2:30pm when the employees tried to stop Additional Public Prosecutor Mahfuzur Rahman Likhan from using the main staircase of the DC office.

Mahfuzur, also assistant general secretary of Dhaka Bar Association, was asked not to use the staircase as it was covered with red carpets to welcome Adviser to the

Prime Minister HT Imam.

According to witnesses, the employees scuffled with Mahfuzur as he refused to comply with the request. As the news spread, members of Dhaka Bar Association rushed to the DC's office and were locked into a clash with the employees.

Deputy Commissioner Zillar Rahman told The Daily Star that it was a misunderstanding among the employees and lawyers.

"I have formed a committee to enquire into the incident", Zillar said.

HT Imam inaugurated the 'Public Internet' at DC's office around 3:00pm yesterday.

'Digitise judicial system to reduce people's suffering'

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillar Rahman yesterday emphasised the need for digitising the country's judicial system to reduce the sufferings of people.

The president made the remarks when outgoing Chief Justice M Tafazzul Islam met him at Bangabhaban.

The outgoing chief justice apprised the president that he had given necessary instructions to digitise the judicial system so that lawyers can know the schedules of their cases from their personal computers.

He hoped that the e-governance system in the judicial process would greatly help reduce delay in disposing of pending cases.

The president lauded the role of the chief justice for his performance in establishing the rule of law in the country.



PHOTO: STAR

Awami League lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury speaks at a discussion at the city's Cirdap auditorium yesterday. On his right is Dr Iftekharuzzaman and on his left are M Hafizuddin Khan and Prof Muzaffer Ahmad. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised the discussion. (Story on Page 16)

Advertisement for Apollo Hospitals featuring Dr. G P N Varma, a Veteran General & Laparoscopic Surgeon. The ad includes his qualifications, appointment details, and contact information for the hospital.