

NEWS IN brief

UGC body to probe irregularities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has formed a committee to investigate the reported 'irregularities' in Asian University of Bangladesh (AUB), and Victoria University. The allegation of corruption, financial and academic irregularities in AUB, and anomalies regarding appointment of vice chancellor and pro-vice chancellor, and other academic irregularities in Victoria University, which had been reported in detail in the newspaper, had drawn attention of the commission, said a UGC press release yesterday. Following the reports, a four-member probe committee, headed by UGC Member Prof Aatful Hye Shibly, has been formed.

Boy killed in city road clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 12-year-old boy was killed yesterday in a road accident at Sabujbagh in the capital. The victim, Mohaimenur Rahman Mehedi, was a student of class five at Tanjumul Millat Madrasa. The accident happened around 2:00pm when he was riding a bicycle in front of Maniknagar Model School, said Nahid Ahmed, sub-inspector of Sabujbagh Police Station. As a van overtook him, the bicycle hit its rear portion causing injuries to the rider. Local people rushed Mehedi to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries around 3:00pm. Following the incident, enraged people vandalised several vehicles and barricaded the road near the spot at Maniknagar.

Woman crushed under train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

An unidentified woman was killed as a train ran over her at Shyampur railway station in Rangpur Sadar upazila on Friday evening. According to the Government Railway Police, the woman was trying to board the running Dinajpur bound-train from Balashighat. But she could not manage to get on and fell down under the train. She died on the spot.

Call to strengthen student politics

CU CORRESPONDENT

Calling to strengthen student politics on the basis of its ideology, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front of Chittagong city unit observed the organisation's 28th founding anniversary yesterday. Observing the day, the organisation's leaders and activists held a rally before Chittagong Central Shaheed Minar around 10:30am where they put forward a seven-point demand including a stop to commercialisation of education.

Dr Mizan blasts irregularities at Faridpur hospital

UNB, Faridpur

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Prof Dr Mizanur Rahman has expressed his dissatisfaction over the irregularities and mismanagement in the Trauma Centre of Faridpur Medical College Hospital. During visiting the centre yesterday, he saw a seven-year-old boy, Shabbir, yelling on the operation table of the Trauma Centre. He castigated the nurses and doctors of the centre after seeing the boy lying in sub-human condition. He directed the officials of the centre to take steps for improving the situation immediately. He also visited Faridpur Muslim Mission, General Hospital and Free Plastic Surgery Camp of Faridpur Welfare Foundation, Government Girls' High School and Zila School. He asked all concerned to be sincere to ensure the proper treatment of poor people.



Appearances can be deceiving as this narrow strip of waterway resembling a sewerage line is actually what is left of Kutubkhali canal of Jatrabari in the city, full of murky water and garbage being relentlessly dumped by the locals, encroached upon by some local "influentials" and spreading an unbearable stench. The photo was taken yesterday.
PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Law soon to ensure elected dist councils Says LGRD minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will enact and amend necessary laws during its tenure, to ensure that zilla parishads [district councils] are run by elected representatives, LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam said yesterday. Ashrafur, also the general secretary of Awami League, said "We don't want government-appointed administrators running the zilla parishads. Rather, we want elected representatives to run them." Speaking at the orientation programme of newly appointed administrators and chief executive officers, the minister said that the government will enact and amend necessary laws to hold the district council elections. "We are working to build a strong foundation for zilla parishads, so that its administrator is powerful enough to work at the highest tier of the local government," he added. Over 110 newly appointed district council administrators and chief executive officers attended the orientation programme at the National Institute of Local Government auditorium in Agargaon. On the Dhaka City Corporations polls, Ashraf said election of the DCCs will be held after reconstitution of the Election Commission (EC). Elections to Rangpur and Gazipur city corporations will also be held once the new EC is formed. He said that the government is planning to create 19 larger zilla parishads and will form a city corporation for each zilla parishad. Earlier on December 15, last year, the government appointed administrators to 61 zilla parishads, all of them belonging to AL and its front organisations. It drew huge criticism from various quarters.

City hospitals run huge fire risk

HELEMUL ALAM

Most of the hospitals and clinics of Dhaka city are operating without necessary fire fighting equipment and trained staff, an official of Fire Service and Civil Defence has said. Wishing anonymity, he also said even the majority of modern hospitals have no modern equipment. During visits to six hospitals of the city between December 14 and 15, this correspondent has witnessed that each of the hospital lacks modern fire fighting devices. The visits also showed that the hospitals have insufficient or no trained staff and preventive measures for fighting fires. The hospitals are Dhaka Medical College Hospital, National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic Rehabilitation (Nitor), Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), Birdem Hospital, Central Hospital, and LabAid Specialised Hospital.

It is necessary to keep hydrant points, hose reels, and fire extinguishers at every floor of a hospital, Zahurul Amin Miyan, assistant director of warehouse and fire prevention of the Fire Service and Civil Defence, told The Daily Star. The correspondent, however, found no hydrant point and hose reel at DMCH and Nitor (Pangu hospital) except some fire extinguishers. There were also no trained people who could use the fire equipments. DMCH Director Brig Gen Shahidul Haque Mallik said the hospital's main building is not under fire risk, as the wall of the building is 20-inch thick and consists of lots of open space. He said the authorities will increase the number of extinguishers in the burn unit and set up fire equipment like

hydrant points and smoke detectors in its new under-construction building. At Nitor, this correspondent witnessed a small fire incident, which occurred just beside the emergency ward, but an hour went by with no initiative to douse the fire which started from a burning cigarette butt at 1:30pm was doused at 2:50pm. Though it was a small fire, the hospital staff showed utter negligence. Khondokar Abdul Awal Rizvi, director of Nitor, said it is very important to aware the staff about fire incidents, and the authorities are planning to train them on fire fighting. As there is a lack of budget, the hospital is taking preventive measures as per its capacity, he said. The recent fire accident in AMRI Hospital in Paschimbanga that cost 92 lives has brought some awareness to the hospital authorities and prompted them to take necessary initiatives.

Brig Gen (Retd) Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah, director general of Fire Service and Civil Defence, said the fire department is to take initiative to train the staff of different hospitals and clinics on fire fighting, as the hospital staff have a huge lack in training. "We will start the training programmes this month, as during a recent survey on the hospitals we found that most of the officials and staff of the hospitals and clinics, except the big ones, do not know what to do during a fire incident". Some 13 small fire incidents occurred in hospitals and clinics in the city in 2011. Of them, the fire fighters had to deal with 10. Only three fire incidents were dealt with at the initiative of the hospital authorities, the DG said. Three persons were hurt in those incidents.

Brig Gen Shahidullah said Fire Service and Civil Defence will train a particular number of staff of a hospital so that they can train other staff. "We will bring all the hospitals and clinics under the training programme gradually", he said. Assistant Director Zahurul Amin Miyan said the hospitals should set up modern fire equipments like auto sprinkler, smoke detector, and heat resistant door at the points like OT, ICU, CCU and post operative rooms. Every hospital is also required to keep one or more emergency stairs on the basis of its accommodation capacity and it should set up auto fire alarms, Zahurul said, adding that there should be a door in front of the stair, which will be able to give protection against a two hours' fire. He also said installation of emergency lifts are also necessary especially in modern hospitals. BSMMU During a visit to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, only a few fire extinguishers were found. There were no hydrant points or hose reels. The hospital also lacks trained persons to operate the extinguishers. At the cabin block of the hospital, which was inaugurated on April 18, 2001, the emergency stair was found locked up. Brig Gen Md Abdul Majid Bhuiyan of BSMMU said the hospital has a sufficient number of extinguishers at different floors, which will be used by the staff during any fire. He said the authorities conduct training programmes for the staff on fire fighting several times a year. According to the fire fighters' suggestion, Brig Gen Majid said, the authorities are planning to set up two water reservoirs, one on top of the roof and the other under the

ground, to fight fire. He said the hospital will strengthen the training programme further. Central Hospital At Central Hospital, the correspondent found hose reels and extinguishers at every floor but the emergency exits were blocked. The authorities had been using the space for other purposes like setting up beds, blocking the exits. LabAid Specialised Hospital Though there were extinguishers, hydrant points with sufficient hose reels, and emergency exits, no modern fire fighting equipment was found at the private hospital. Dr AKM Mahubul Haque, director of the hospital, said the authorities train a particular group every week, who will fight fire. "We have sufficient number of fire extinguishers and hydrant points with hose reels to fight fire properly". Birdem Hospital The correspondent found insufficient the number of modern equipment at Birdem hospital. "We have already submitted proposals to the fire committee of the hospital to bring modern fire fighting equipment", Ismail Hossain, head of security of the hospital, said, adding that the hospital trains its staff on fire fighting every two months. On December 12, the Fire Service and Civil Defence started a survey on the hospitals of the country. The fire staff have visited over 100 hospitals and clinics till December 19. The survey was started following a High Court directive. On December 12, 2011, the HC asked the Directorate General of Health Services for a report on fire safety measures at hospitals, clinics, and other health centres across the country by February 28, 2012.

Esab team visits Daily Star press

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of Engineering Students Association of Bangladesh (Esab) yesterday visited The Daily Star press to make updated its members about the latest technology and to make them connected with the industry. The 22-member team, led by the Esab President Fahim Tahmid Chowdhury, under the outreach programme got firsthand experience on modern printing technology while visiting the newspaper's Tejgaon Industrial Area, said a release. "They [Esab members] were amazed with the latest printing technology. Moreover, they were acknowledged with the exclusive technology of computer to plate," the press release added. It further said that after visiting the whole press, the members found them acknowledged with the press's technology and mechanism. The organisation's vice-president Asif Al Hye, general secretary Arif Raihan Maahi, assistant general secretary Kazi Safwath Abedin, among others, included in the delegation. Esab, the largest engineering student community in the country, arrange such outreach programmes on regular basis.

Held Hizb ut men not first-timers in arrest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This is not the first time that the five alleged Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh members, arrested by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Friday when they brought out a procession in the city's Uttara, were detained, said police. "Police arrested them five months ago when they brought out a procession and were distributing leaflets of the banned organisation in Uttara," said Khandker Rezaul Hasan, officer-in-charge (OC) of Uttara Police Station. They came out of jail on bail around one month ago and resumed their activities, said the OC, adding that during conversations under police custody, the youths seemed to be dedicated and staunch believers of the outfit's philosophy. Each youth was placed on a six-day remand from yesterday in two separate cases, one for attacking Rab personnel and another under the anti-terrorism act, filed by a Rab official. The youths had resisted arrest, leading to a scuffle with Rab personnel and the subsequent injury to two of the youths and two Rab personnel. Hizb ut-Tahrir Bangladesh has been banned by the government since October 22, 2010.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country in 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during mid night till morning, Met Office said.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may fall by 2-3 degrees Celsius over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:37pm today and rises at 6:43am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 27.0 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 12.9 degrees Celsius at Srirangal.

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	Evening
Dhaka	21.5	16.2	82	68
Chittagong	25.2	16.8	94	72
Rajshahi	22.3	14.2	95	69
Rangpur	22.0	13.2	89	65
Khulna	24.0	17.5	71	79
Barisal	24.2	17.0	86	90
Sylhet	24.4	13.3	98	88
Cox's Bazar	27.0	14.7	95	72



Gonosanghati Andolon brings out a procession before Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday protesting the torture on a Bangladeshi by some Indian Border Security Force members in Murshidabad district, Paschimbanga on January 18.

Mother, 2 children hospitalised after suicide attempt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman and her two girl children were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after they poisoned themselves at Mirpur in the capital. They are Taslima Begum, 27, wife of Siraj Miah, a car driver of a private firm, and her daughters Swarna, a student of class two, and one and a half years old Turna. At the hospital, their neighbour Shimu Akhter told reporters that around 5:00pm she heard someone groaning with pain in the victims' house at D Block of Mirpur section-2. As she entered the house, she saw Taslima and her daughters gasping on a bed. A half-filled bottle of toilet cleaner was lying beside them. Shimu then called out the caretaker of the house, Nazrul Islam, and took Taslima and the children to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital from where they were later shifted to DMCH. DMCH sources said Taslima was in a critical condition and unable to speak whereas the condition of her daughters was better. Taslima's husband Siraj Miah said he had a small quarrel with his wife the night before over transferring their elder daughter to a school in the area. He added that he went out for shopping yesterday noon and then to his work place. His neighbours informed him of the matter over the phone in the afternoon.