

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

A New Look for Applied Physics

I was in Dhaka University recently with my friend Sakhawat, alumnus of the Applied Physics department. This department is housed in a nondescript white building. Adjacent to ornate red Curzon Hall it looks out of place. When we were told that the building had a brand new facade we wanted to see for ourselves.

Indeed, a new exterior enveloped the old building. It left the original building untouched but added a new facade, including high red arches and domes resembling Curzon Hall. It was as if a new layer had been added from the outside. There were subtle differences - the new dome, for example, was less intricate than the Curzon dome - but the two buildings now looked very much alike.

Wanting to find out more, we talked with Dr. Adnan Kiber, head of the department and Sakhawat's batchmate. Several teachers were also present.

Now known as Applied Physics, Electronics and Communication Engineering, the department started its journey in 1965. It is home to about 500 students and has a class (batch) size of 70. Graduating students find employment in a variety of sectors including government (BCS), telecommunications, banking, and various research organizations.

The department is one of the most sought-after in Dhaka University. "The competition to enter becomes tougher as time passes," said Dr. Kiber. Currently, forty thousand students (with GPA 5) apply into a group of science-related majors at the University. Those admitted into Applied Physics rank within the best three hundred of these applicants.

Courses emphasize the application of physics for engineering and technological use. Workload is intense. Instructors often use course material from MIT and Harvard. Students are trained to think out of the box and be nimble with engineering, scientific and analytical work.

Graduates excel in many fields. This year, an alumnus competed against hundreds of other physicists to win an international prize from Rutherford-Appleton Laboratory in the UK. Others have started successful semiconductor ventures in Silicon Valley, rose to senior positions in the U.S. software industry, or became prominent business leaders. This year, two instructors and a student won tickets to the Lindau meeting of Nobel laureates through a global competition.

Looking forward, Dr. Kiber expressed concern about science and technology education. "Today's young people are attracted to commerce-related



Dr. Kiber under a new arch.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

subjects for financial reasons," he said. However, the nation cannot move forward without excelling in science and technology. The government needs to formulate policy and provide incentives to attract the brightest minds into these areas, he emphasised.

We discussed the new facade. "The work was done by the government with funding from a Japanese heritage fund," he said. The Public Works Ministry provided architectural design and implementation. The University oversaw the two-year construction which cost about two crore Taka.

Before leaving, I walked around the building once more, photographing. The trees - including a Nageshwar wearing leaves of many colours - were vibrant after rain. Their green contrasted nicely with the red exterior. I knew I would be back for more pictures.

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MP hurt in road crash

A CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Nazrul Islam Manju, a lawmaker of Khulna-2 constituency and president of Khulna city unit of BNP, was injured as a car rammed his private car from the opposite direction at KDA Avenue in the city yesterday noon.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred while he, along with some of the party workers, was returning home from a marriage ceremony. His car was smashed after being hit by another one at Alisan square.

Manju said he sustained injuries in his waist.

The striking car was seized

Two teachers held with Phensidyl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Two teachers were detained by Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel at Bangalpara border under Panchagarh upazila of Thakurgaon on Thursday for allegedly possessing around four Phensidyl bottles.

Afterwards, some men tried to snatch the duo, Masud Pervez, a local madrasa teacher, and Md Samsuzzaman alias Nayan, an assistant teacher of Panchagarh High School, from the upazila's Ghagra BGB Camp.

Masud, 30, is the son of late Sabiruddin Ahmed of Dacopara and nephew of a local lawmaker while Samsuzzaman, 40, is the son of Hazrat Ali of Rowshanbag in Panchagarh.

Police said the duo illegally crossed over to India on a motorcycle that day and were detained on their way back.

Judicial Magistrate Abdul Malek sent them to jail yesterday after BGB handed them over to Panchagarh Police Station, where a case was filed, accusing them of illegal cross-border movement and drug trade.

The proposed budget that increased the tax net and rates will add to the woes of the masses who are trying to cope with the rising prices of essentials, some left-leaning political parties and workers' organisations observed yesterday.

Terming the budget a charter to protect the interests of the society's affluent section, they said the scope to whiten black money will only benefit the corrupt.

Communist Party of Bangladesh, in a press statement, said the budget will fuel the prevailing discrimination between the rich and the poor.

"Inflation and unemployment will make the common peoples' livelihoods vulnerable," it said.

Workers' Party of Bangladesh said increasing the minimum tax from Tk 2,000 to 3,000 will do injustice to the masses.

There were no special measures to help achieve a GDP growth of 7.2 percent. The GDP would continue to stay at the current year's 6.3 percent, said the party in a statement.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith did not address any of the economic and

political issues that affected people but defended the measures (regarding the power and energy sectors) that made the economy vulnerable, it added.

Though safety net measures meant for people below the poverty line were maintained, the government ignored many important issues.

These include implementation of the workers' wage commission, rationing for garment workers and the poor, reduction of urea prices, ensuring fair price of farm produce for farmers and nationalisation of primary education, it said.

Bangladesh National Awami Party-Bangladesh NAP said the budget had no significant measures to create employment but elements which will increase the inflation rate.

There is also the indication of a fuel price hike, which will increase people's expenditure, said the party in a statement.

Bikalpadhara Bangladesh President Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said the government will fail to implement the "conventional" budget due to administrative inefficiency.

Addressing a programme in the capital, he slammed the deficit budget

of Tk 52,000 crore, which the government plans to get from banks that are already in bad shape.

Revolutionary Workers' Party of Bangladesh said reduction of subsidies in agriculture and the rural development sector will affect the country's food security.

Bangladesh National Awami Party said the scope for whitening black money will encourage corruption and illegal means of income while the deficit budget will create anarchy in the financial sector.

Democratic Revolutionary Party said the budget did not address ways to curb the rising prices of essentials that are crippling the common peoples' lives.

Construction of hospitals and low cost dormitories in industries and ensuring free treatment and due wages for workers were overlooked in the budget, said Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad.

Swadhin Bangla Garments Sramik Karmachari Federation, at a rally before Jatiya Press Club, demanded introduction of rationing and healthcare facilities for garment workers.

Rogue OC transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the face of continuing demonstration of journalists, the officer-in-charge of Dhanmondi Police Station has been transferred.

Anwar Hossain, inspector (investigation) of the police station, said "O C Moniruzzaman will hand over the charge to me today (yesterday). We received the transfer order a day ago."

Journalists have been demanding removal of Moniruzzaman, as he led police into using batons and firing blank shots to disperse journalists, who were demonstrating the death of journalist Bibash Chandra Saha in a road accident in the capital's Dhanmondi May 11.

O C Moniruzzaman was transferred to Demra Police Station, while the Demra OC was sent to Detective Branch of Police of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The transfer order came, as a number of journalist organisations got united at Dhaka Reporters' Unity on Thursday over the demand of the OC's removal.

NEWS IN brief

Navy team leaves for UN mission

METRO DESK

A team of 320 Bangladesh Navy personnel left Chittagong yesterday for Lebanon to board on BNS Osman and BNS Modhumoti deployed in Peacekeeping Operations under the banner of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

Assistant Chief of Naval Staff Operations Rear Admiral M Farid Habib bid farewell to the team at Shah Amanat International Airport urging them to work with honesty, sincerity and professionalism to achieve the appreciation and good name for Bangladesh, says a press release.

High rank naval officers of Chittagong, including Commodore Commanding Chittagong M Anwarul

Body of woman found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police recovered an unidentified body of a young woman from Lohalia River bank at Bhuria village under sadar upazila on Thursday.

The police said they recovered the body of the woman aged about 25-years after being informed by locals around 7:00 pm.

The body's both hands and legs were tied with veil and scarf, police sources said.

Police suspect that someone dumped the body into the river after killing her.

The body was sent to Patuakhali General Hospital

Prisoner dies in Natore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A prisoner at Natore district jail died of cardiac arrest early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Abdul Karim, 60, a resident of Bonbela area in the Natore town. He was landed in the jail in a drug related case.

Shawkat Hossain, jailor of the jail, said Karim was admitted to Natore Sadar Hospital around 4:00 am as he felt pains in chest.

Dr Tulshi Kumar Saha, a medical officer at the hospital, said Karim died around 5:10 am.

The body of the prisoner was handed over to his family members, the jailor Shawkat said.

Bandarban AL leader murdered

BSS, Bandarban

Miscreants chopped and brutally murdered Awami League leader Pale Mro of Poamuhuri village under Alikadam upazila of the district on Thursday night.

Police sources said a group of miscreants entered the village and attacked Pale Mro near his residence. They brutally chopped him dead on the spot.

Being informed, police and army personnel rushed to the area.

The body was sent to Bandarban Sadar Hospital



Students studying mass communication and journalism at different universities form a human chain on the Central Shaheed Minar premises in the capital yesterday demanding that the government takes steps to ensure press freedom and security for journalists.

PHOTO: STAR

DHAKA TODAY

Roundtable

Policy Research Center will organise a roundtable; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 3:00pm.

Workshop

National Human Rights Commission in collaboration with Save the Children will arrange a workshop; Venue: Brac Centre Inn, Mohakali; Time: 9:30am.

Seminar

Dhaka Ahsania Mission and Bangladesh Restaurant Owners' Association will

organise a seminar; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 12:00 noon.

View exchange meet Samunnaya will arrange a view exchange meeting; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:30am.

Human chain Communist Party of Bangladesh will form a human chain; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Roundtable Deshpriyak Nagorik Committee will

WEATHER TODAY

Heat wave may continue

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershows accompanied by temporary gusty or squally winds likely at a few places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna and Dhaka divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Khulna division and the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, and Patuakhali and it may continue.

Day temperature may fall slightly and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The highest maximum temperature is likely to be 37-38 degree Celsius and lowest minimum temperature may be 21-22 degree Celsius.

Thesunset in the capital today at 6:45pm and rises tomorrow at 5:10am.

Country's highest temperature 39.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessor and lowest 21.0 degrees at Srimangal.

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

City/Town	Temperature in		Humidity in
	Celsius	percentage	
Dhaka	35.5	26.0	25 61
Chittagong	34.8	25.8	84 83
Rajshahi	37.6	23.8	70 68
Rangpur	33.2	25.0	76 65
Khulna	38.5	25.8	70 56
Barisal	35.7	28.6	75 66