

China's congress representative arrives in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yan Junqi, vice chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, arrived in Dhaka on a three-day visit yesterday.

Junqi, who is leading a 16-member delegation, arrived in Bangladesh at the invitation of Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, says a Chinese embassy press release.

Besides the Speaker, Junqi will also meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, among others.

"The purpose of this visit is to promote friendly relations between the two countries," he said.

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A view of the DC Hill premises, a public place in Chittagong city. Locals have started a vehement protest against the opposition of the deputy commissioner and the divisional commissioner to its development as a public space recently.

PHOTO: STAR

DEVELOPING CTG DC HILL AS PUBLIC PLACE Locals oppose 2 resident govt officials' resistance Demand full-fledged cultural complex

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Eminent personalities and leaders of socio-cultural organisations in Chittagong city yesterday demanded that a full-fledged cultural complex be built on the city's DC Hill premises, keeping its natural scenic beauty unscathed.

They criticised the opposition of the deputy commissioner and the divisional commissioner of Chittagong to building any structure in the area, where the duo's official residences are located.

The locals and cultural activists, who have long been calling for turning the DC Hill premises into a cultural hub, were addressing a views exchange meeting organised by Sammilita Sanskritik Jote, Chittagong, at the city's Theatre Institute.

Eminent social scientist Dr Anupam Sen said all the cultural programmes like book fairs, Swadhinata Mela, Pitha Utsab, and Rabindra and Nazrul Utsab had been held on the premises for around 40 years.

"The city dwellers have the opportunity to enjoy the programmes from the galleries built on its (DC Hill) slopes," he said. The duo's move has hurt the city dwellers, he added.

Writer Begum Mustari Shafi said the public works minister had directed the Chittagong Development Authority to develop the space but the decision was pending following the two officials' move.

According to the Chittagong city master plan, the DC Hill ground is an open, public space. As part of that, the CDA has decided

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BCL halts exam at RU for leader's 'illness'

Locks, vandalises classroom, threatens teachers brandishing guns

RU CORRESPONDENT

Because one of their leaders was "ill", Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday forced the Islamic history and culture department at Rajshahi University to postpone an examination by locking and vandalising the exam hall, threatening teachers at gunpoint and hurling abuses at them.

The master's final exam of course no. 5 was scheduled to start at 9:00am but when students and teachers turned up, they found the exam hall, Room 204 at Shahidullah Arts Building, locked.

About 100 students were to sit for the exam.

Witnesses said about 20-25 BCL men, led by RU unit vice president Rana Chowdhury, joint secretary Mahbubur Rahman Mastak, and environment affairs secretary Mustakin Billah, locked the room to stop the exam from taking place, as another RU BCL vice president and an examinee, Mehedi Hasan, was having "fever", according to BCL sources, and unable to sit for it.

Teachers said Mehedi neither did apply for any alternative arrangement nor did inform the

department about his illness through any letter. "If he filed an application, we would try to arrange his exam in sick bed," the department chairperson, Prof Syeda Nure Kaseda Khatun, told The Daily Star. A scheduled exam cannot be cancelled without an academic committee meeting, she added.

After breaking the lock, the teachers prepared to start the exam at 9:30am, but then the BCL activists started vandalising windows of the classroom.

As the chairperson and two other professors, Imtiaz Hossain and MA Bari, stepped in, they hurled abuses at the teachers and threatened them by brandishing two pistols, said a teacher.

A witness preferring anonymity told The Daily Star that BCL leaders shouted, "catch them [teachers], beat them".

"All of you [teachers] will get punished," he said, quoting vice president Rana.

On information, Proctor Prof Tarikul Hasan rushed to the department and calmed the BCL marauders.

BCL's RU unit president Mizanur Rahman denied the allegations of any vandalism, threat or verbal abuse.



Alim Uddin, an amputee refusing to succumb to his fate, drives a battery-run rickshaw for subsistence. Every day, he fights a two-pronged battle--one against his impairment and the other for his existence by toiling to earn way more than Tk 350, the daily rental he has to pay to the vehicle owner. Though the way he operates the vehicle spells danger for him and the passengers, the government's rehabilitation services for such poor but indomitable persons has failed to reach out to him. The photo was taken at Bijoynagar intersection in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

SOUTH-WESTERN REGION'S DEVELOPMENT Allocation in nat'l budget demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The south-western region of the country is being neglected, claimed speakers at a discussion yesterday, and demanded that the government make special allocation in the national budget to improve the situation in the region.

They were addressing the discussion organised by Brihatar Khulna Unnayan Sangram Samannay Committee, a platform of civilians of greater Khulna, at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

The committee demanded the authorities concerned take an initiative to implement the Ganges Barrage project and ensure the best use of Mongla port.

They further urged the government to ensure that Khulna's demand for gas and electricity is met.

Once Khulna was called the city of factories, but now the region only boasts 2,359 factories while there are 11,588 factories in central region (Dhaka division), 4,235 in eastern region (Chittagong and Sylhet) and 6,570 in northern region, they said.

Mohammad Fakhruddin, president of the committee, said it was necessary to modernise the Khulna Railway

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Country may witness scorching summer

BSS, Dhaka

The country may witness a hotter summer this year as there will be less rainfall than usual this month and the next.

According to a long-range weather forecast, April experienced 79

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Correction

The Daily Star in its report headlined "Cambodian PM due on Friday" published yesterday inadvertently mentioned that Prime Minister of Cambodia Hun Sen is expected to pay a three-day official visit to Dhaka from Friday. It would actually be from June 16 instead of Friday. We regret the error.

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