

From 2 to 17

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competence in English due to shortage of qualified teachers at schools and colleges," said Prof Imdadul Haque, member of the admission committee.

At the meeting at the DU senate building, the committee also decided to discontinue the opportunity for students to sit twice for admission tests.

The decision was made to eliminate unequal competition between regular and irregular students, and discourage tutoring at coaching centres, said DU Vice Chancellor Prof AASM Arefin Siddique, who chaired the meeting.

The university this year, for the first time, made elective English mandatory for students wishing to study English. They must obtain 15 marks in elective English section and 20 in general English section to be eligible.

It was done with an aim to enrol students with better aptitude required to pursue higher education in English.

A total of 1,364 students took the test and only Jannatul Ferdous Dola and Shahbaz Amin Bhuiyan got through.

The abysmal performance of applicants triggered criticism from educationists. They attributed the disastrous results to poor quality of teaching at secondary and higher sec-

FAILURE RATE IN ENGLISH (In %)

UNIT	2012	2013
KHA	56	56
GA	70	76
GHA	37	57

ondary levels.

Most students lack aptitude for learning English and all they care is about getting good marks, they said.

However, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid blamed the test method for poor results, and termed it faulty and unacceptable.

He said the university authorities had intentionally set tougher questions so that only a few students could get through.

This year, around 58 percent of 175,824 applicants in three units -- kha, ga and gha -- failed to secure pass mark in English.

However, the results of previous admission tests were not satisfactory either, as more than half of the admission seekers failed to get pass mark in English in different units.

Prof Arefin told The Daily Star that

the applicants, who will fail to enrol in the DU in one academic session, will not get the chance to sit again for test the next year.

Data show that almost half of those who enrol in the DU in an academic year are students of the previous academic session.

This year, a total of 45,053 applicants passed the admission test in four units. Of them, 21,493 passed the HSC exams last year.

Moreover, around 400 seats fall vacant every year in different departments, as many students switch to other departments by taking admission test for a second time. These seats remain vacant for the remaining three years of the graduation course.

Discontinuation of the opportunity for taking the test twice will stop this bad practice, said Arefin.

"Some applicants resort to cheating with the help of coaching centres when they take test for the second time," he said.

This year, 30 applicants were caught with answers in inboxes of their cell phones during DU admission test at different exam centres outside the university. Most of them sat for test for the second time.

position on climate change, MDG, post-2015 development strategy, disaster-risk reduction and Asia-Europe communication.

The PM on Friday will take part at a discussion with top leaders on various issues, including fight against terrorism, security challenges and issues of cooperation between Asia and the Europe.

"Europe is the largest development partner of Bangladesh and the biggest export market for Bangladesh. Through ASEM, Asian countries can together uphold their attitudes towards the European countries," the foreign minister said.

Responding to a question, the foreign minister said the PM will hold a series of meetings with a number of heads of governments. "She'll hold talks with the prime ministers of Italy, the Netherlands, Greece and Sweden apart from holding a meeting with the European Council president."

The theme of the 10th ASEM summit is "Responsible Partnership for Growth and Security" that reflects the enlarging scope of the EU-Asia relationship.

They demanded the government bring Latif back home and put him on trial. The parties threatened of announcing tough agitation programmes including hartal if their demand went unheeded, reported BBC Bangla last night.

The BNP has also raised the same demand.

Around 30 cases have been filed against the former minister in the last few days for hurting religious sentiment of the Muslims. He is now in India.

The Qawmi madrasa-based Hefajate Islam and 19 other Islamist parties have issued an ultimatum to the government to take legal action against Latif by today.

Zafarullah Khan, joint secretary general of Hefajate, said they are still adamant that they will enforce programmes like hartal to press home their demand.

He however thanked the government for dropping Latif from the cabinet and suspending him from the party.

Leader of a faction of Islami Oikya Jote, Abdul Latif Nezami said all major parties are united in demanding trial of the former minister.

BNP Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said people's anger will not dissipate if Latif was not put on trial.

that cause illness and even deaths.

Infections caused by such practices are not known, but Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS)-2011 found diarrhoea accounts for 2 percent and acute respiratory infections like pneumonia account for one-fifth of all under-5 child deaths.

A survey by the World Bank and icddr,b in 2011 calculated that Bangladesh incurs a financial loss of 5.3 percent of its GDP a year due to inadequacy of sanitation and hygiene facilities.

These losses could be greatly reduced as the national hygiene survey 2014 says 99 percent of diarrhoea, 90 percent of dysentery and 51 percent worms can be checked just by providing safe drinking water, sanitation systems and proper washing of hands.

The environmental hazards, mainly air and water pollution, are the major problems in Bangladesh, said Dr Khairul Islam.

"Therefore, we must turn sanitation and hygiene into a social movement to save our children from malnutrition. Otherwise, we as a nation would fail to go forward," Khairul said.

All these lead to certain infections

Rajib president

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According to the JCD constitution, its central committee is formed for two years.

Declaring committees through issuing press releases has become a common practice for the associated student body of BNP as it could not hold any central council since 1993 due to intra-party conflicts.

JCD sources said Khaleda was very unhappy with the last JCD committee as it failed to wage a strong anti-government movement to foil the January 5 polls.

The party chief in several meetings had expressed her desire to dissolve the committee.

Accordingly, she recently met JCD leaders and activists to know their opinion on the new committee.

Detectives find

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far from West Bengal and Assam.

The two women who were arrested from the spot were initially students of the madrasa and later became teachers there. Some of those arrested from Assam also study there.

After the news of the madrasa's link came out, Moulana Siddikulla Chowdhury, chief of Madrasa Samunnay Samity of West Bengal, said, "Such activities are going on in the guise of madrasa and religion. The madrasa was established suddenly and does not bother about Islamic principles. Islam never supports such terrorist activities in the name of religion -- it's forbidden."

Last week, Indian media citing detectives reported that a government probe found that the explosives manufactured in the house were being sent to Bangladesh.

The Indian press also reported that some Bangladeshi JMB militants had links with the blast.

Govt wary

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On financing of militants, the state minister said Bangladesh Bank will provide the national committee with information on any abnormal banking transaction by any individual or organisation.

The intelligence agencies will work based on the information received from the central bank to check financing of militants, he added.

Senior Home Secretary Muzammel Haque Khan, representatives from Bangladesh Bank, Islamic Foundation, and chiefs of law enforcement agencies attended the meeting.

BOMB HOAX

Our correspondent in Chittagong reports: An anonymous caller phoned Manash Kumar Das, executive member of Chittagong District Bar Association, around 9:15am yesterday.

Speaking local dialect, the caller threatened a suicide bomb attack by the JMB at the court building area today (Tuesday), Manash told this newspaper.

"After receiving the threat, we reported the matter to law enforcers for necessary action," said Abdur Rashid, general secretary of the bar association.

Mohiuddin Selim, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station, said they already initiated an investigation to identify the caller.

Six platoons of police have been deployed in the area to avoid any trouble, added the OC.

Police filed a general diary with Kotwali Police Station in this regard.

BCL activists

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organisation did not get the interview card. Riled up, members of our organisation caused the chaos."

Terming the incident unprecedented, Vice Chancellor Prof Ali Ashraf said yesterday's interviews has been postponed due to the untoward incident.

Asked about taking action against the troublemakers, he said the university proctorial body will look into the matter.

Despite repeated attempts, this newspaper could not reach Faisal Arefin over the phone for his comment.

Charges against

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Mahmud -- are behind bars.

The investigation officer in the charge sheet said the seven NSU students had vowed to kill the "atheist bloggers" after reading Jasimuddin's books and listening to his sermons.

They targeted Rajib "for his blog posts under the nickname Tabababa" and got divided into two "intel group" to collect his details and track him down and the "execution group" to carry out the murder.

The charge sheet mentioned Jasimuddin as the "instigator" while Rana as the "planner".

5 cops accused of torture in custody

Court orders investigation, registering case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A Noakhali court yesterday directed the district superintendent of police to register a case filed against five policemen in connection with the alleged torture of a garment worker in custody causing him to lose one of his legs.

Abdul Quddus Mia, judge of the Noakhali District and Session Judge's Court, also ordered the SP to investigate the accusations made by the victim's father in the case statement.

The accused are Ashraful Alam, officer-in-charge of Sonaimuri Police Station; Abdus Samad, who was the OC of the police station when the incident took place; Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury, a sub-inspector of the station; Zahid Hasan, OC of Bandar Police Station of Chittagong and its SI Mohammad Asad.

According to the case statement, Sonaimuri police in association with Bandar police arrested Nazrul Islam, a 25-year-old BNP supporter of Sonapur village in Sonaimuri, on September 16 in connection with the murder of local Juba League leader Arif Hossain.

The police that night tried to pressurize him into giving a confessional statement in the murder case but Nazrul refused to do so, said his father Abul Kashem in the case statement.

UNDP removes

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section of an advertisement seeking applications for the post of chief technical adviser under the Electoral Reform Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh.

The advertisement stated that the United Nations conducted a review of the on-going electoral assistance provided through the Strengthening Electoral Management in Bangladesh (SEMB) project following the elections. The UN Focal Point for the Electoral Assistance and the SEMB donors suggested reduction of the assistance.

But these statements were not found in the advertisement yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh office of the UNDP issued a press statement on Monday clarifying its stance on the issue.

"Our attention has been drawn to press reports carried by several reputed newspapers of Bangladesh regarding the UNDP administered project, Strengthening Electoral Management in Bangladesh. These reports cited a job advertisement that referred to past parliamentary elections," Country

Director Pauline Tamesis said in the statement.

"I wish to clarify that the text cited in the media does not represent UNDP's position on the 10th parliamentary nor Upazila elections. It seems that the advertisement was published without proper review and approval. This is an error that we regret and we have already taken steps to rectify this mistake. I apologize to our partners for the misunderstanding."

"The UNDP wishes to highlight its long-term commitment to electoral cycle support in Bangladesh. Working with partners and the Election Commission of Bangladesh since 1995 our aim is to assist build an environment for transparent and peaceful elections," she added.

Reasserting the UN body's commitment to supporting the electoral process of Bangladesh, Tamesis said, "We are looking forward to working with the Election Commission beyond the current project's [SEMB's] lifecycle, and will be coordinating closely with the UN Electoral Focal Point on the next phases of support."

2 shot dead 'by police'

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of Jessore Sadar Police Station reached the spot around 11:30pm and detained them along with two others -- Mohsin Ali, 17, and Opu Hossain, 16, said Rakibul.

Detectives stopped at Panchbera Bahadur bus stand and freed Mohsin and Opu, he said, adding that he heard the news of his son's detention on that night from other people sitting at the tea stall.

"Police gave Mohsin and Opu Tk 200 each as bus fare before freeing them and told them that they were taking Hadi and Shohag to the police station," Rakibul claimed.

Next morning, Rakibul came to know that dead bodies of his son and Hadi were found in Jhenidah. He demanded a proper investigation into the incident to unmask the real culprits.

Meanwhile, a relative of one of the released youths said, police cordoned the area off and chased Hadi, Shohag and some others sitting at the tea stall.

They caught Shohag after he crossed a canal in the village and Hadi when he tried to flee the area, said the relative seeking anonymity.

Enamul Hossain, officer-in-charge

Govt okays project

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in Rangpur and 34 in Rajshahi districts, according to the project document.

"The spots are really death traps. We don't want unnatural deaths. The number of accidents at these points will come down after the project is implemented," Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal told reporters after the meeting.

The government has taken a number of measures to improve road safety, Communications Minister Obaidul Quader said at the meeting.

As many as 96 people were killed in road accidents during the Eid-ul-Fitr holidays. The number of deaths came down to 25 during the vacation of Eid-ul-Azha, he added.

The meeting also approved a Tk 19 crore project for an extension of the mobile library of Bishwa Sahitya Kendra (BSK). Of the amount, the government will contribute Tk 12.51 crore

and BSK itself will give Tk 6.53 crore.

The planning minister told reporters

that BSK would introduce a scheme, under which its members

would be able to read books online.

Since 1998, BSK has been running its Book Reading Programme through mobile libraries with the assistance of the government and development partners.