



President stresses joint efforts for quality edu

While addressing Open University convocation
UNB, Gazipur

President Abdul Hamid yesterday underscored the need for putting joint efforts to ensure quality of education so that the students of the country can survive with their quality in both local and international competitions. "We will have to keep in mind that passing in the examinations and get educated are not same. The main purpose of education is to flourish talents of

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Tracks missing their rail anchors near the fish wholesale market in the capital's Kawran Bazar. There are over 100 missing in the stretch from here till the Moghbazar crossing. Locals say drug abusers break these off to sell at metal recycling shops for Tk 40 a kilogramme. The photo was taken last month.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

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Worries over TIB report, but specific proof sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted educationists Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman and Serajul Islam Choudhury termed the findings of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) over alleged financial corruption in teacher recruitment in some public universities alarming, while two vice chancellors called upon the corruption watchdog to disclose specific information of the corruption.

In its report titled "Recruitment of Lecturers in Public Universities: Governance Challenges and Ways Forward", TIB said it had found allegations of unauthorised financial transactions in eight public universities while political leanings, nepotism, regionalism, and religious identity were found as dominant factors in the recruitment process at 13 public universities.

The findings reflect the reasons behind the declining quality in education, opined Serajul Islam. "We had a common perception, but what TIB has produced is a documentary proof which is undeniable," he said.

"We knew about the practice of nepotism and political favouritism as factors in the recruitment process but what has surprised me most is the financial transaction."

Serajul Islam said, "It's not a place of bribe. Even if a single incident of bribery [for the recruitment of lecturer] had taken place, then what remains of us? It's very disappointing."

Less qualified teachers deprive meritorious students, he said. "They [the less qualified] don't develop themselves and students don't get confidence. As a result, the quality of education is declining."

On the other hand, the recruitment of less qualified candidates disappoints meritorious students, he said. "They don't apply for the post of lecturer, but rather seek

employment elsewhere."

To secure the job of a lecturer, one had to make an unauthorised payment of Tk 3 lakh to 20 lakh, the report says.

Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman said, "I don't know how much representative is the report. In some cases, political and personal considerations are emphasised during recruitment. But I don't know how much wide-spread the practice is."

"I've never heard of transaction of money in the recruitment. If it is true, there won't remain any scope for us to show our face," he said.

"I'm feeling embarrassed and terrified," Anisuzzaman added.

About remedies, Serajul Islam said UGC might put pressure upon the persons who were responsible for appointment.

"Above all, the universities are not functioning properly. Nepotism and political favouritism grip the universities and have created an infallible attitude," he said.

"I don't find any simple solution."

Dhaka University's Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique claimed that proper ways were followed in the recruitment process at his university.

"Our policies are fairly specific," he said, adding that during recruitment, they considered academic activities and merit of candidates and how the teachers evaluated them.

Saying that there is no mention of a specific incident of financial transaction, he said, "I'll take measures if any such incident has taken place in my university."

Questioning the intention of TIB, Jahangirnagar University's Vice Chancellor Farzana Islam called upon the corruption watchdog to give proof of unauthorised financial transactions that happened during the recruitment of lecturer.

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RADAR SCAM

Stay sought on HC trial time limit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An appeal was filed with the Supreme Court yesterday challenging a High Court order that asked a trial court to finish the trial proceedings of 24-year-old radar purchase scam case filed against Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad and three others by March 31.

Seeking a stay on the HC order, former air chief Sultan Mahmud, also an accused in the case, submitted the leave-to-appeal petition to the Appellate Division of the SC through his lawyer Syed Mahbubur Rahman, claiming that the HC passed the order without hearing his arguments. The SC chamber judge may hear the appeal today, Anti Corruption Commission lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

Following an ACC petition, the HC on November 24 directed the trial court to finish the trial proceedings by March 31.

Earlier, the lower court had recorded statements of 12 witnesses.

It can record statements of the case's remaining 26

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Indonesian minister here to discuss Rohingya issue

Seeks lasting solution

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Indonesia's Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi arrived in Dhaka last night to discuss with high government officials the current ethnic cleansing and persecution on the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar's western state of Rakhine as well as finding a lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis.

During her 24-hour visit, she will be discussing Rohingya issues with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Bangladesh counterpart AH Mahmood Ali, and visit Ukhia to see the conditions of Rohingya refugees, according to diplomatic sources.

Marsudi came to Dhaka after attending a meeting along with the foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) with Myanmar State Counsellor and Foreign Minister Aung San Suu Kyi in Yangon yesterday.

Myanmar leader Suu Kyi met with regional foreign ministers to tackle growing



Retno Marsudi

international criticism of her army's forceful treatment of the country's Rohingya minority, which some critics say, constitutes crimes against humanity.

She came to Bangladesh to talk about the Rohingya issues as Indonesia wants to comprehensively address problems related to Rohingyas fleeing along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, said a foreign ministry official, adding all countries that attended the meeting in Yangon freely expressed their opinions in an effort to reduce regional concerns over a situation in northern Rakhine.

Human rights groups have accused the military of perpetrating mass murder, looting and rape against the Rohingya in Rakhine, where the army went on a counterinsurgency offensive after an October attack there on police outposts that killed nine officers.

According to Indonesian embassy

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US envoy arrives to discuss religious freedom

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

David N Saperstein, US ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom, has arrived in the city on a five-day visit to discuss religious freedom with the government, civil society representatives and religious minority communities.



Saperstein

According to the US embassy in Dhaka, Saperstein, who came to Dhaka after his visit to India, is expected to visit some areas inhabited by minorities, including Cox's Bazaar where he would likely see the condition of Myanmar's Rohingya people.

Official sources said his visit would also focus on knowing causes of the recent

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