

Misspellings in PUST admission form

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The words 'university' and 'science' were wrongly spelled in the admission and the undertaking forms of Pabna University of Science and Technology (PUST).

In both the forms, 'univesity' was printed instead of university, 'scienc' instead of science and 'technolgy' instead of technology.

The wrong spelling of the name of the university drew criticism from the university teachers, general public and admission seekers. They blamed poor monitoring of the work by the authorities concerned for the mistakes.

"The admission forms are printed in printing presses. When the university authority submitted the soft copy of the forms there was no wrong spelling. They could not adjust the font in the printing press so the spellings turned out wrong," said Awal Kabir Joy, proctor of the university.

"When we find forms with any wrong spelling we get them reprinted," the proctor added. He denied that there was poor monitoring of the work.

Professor Abdul Alim, head of Bangla department, said the academic council approved the forms correctly, but after printing the forms went to the admission department, so the printing mistakes could not be found immediately.

Admission seekers are submitting their applications in the forms with the wrong spellings.

"The students can re-submit their applications when we get the corrected forms," Awal, also a member of the admission committee, said.

"When we got the forms in which the name of the university was wrongly spelled, we were very surprised," said an admission seeker.



Rows of beehives set beside mustard fields, like these ones at Handial in Chatmohar upazila under Pabna district, is now a common sight in Chalan Beel area. Inset, beekeepers and agriculture officials hold hive parts with produced honey.



PHOTO: STAR

High honey yield, good mustard harvest

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU with ANDREW EAGLE

For hundreds of diseases honey is a renowned curative. Yet for the risk of stings many people don't appreciate beehives near their homes. By contrast, the golden mustard fields of Pabna and Sirajganj in these winter months provide an ideal location for hives; the bees not only produce delicious honey from the flowers but also help secure a good mustard harvest through increased pollination.

"Mustard fields are more suitable for honey collection than other crops," says one local apiculturist, Said Md Aslam Sardar from a village beside Chalan Beel. "I have positioned 300 box hives in a one-bigha field in Noubaria village in Pabna's Vangura upazila a couple of weeks ago. I hope to collect around two tonnes of honey."

Like him, more than 800 beekeepers from across the country reach Pabna and Sirajganj during the winter, aiming to collect honey from mustard fields. It's

a practice that has proved particularly popular over the last decade.

Up to 3,000 tonnes of honey is likely to be collected from the regions mustard fields this year, according to beekeepers, with approximately 50,000 beehives set across 66,000 hectares in Pabna and Sirajganj, especially in the lands around Chalan Beel.

The same fields will produce an estimated 76,000 tonnes of mustard crop, according to agriculture officials, with the work of the bees accounting for a fifteen to twenty percent better harvest than could otherwise be anticipated. Indeed mustard farmers who were once sceptical of apiculturists setting up hives near their fields nowadays invite them in.

"Some years ago production of mustard per hectare was not more than one tonne," says Rawshan Alam, the upazila agriculture officer in Chatmohar. "Thanks to apiculture in the Chalan Beel area it's now easy to

achieve up to 1.2 tonnes per hectare in a mustard harvest."

"Chalan Beel of a winter is a favourite with beekeepers," says president of the northern region's apiculturist association Jahangir Alam Modhu, "as they like to take advantage of the vast fields of mustard flowers. Although honey production peaks in winter, beekeepers are active in the area from mid-November until May."

According to Jahangir the beekeepers don't only rely on mustard but also set hives near other winter crops including fields of rye and black caraway, locally known as kalo jeera.

"The Chalan Beel area in winter is the largest honey producing zone in the country," says Pabna's Additional Director of the Department of Agriculture Extension Md Khoyer Uddin. "And for the presence of the bees and the associated promise of better harvests, many farmers have stopped using pesticide too."

Dharla erosion makes their future bleak

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Although their families lost everything they had within the space of a couple of weeks, two minor cousins Khalid and Sifat are unaware of their loss.

When their parents are thinking about the future of their minor children, the two were happy to play on the vulnerable bank of the river Dharla.

Like these two kids, the future of over 120 children from nearly 60 families of the village has become uncertain, as most of them have been rendered homeless due to the erosion by Dharla river in the last one month, said Mansur Ali, 62, an erosion affected victim of Badaitari village under Mogholhat union in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Khalid's father Sirajul Islam, 33, of the village, said he owned four bighas of cropland just two weeks ago, but now he did not even have any homestead where he can live with his family.

"I have taken shelter at one of our neigh-

bouring relative's house as the recent erosion has snatched away all my arable lands and homestead in two weeks time," Sirajul added.

"Only a month ago, we had a dream to educate our son, but the Dharla robbed my dream as there is nothing left for us due to the recent erosion," said Sifat's mother Selina Begum, 24.

"We had seven bighas of croplands and a fruit orchard only a month ago, but everything has gone into the womb of Dharla," Selina said.

Sifat's father Idris Ali, 35, said, "I raised a litchi orchard in one bigha of land and was planning to spend the earned money for our children's education purpose but the erosion by Dharla swallowed that away along with my homestead and the orchard," Idris said.

Nazrul Islam Bhutto, local union parishad member, said most of the erosion affected families of the village have taken shelter on government khas lands, open roads and their relatives' houses.

Withdraw error-ridden textbooks

FROM PAGE 1

on the heels of a public outcry over some embarrassing blunders in school textbooks. Faced with a volley of criticism, the government made two officials of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) officer on special duty (OSD) and suspended its artist-cum-designer. Two separate committees were formed to find out the errors and the people responsible for the mistakes.

The prominent citizens in the statement said the government's success in distributing textbooks to all students free of cost on the very first day of the year was indeed commendable.

But questions over the standard of the textbooks have been raised for the last several years. People are outraged by the printing mistakes and distortion of spelling, information and history of the textbooks distributed this year, they said.

Initially, attempts were

made to label the incidents as negligence of duty, but gradually the inside stories had started to surface, they added.

"The deliberate changes in the textbooks were the result of regression and fundamentalism.

"There is a dangerous spread of communal politics behind this, which has been evident over the last few years. This year's textbook is the manifestation of compromise of the government with the communal politics," the statement said.

In this year's textbooks, it said, three types of errors and distortion could be found: distortion of spelling and information, mistakes in formation of sentences, and instilling fundamental and communal attitudes into the textbooks.

The first and second errors are occurring due to a lack of proper planning and management, but the third one was made in a planned way, and those who did this

are deliberately trying to turn the country into a communal one, the statement added.

"On many occasions, the history of our Liberation War in our textbooks has been distorted. Textbooks are chosen as a weapon to implement ill political motives."

The statement said there is "politics behind the spread of communalism and single religion" in this year's textbooks.

"The defeated communal forces of 1971 have turned into a poisonous tree taking the advantage of the political spinelessness of the ruling class."

When Hefajat-e Islam and Charmonai Pir hail the government for preparing "error-ridden and communal textbooks", then it becomes clear how directionless the so-called ruling political parties are, they said.

"The future of the nation is paying a high price for this political bargain," they said, adding that communal thoughts are being implanted

in the minds of the children.

They said the government was creating obstacles to the path which would lead the children to a world full of cultural activities. "Instead of inculcating morality in students' minds, division and communalism are being created."

The biggest evidence of how the government is defeated to fundamentalism is the exclusion of articles by writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Lalon Shah, Humayun Azad and Satyen Sen from the textbooks, they said.

The citizens strongly condemned the shameful politicisation being done in the textbooks.

The signatories to the statement include Ahmed Rafiq, Kamal Lohani, Jatin Sarkar, Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury, Prof Hasan Azizul Haque, Dr Ajoy Roy, Prof Dwijen Sharma, Abul Momen, Ramendu Majumdar, Nasir Uddin Yusuf, poet Asad Chowdhury, and Mamunur Rashid, among others.



Unaware of the danger looming large, two children sit in a playful mood on a nearly detached chunk of earth on the bank of the eroding Dharla river at Badaitari village in Mogholhat union of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila. They are among over 120 kids belonging to around 60 families of the village, who became homeless due to the river erosion in last one month.

The pigeon-man of Barisal

SUSHANTA GHOSH with ANDREW EAGLE

Meeting 36-year-old Rezaul Kabir from Barisal one would hardly guess they were talking to the pigeon-man, as he is called by many. With no sign of feathers, wings or beak, Kabir looks as ordinary as anybody. On the other hand, that's assuming he's alone at the time, which he rarely is. Kabir's faithful companion, a pet pigeon he calls Muhin, likes to follow him everywhere.

While Kabir works shifts at a restaurant in Barisal City, Muhin often sits upon his shoulder. When Kabir rides a motorcycle at home beside the Kirtankhola River, Muhin flies alongside. As Kabir sleeps of a night, Muhin rests nearby.

Kabir has been raising and training pigeons since he was thirteen years old. He keeps over fifty pigeons of several varieties at his residence. "I spend all of my earnings on my pigeons," Kabir says, "almost Tk 500 per day. I built a home for them on my rooftop. I give food and water. I've taught all of them to do some kind of acrobatics."

Yet of all his pigeons, Muhin is undoubtedly the superstar. "About four years ago a female pigeon died, leaving behind two squabs," says Kabir. "I was able to collect one of them. That was Muhin. Nowadays he's my best friend."

Muhin likes to take food from Kabir's hand. Even



when Kabir travels far from the city Muhin won't be left behind. Sometimes that has even involved a boat journey. Muhin is up for that too.

"My pigeons have demonstrated their acrobatic skills for many journalists and organisations," Kabir recalls. "They were featured on the popular TV show Ittadi and even foreigners, including the former US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan Mozena, have sought me out to see a flying demonstration of my pigeons."

"Pigeons symbolise peace and love," Kabir says. "I love my birds very much. My aim is to establish a pigeon sanctuary where all different types of pigeons can be found."

Photo journo

FROM PAGE 16

Zia was first taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 2:30am yesterday. Later, a DMCH medical board referred him to Apollo.

He suffered critical injuries in his head and legs when the private car hit his motorbike around 11:50pm Monday in the capital's Panthapath area.

Journalist Tarun Sarkar, who was supposed to meet Zia in front of Bashundhara City shopping complex, said he was waiting in front of the shopping mall and saw Zia on the other side of the road.

"While I was paying the rickshaw fair, I heard a loud bang. I saw a car speeding away towards Panthapath intersection and Zia was lying on the ground," he said.

Journalist Amir Muhammad Jewel, another witness, said the private car hit Zia's bike when he was probably taking a right turn in front of the shopping mall after coming from Karwan Bazar.

The car hit the bike so hard that Zia was flung into the air from his bike. It then sped away turning off its headlights, he said.

Later, they rushed Zia to DMCH where he was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit.

Meanwhile, police last night arrested Kalyan Corraya, an actor and model, in a case filed with Kalabagan Police Station over the incident.

Maj (retd) Sazzadul Kabir, security manager of Prothom Alo, yesterday lodged the case against Kalyan, said Ferdous Hossain, sub-inspector of the police station.

Rapist yet to be held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Three days into the incident, police are yet to arrest the alleged rapist, former union parishad (UP) chairman, of a woman.

The 30-year old, abandoned by her husband, was raped allegedly by Dulal Ahmed, former chairman of Sohanati UP in Gouripur upazila, on Saturday.

Delwar Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Gouripur Police Station, said Dulal along with his six to seven associates picked up the woman from her father's house at Sonakandi village on Friday night.

They later took the victim to Dulal's house where he violated her overnight.

The medical test of the victim was conducted at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital the following day but they are yet to receive the report, police said.

Accused

FROM PAGE 2

with the murder.

Adnan, a student of Uttara's Trust School and College and a member of local Nine Star Group, came under attack in Uttara on January 6 allegedly from members of Disco Group.

Critically injured Adnan was rushed to a local hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Ali Hossain Khan, officer-in-charge of Uttara West Police Station, said some teenagers used to form gangs to establish supremacy in the area.

"We earlier arrested some members of such gangs following intra-gang feuds. Later, they were sent to a teenage correction centre. They eventually secured bail from courts," the OC added.