

'ASSAULT ON COLLEAGUE' DU teacher relieved of academic duties

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University authorities yesterday relieved a teacher of all academic duties for allegedly assaulting one of his colleagues.

The order was issued against Prof Mezbah-Ul-Islam, chairman of information science and library management department, Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman told The Daily Star.

Md Anwarul, an associate professor of the department, had filed a complaint against him, he said.

According to the complaint, Anwarul was unable to come to the university on March 11 and 12 as his child was ill. Although he had informed the chairman verbally, Prof Mezbah hurled expletives at him when the latter joined office on March 13.

"He attacked me when I returned to the department office after teaching evening classes," the complaint reads.

Mezbah launched the attack when Anwarul refused to submit a leave application, it adds.

"Later, Prof Md Saiful Alam and Prof Md Nasir Uddin Munshi rescued me from the chairman's room," said Anwarul in the complaint.

Earlier in the day, some 100 former and current students of the department formed a human chain at the Aparajeyo Bangla, demanding removal of Prof Mezbah from the post of chairman.

Protesting the assault, the students also boycotted classes. Teachers of the department have also been boycotting classes and academic duties since March 14.

Prof Abu Md Delwar Hosain, dean of arts faculty, will serve as an interim chairperson of the department until further order, said the VC.

Prof Mezbah could not be contacted as he did not respond to repeated phone calls made by this correspondent.



Ignoring oncoming traffic, a youth along with a school girl darts across Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital yesterday. Such risky crossings often claim lives on the busy road. Still, many prefer jaywalking to using the footbridge nearby.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Course for foreign diplomats begins

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

A fortnight-long specialised international diplomatic course for foreign diplomats began at the Bangladesh Foreign Service Academy in the capital yesterday, aiming to strengthen the existing diplomatic ties between Bangladesh and the respective countries.

Junior and mid-level diplomats from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Malaysia, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam are participating in the course, which will continue till March 29, said a press release.

Issues involving the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy in the changing global context, multilateral trade and geo-politics, climate change, development agenda, blue economy, and so forth will be taught and discussed during this two-week course.

Sessions will also be conducted on Bangladesh's

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Professor Anisuzzaman's clarification

Professor Emeritus of Dhaka University

Anisuzzaman sent the following clarification on his write-up published in supplements of different newspapers on the occasion of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth anniversary on March 17.

It reads: "In the supplement published on the occasion of the

Bangabandhu's birth anniversary in various newspapers today [March 17], a part of my write-up has been printed as follows:

'and, some changes were introduced in the government system.' What I wrote in the original Bengali was to the effect that 'and an

[sic] one-party system of government was introduced by amending the constitution.'

The Department of Films and Publications did not take my permission to make such change nor did it

care to discuss the matter with me. I wish to bring this to the attention of all."

BNP to join upcoming mayoral polls

Likely to pick new faces for three cities

UNB, Dhaka

As the party's target is to retain all the five mayoral posts to demonstrate its popularity and boost the morale of its followers ahead of the next general election, BNP looks unlikely to give nomination to its three existing mayors, including those of Barisal and Gazipur, in the upcoming city polls.

Though the party seems busy pursuing a movement seeking release of its Chairperson Khaleda Zia, its senior leaders said they have already completed their all-out preparations to join the five city corporation polls likely to be held by July next as per Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda's Thursday's announcement.

Talking to this news agency, a number of BNP senior leaders said their party would join the city polls under any circumstances, but they are unlikely to announce it before the declaration of the polls schedule as part of its strategy to mount pressure on the government and the Election Commission (EC) to create a level-

playing field.

They said they are now working out some strategies. As part of the strategies, BNP's most important alliance partner Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami may put candidates independently in the five cities so that BNP can get support of some progressive parties like Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Gono Forum, Nagorik Oikya and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Rob) in the five city polls.

A BNP standing committee member wishing anonymity said, "We'll join the election as we're confident that we'll be able to retain all the five mayoral posts if the election is held in a minimum fair and credible manner. We've nothing to lose in the polls. If we win, it'll manifest our popularity and invigorate our party leaders and activists. If we lose in rigged polls, it will justify our demand for holding the general election under a non-party neutral administration."

He said they are doing some groundwork, including resolving intra-party conflicts and taking opinions of party grassroots leaders about the possible

mayoral candidates of the party.

The BNP policymaker said their party may install Mojibur Rahman Sarwar as BNP mayor candidate for Barisal city polls dropping existing mayor Ahsan Habib Kamal, while Hasanuzzaman Sarkar for Gazipur replacing incumbent mayor MA Mannan, and Shafiqul Alam Mona for Khulna city replacing current mayor Moniruzzaman Moni.

He also said it is almost certain that existing Rajshahi mayor Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul and Sylhet mayor Ariful Huq Chowdhury will get party nomination further for the next polls.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said they will finalise their decision on joining the city polls observing the overall political situation in the country.

He said the Election Commission must create a level-playing field and equal opportunities for all parties for participatory elections to the city corporations.

The BNP leader also said now there

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BNP yet to get rally permission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP till last night did not get permission for today's pre-scheduled rally at Suhrawardy Udyan.

The party announced the programme to press for release of party Chairperson Khaleda Zia from jail.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday said, "We are still hopeful about getting permission." He was addressing a press briefing at the party's Nayapalton office.

Public Works Department has already informed BNP that it has no objection if Dhaka Metropolitan Police allows BNP to hold the rally at the venue, said Rizvi.

Earlier, on March 12, BNP announced that it would hold the rally today, after failing to get permission to hold the similar programme on that day.

On March 2, BNP first announced the rally, but DMP informed BNP on March 11 that they could not give it permission on security grounds.

EARLY, LATE CHILDHOOD 'Healthcare increases height, cognition'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's healthcare programmes for mothers and children played a significant role in improving height, cognition and educational attainment of children in their early and late childhood, said a recent study.

When children grew older, many of the effects including their height was sustained, but their cognition did not improve, the study said, suggesting the government puts emphasis on continuation of cognitive development.

The study was prepared based on the effects of a maternity, child health and family planning programme undertaken in Chandpur's Matlab area 35 years ago. It was launched in 1977. The findings of the study were revealed at the Development Economic Conference 2018, jointly organised by Brac Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) and International Growth Centre (IGC) at Brac Centre in Dhaka.

Several faculty members of different universities from home and abroad, including Dhaka University and Yale University, took part in the daylong conference.

"Improving health and nutrition of young children is important not only for immediate well-being, but also because it is believed to reduce poverty in the long-run through improved human capital," said Gisella A Kagy, a professor of Vassar College in USA, while presenting the study findings.

Speaking at the conference, Prof Abul Kalam Azad, director general at the Directorate General of Health Services, sought increased government funds in the health sector.

Sultan Hafeez Rahman, country director of IGC Bangladesh and also the executive director of BIGD; Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, vice-chairperson of Brac; and Ruchira Naved, senior scientist of International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, also spoke.



Winners of "Praner Bhasha", a quiz campaign by The Daily Star and Pran Milk, at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. Among the guests were Maksudur Rhaman, category manager of Pran Dairy Ltd; and Azim Hossain, head of Digital Media of Pran-RFL Group. The contest was organised marking International Mother Language Day.

PHOTO: STAR

Bangabandhu's birthday celebrated abroad

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh missions across the world observed the 98th birthday of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on Saturday.

The embassies and high commissions hosted programmes including placing wreaths at the portrait of the father of the nation, cutting birthday cakes and reading out the messages released by the president, prime minister and foreign minister, according to press releases received from the Bangladesh missions abroad, including the USA and the UK, India, Denmark, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Japan.



Kazi Golam Mahboob (1927-2006)

An activist of the 1952 Language Movement

Twelve years have passed since you left us but the values you instilled in us, live on. We remember you as a man par excellence. Intelligent, courageous, witty and charming, you brightened the life of everyone you came across.

An activist and convener of the 1952 Language Movement, Kazi Golam Mahboob was a talented lawyer who went on to become the President of the Supreme Court Bar. Above all, to us, he was a beloved husband, a doting father and a caring grandfather. We miss you deeply.

A milad mahfil and prayer congregation will be held in Dhaka and at his birthplace Gournadi, Barisal.

- Family Members

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FOUR ARSON CASES OF 2015 Khaleda's assistant Shimul denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Four Dhaka courts yesterday rejected as many bail prayers of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Special Assistant Shamsur Rahman alias Shimul Biswas in separate arson cases filed with Pallabi, Kafur, Badda and Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

However, another Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday granted him bail in an arson case filed with Bhatara Police Station. All the five cases were filed in the first three months of 2015 for torching passengers' buses during the countrywide movement enforced by BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Shimul, accused in over 98 criminal cases, was arrested in the capital on February 8 after a Dhaka court sentenced Khaleda to five years' imprisonment in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

Separate courts earlier issued arrest warrants against him in connection with 70 criminal cases filed in 2015. But, police did not arrest him even though he was discharging duties as Khaleda's special assistant when the warrants were issued.

Shimul was remanded for 15 days in three cases filed with Shahbagh and Paltan police stations. But, police are yet to take him on fresh 27-day remand in three other arson cases filed with Shahbagh, Paltan and Bangshal Police Station.

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