

UGC allows

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Public universities were holding online classes as they could not take in-person classes since March 17 last year, when the government closed all educational institutions due to the pandemic.

The closure has been extended till May 23 this year in phases.

According to UGC statistics, there are 49 public universities in the country. About 3 lakh students are studying at these universities, except National University, Islamic University and Bangladesh Open University.

PROPOSAL ON PROCEDURES OF EXAMS

The guideline says public university students have completed theory classes for two semesters since April last year, but they are yet to sit for semester final exams. Students are losing interest in their studies as they are not sure when the exams will be held.

It mentions that grades can be awarded to students after holding online exams on specific subjects by giving “creative assignments”, “creative quiz/ MCQ questions”, and holding “time-constrained class tests” and viva voce exams.

But students should keep the camera and microphone of their devices turned on while taking the exams online.

Practical tests will be held after normalcy returns.

“Universities must have to hold viva and they can also choose all the options or two or three of them,” said UGC member and committee chief Prof Dil Afroza Begum.

She said there should be a viva board to take the exams and all activities should be recorded. Students should be asked different questions.

A committee member said universities can develop a system in which a student can write the answer and take a picture of it and send it to the university.

The member said universities will keep in mind that no student is affected due to shortage of digital devices or interrupted internet access, and there should be steps to stop adoption of unfair means by students during exams.

Dil Afroza said that UGC had earlier provided over 41,000 students of public universities Tk 8,000 each interest-free loans to buy smartphones.

It has also allowed 30GB internet data at the cost of Tk 200 for each public university student per month, so there will be no problem of internet access, she added.

Govt serving

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The same company imported another two million doses of vaccine in April under the existing agreement, meaning that it has achieved a profit Tk 15.40 crore.

Quader said the supply of Covid-19 vaccine from India has suddenly been stopped and due to a lack of alternative source, the vaccination programme fell into extreme uncertainty.

“At a time when the pandemic is raging in Bangladesh, we are being forced to suspend the vaccination programme for want of vaccines,” Quader added.

The JP chairman said doing business under import of Covid vaccine is not acceptable during the pandemic period

No excuse for polluting the environment: Gowher Rizvi

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister’s International Affairs Adviser Dr Gowher Rizvi yesterday said industries are important for economic growth, but there is no excuse behind polluting the environment recklessly.

“Most of the pollution is coming from industries. They are bound by government regulation to ensure ETP [effluent treatment plant] is installed and operated, but they’re not doing so. That’s unacceptable, and as a society, we must demand from them of their societal responsibilities,” he said while speaking as chief guest at launching of a project on “Promoting Democratic Governance and Collective Advocacy for Environmental Protection in Dhaka City” held virtually.

The project will be jointly implemented by Waterkeepers Bangladesh, Department of Geography and Environment of Jahangirnagar University, and Centre for Atmospheric Pollution Studies of Stamford University, with support from USAID, UKAID and Counterpart International.

He also said public interest litigation (PIL) plays a great role in environmental protection, and the courts have shown that they are open to the matter.

“Why do we need PIL for laws to be pushed? It often takes away the responsibility of the administration and agencies, as they

wait until the court gives an order,” he said.

Rizvi said the government is now more receptive to advocacy of NGOs, but it must be based on evidence-based research.

Habibun Nahar, deputy minister for environment, forest and climate change, said the responsibilities centring environmental pollution surely falls on her ministry, and people only blame them. “But we, including the people, are always concerned about our rights, not our responsibilities.”

Sultana Kamal, chairperson of Blue Planet Initiative, said, “This project aims to address challenges of environmental pollution affecting rivers, which has been marked as a human rights issue by planners.”

At the webinar, Atiqul Islam, mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation; Judith Herberson, development director of Foreign of Commonwealth and Development Office; Prof Mohammad Ali Naqi, vice-chancellor of Stamford University; and Marc Yaggi, executive director of Waterkeeper Alliance, also spoke as special guests.

The launching programme was moderated by the consortium lead and BPI Executive Director Sharif Jamil, while Prof Dr Nurul Islam of Jahangirnagar University addressed the vote of thanks, and Mainuddin Ahmed, chief of Promoting Advocacy and Rights (PAR), gave the welcome speech.

Don’t want

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15 trees, planted in the ‘70s, have already been felled there.

Contacted, Asifur Rahman Bhuiyan, superintendent architect of the Department of Architecture, involved with the planning and designing of the project, said they will not construct any restaurant in the Udyan, clearing trees.

He said they will construct walkways so that they can protect the greenery. Asifur said they are trying to save the big trees that are aligned with the design of the walkway, but they will cut the small ones if they fail to protect those. He also said they will plant more trees, taking suggestions from experts.

“We will set up seven toilets and sheds next to those,” he said. There will also be seven small food stalls, he added.

Suhrawardy Udyan has already had several structures like the 150 feet glass tower, Shikha Anirban, an underground museum, amphitheatre, mural, and a reflecting pool.

The official said a parking lot will also be built with a capacity of 500 cars. He said they will construct it without damaging any natural groundwater recharge capacity or cutting trees.

Besides, Asifur said, the Shahbagh police box will be relocated, and 50 flower shops will be set up in place of the existing flower market.

LEGAL NOTICE SERVED

Meanwhile, a Supreme Court lawyer yesterday served a legal notice on three government high officials concerned, asking them to cancel the activities of clearing trees and setting up restaurant at Suhrawardy Udyan in 48 hours.

Lawyer Manzill Murshid sent the notice to Liberation War Affairs Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh, Public Works Department Chief Engineer Md Shamim Akhter and Chief of Architect of Bangladesh Mir Monzur Rahman through email.

In the notice, Murshid said if they don’t stop such activities in 48 hours, a contempt of court petition will be filed against them.

He said many trees at the Udyan have been cut and its environment has been damaged to establish restaurant or shops, ignoring the 2009 High Court verdict.

Following a petition, the HC on July 7, 2009 directed the government to identify and preserve all the important historic places related to the republic’s Liberation War and to set up memorial monuments at the historic places at Suhrawardy Udyan so that people from home and abroad can pay homage to martyred freedom fighters.

The HC had ordered the government to take steps to protect and maintain the historic places at the Udyan where Bangabandhu delivered his historic speech on March 7 in 1971 and where the Pakistan army surrendered on December 16, 1971.

Eight returnees

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She suggested following health guidelines rather than giving importance to the variant.

A total of 18 people with Covid-19 came to Bangladesh from India through Benapole Land Port since April 25, a day before Bangladesh closed its land ports for passengers to stop entry of the deadly virus from neighbouring country India.

Sixteen of them were still undergoing treatment at Jashore General Hospital till yesterday, and they are doing well, said Dr Arif Ahmed, resident medical officer of the hospital.

None of them needs oxygen or had any complication, Dr Arif said.

Two patients were released from the hospital yesterday, as their Covid-19 test results came out negative, he said.

“Bangladeshis are entering Bangladesh with Covid-19 certificates. The 18 were identified by their certificates, which stated that they were Covid-19 positive,” he continued.

“Earlier, we sent eight samples to IEDCR for testing. However, we did not get results from them yet, and we have sent 10 other samples on Wednesday,” he added.

The hospital sends samples to both the university and IEDCR for testing.

A total of 1,410 Bangladeshis have entered Bangladesh from April 25 till yesterday through Benapole Land Port, and are currently under institutional quarantine at hotels and dormitories of Jashore and adjacent Khulna, Satkhira, Jhenidah and Narail districts, since Jashore alone cannot

accommodate so many people, said Jashore Deputy Commissioner Tamijul Islam Khan.

“We have taken initiatives to stop the Indian variant’s entrance into our country,” the DC said.

The Jashore administration has taken prompt action to arrange accommodation for the India-returnees. However, many returnees alleged that they are not getting proper facilities by hotel authorities.

They said they are facing financial hardship for staying at hotels, after spending a lot of money in India for treatment purposes. They demanded quarantine in their own district.

Despite the administration’s initiatives, the risk of the Indian variant remains high, due to trucks continuing to enter Bangladesh through Benapole Land Port.

Some 350 trucks bring goods to the land port from Indian states; some of those states have been badly affected by Covid-19.

The truckers do not follow health guidelines during their stay at the port, our Benapole correspondent reports.

Although they were directed to stay inside their vehicles at the port, they roam around freely, claimed Mafizur Rahman Sazan, president of C&F Agents Association, Benapole.

People’s concerns in the bordering areas of Bangladesh are growing as the pandemic’s second wave has devastated India.

India recorded 3,980 deaths in the last 24 hours till Thursday morning, the highest in a day so far, pushing the total fatalities to 2,30,168.

Activists make

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Advocate Masuda also presented a nine-point demand for a fair probe of the Gulshan incident. She said the accused must be brought under the law immediately, action should be taken for providing a quick autopsy report, the safety of the family members of the victim must be ensured and the government and the administration must play an active and effective role in ensuring a fair and speedy trial.

She also demanded to stop the practice of victims-blaming, urged media to play a responsible role in such incidents, and called on to formulate a national commission for framing necessary guidelines for the elimination of violence against women.

BMP president Dr Fauzia Moslem said, “the movement to prevent violence against women is not just the duty of women’s rights organisations. Everyone has to work for it.”

“Those involved in the Gulshan incident are not seen to be on quick trial. We are now seeing how the abundance of money can make people inhumane, who can buy

the entire society,” she added.

Retired Supreme Court Justice Nizamul Haque Nasim, who is also a member of the national committee, urged journalists to dig deep and present accurate information in the case of the Gulshan girl and law enforcement agencies to be more active in this regard.

He also called on the government, law enforcement agencies, judiciary, media and women’s rights groups to work together to prevent violence against women.

Former National Human Rights Commission Chairman Prof Dr Mizanur Rahman said it is very sad to demand a fair and impartial trial for the death of a woman in the 50 years of independence.

“The fair trial of violence against women and girls should be a normal process in the administration of justice,” he said.

The conference was moderated by Advocate Maksuda Akhter, legal advocacy and lobby director of BMP.

BMP general secretary Maleka Banu, joint general secretary Shima Moslem, legal aid secretary Shahana Kabir, and finance secretary Dil Afroze Begum among others, joined the conference.

Wait for

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handed death sentences to 22 people and life terms to six others. A decade later, on June 15, 2016, the High Court confirmed death penalty of six, including Nurul.

The HC, however, commuted capital punishment of seven others to life imprisonment, upheld life term of two and acquitted 11 of charges.

Visa delays

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Contacted, Shelley Salehin, director (personnel) at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told the Daily Star that they are serious about the memorandum. “The minister held a meeting with the US ambassador yesterday and he said they will consider the visa interview issue,” she said.

Multiple students recounted their experience to this correspondent. Kirtaniya Rahul, a graduate of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), had to cancel his scholarship for Fall-2020 as he couldn’t guarantee he would get a visa last year.

“I then applied to four US universities for this year, and I have secured a fully-funded PhD offer. I quit my job after getting this offer as I thought the visa process will be expedited this year,” he said.

Roushney Fatima, a representative who met the foreign minister, said, “I got accepted in a PhD program in the Medical University of South Carolina, with a Doctoral Fellowship and Dean’s Scholarship in fall 2020. I was supposed to work on cancer biology with a large group of international researchers but I was the only one who couldn’t join the lab due to visa complications.”

Anupam Bose, who secured graduate admission to Iowa State University, said, “I have been preparing for graduate studies for over one and a half years now. The standardised tests (IELTS, GRE) and university applications not only require a lot of time and effort, but also cost a hefty amount. Now all of that can become a sunk cost if we don’t get the visa on time.”

Every year, around 2,000-2,500 people receive student visas for higher studies in the United States, according to the US state department website. Last year, this number was 1,252 as a large portion of students were unable to get visas in due time.

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DISCLOSURE RELATING TO UN-AUDITED FIRST QUARTER (Q1) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This is for kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of Pubali Bank Limited in its 1284th Board Meeting (physical and virtual) held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 1:30 PM in the Board Room of the Bank’s Head Office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka has approved the First Quarter (Q1) un-audited Financial Statements of the Bank as on March 31, 2021 and disclosed the following key financial indicators of the Bank:

Measures	31 March 2021		31 March 2020	
	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)	Taka (Solo)	Taka (Consolidated)
Operating Profit	2,421,229,432	2,475,012,695	2,268,379,774	2,300,954,489
Net Profit/ (loss) after Taxation	979,107,986	1,011,563,973	871,250,551	882,385,629
Net Assets Value (NAV)	39,825,547,535	39,744,699,526	29,755,389,190	29,615,918,066
NAV Per Share	38.73	38.65	28.94	28.80
Earnings Per Share (EPS)	0.95	0.98	0.85	0.86
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS)	3.58	3.98	4.58	4.91

The details of the un-audited First Quarter (Q1) Financial Statements as on March 31, 2021 is also available in the website of the Bank at www.pubalibangla.com.

By order of the Board
Sd/-
Zahid Ahsan
Deputy Managing Director
& Company Secretary

Dated: Dhaka
May 6, 2021

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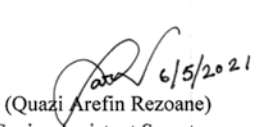
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Ministry of Finance
Admin-3 Section
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.erd.gov.bd

Reference No: 09.00.0000.074.07.008.20/405 Date: 06/05/2021.

Tender Notice (e-GP)
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of goods details in table:

Sl. No	Tender ID No.	Description of Goods/ work	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1.	576909	Procurement of Computer and Others	23.05.2021 at 11.00	23.05.2021 at 12.00	23.05.2021 at 12.00

- This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
- The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank Branches.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


(Quazi Arifin Rezoane)
Senior Assistant Secretary
Phone: 48114354

GD-919