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আর্থিক নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করতে

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We welcome Spanish investment in Bangladesh

PM tells outgoing envoy

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Spanish investments will be welcomed in any sector of Bangladesh.

She made the remark when Spain's ambassador to Bangladesh Francisco de Asis Benitez Salas paid a farewell call on her at the Gono Bhaban, said PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim.

While briefing reporters after the meeting, Karim said Salas expressed his country's keenness to

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Meera and her father pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals at Rayerbazar killing field yesterday morning. The father and daughter decided to visit the memorial a day before to avoid crowd. The nation is set to observe Martyred Intellectuals Day today.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

EC declares 46 more candidates valid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another 46 aspirants got their candidacy back yesterday after winning appeals against the cancellation of their candidacy for the upcoming parliamentary election.

Of the 46 who got their candidacy back, 18 are independent, two are from Jatiya Party, three from Trinamool BNP, six from Sangiskrik Muktiyote, and two each from Bangladesh Nationalist Movement and Bangladesh Nationalist Front, said the EC sources yesterday.

With this, 214 candidates got their candidacy back so far. CEC Kazi Habibul Awal and the other four ECs held a total of 103 hearings at the Election Commission office yesterday.

EC officials said they rejected 53 appeals, while decisions regarding two would be made later.

So far, EC held hearings of 394 appeals out of the 558 appeals filed by aspirants, and the hearings will continue till December 15.

The EC rejected the candidacy of Awami League-nominated aspirant from Jashore-4, Enamul Haq Babul, and independent aspirant from Sunamganj 4, Dewan Shamsul Abedin.

Appeals of Bikalpadhara Bangladesh Secretary General Abdul Mannan for getting back his candidature for Laxmipur-4 and Noakhali-4 were rejected as well.

The EC also rejected an appeal challenging the candidature of Jatiya Party Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnun for Kishoreganj-3, which was filed by AL candidate for the same constituency Nasirul Islam Khan.

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NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM

'It's against DU spirit, freedom of speech' Speakers say after university authorities cancel discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University authorities yesterday cancelled the venue booking for a scheduled discussion on the updated school curriculum, terming it an anti-government event.

The Dhaka University Teachers Network had planned to hold the discussion titled "National Curriculum 2021: Why We are Worried" at DU's RC Majumdar Arts Auditorium at 2:00pm.

Prof Tanzimuddin Khan, one of the organisers, said they were in the process of hanging banners at the auditorium when Prof Abdul Bashir, the dean of the Arts Faculty, called him and said they cancelled the booking.

"The move [cancellation of the booking] goes against the spirit of the university and freedom of speech. It is also a violation of the Dhaka University Order-1973," he said.

Contacted, Prof Bashir said they had to cancel the programme based on a call from a "special place", without elaborating what the "special place" was.

"We came to know that an anti-government discussion would be held here, and we cannot allow it," he said.

Asked about the violation of the DU 1973 order, Prof Bashir said he was not fully aware of the law. He said being in a responsible position, he could not allow any anti-state activities.

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Address parents' concerns: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the new competency-based national curriculum is being readily accepted by the students, ensuring its smooth implementation requires addressing the guardians' concerns and providing adequate training to teachers, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

They stressed for collaborative efforts for implementing the curriculum effectively.

Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha organised the roundtable titled "Competency-based New Curriculum of Bangladesh: Challenges and Way Forward" at The Daily Star Centre. It was attended by government officials, teachers, trainers and guardians.

Prof Ratan Siddique, former NCTB chairman, said through this curriculum, students will become true "learners", not just "examinees".

"Earlier, there was only competition among students. From now on students will learn to cooperate among themselves through different

class works. It will bring qualitative change to the students' learning and behaviour," he added.

Nasrin Begum, coordinator of BNPS, presented an article clarifying recent criticism and propaganda centring the new curriculum.

We need additional training for teachers, awareness campaigns for parents, and improving required physical infrastructure to address these challenges.

FERDOUSI BEGUM

Principal of Rotnogorva Farida Zaman School and College

Ladly K Faiz, executive director of CWFED, stressed the importance of incorporating new approaches to education. "Any new method should be seen in a positive way.

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UN wants Bangladeshis to vote without intimidation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UN wants every Bangladeshi to be able to vote free of intimidation and repercussions in the upcoming election.

"We continue to engage on this issue and continue to call for the organisation of free and fair elections in which every Bangladeshi can vote, free of intimidation, or free of any repercussions," Stéphane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, told reporters at a briefing in New York on Tuesday.

He made the comments when a journalist referred to six leading human rights organisations urging the international community to stand for the protection of fundamental rights and democracy in Bangladesh.

The next election is scheduled to be held on January 7.

Heart stent prices drop by 43pc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Much to the relief of heart patients in the country, the government has reduced prices of cardiac stents up to 43 percent, effective from December 16.

The prices have been reduced by Tk 2,000 to Tk 56,000, depending on varieties.

Directorate of Drug Administration issued a circular on Tuesday, saying that prices of 44 types of cardiac stents – from 27 manufacturing companies – have been reduced.

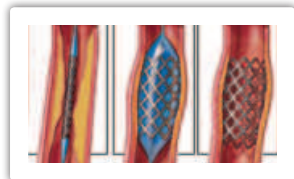
The retail prices have been fixed from a minimum of Tk 14,000 to a maximum of Tk 140 lakh.

A cardiac stent is a tube-shaped device placed in the coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart, to keep the arteries open in patients suffering from coronary heart disease.

The circular, signed by director general of DGDA Mohammad Yousuf, directed all hospitals concerned to display the new prices of cardiac stents on their noticeboards.

Simultaneously, hospitals providing cardiac treatment will have to take measures not to include coronary stents in their price packages, the DGDA circular said.

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'I miss the war of words between us'

Quader on Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said he misses the "war of words" between him and BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir as the latter is in jail now.

When asked if he misses Fakhrul, he said, "No... I do not want to say it like that. I mean, I exchange words every day. He also sharpened his attack while answering various questions. It felt good to do that. It's definitely absent now. It's true."

He said this while talking to reporters at the political office of the Awami League president in Dhanmondi. "Democracy also benefits from this. He responds to me, and I respond to him... but it's a matter of law [that Fakhrul is in prison]," said Quader.

Quader also said, "I habitually say the word 'miss', I do not want to say it like that. I mean, I exchange words every day. He also sharpened his attack while answering various questions. It felt good to do that. It's definitely absent now. It's true."

About the upcoming election, Quader said democracy in Bangladesh will become more flawless through it.

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Court refuses to pass order as Fakhrul seeks bail in 10 cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday sought bail in 10 cases filed with police stations in the capital over political violence.

The court, however, refused to pass any order on the bail petitions as these were not filed with due process.

Of them, six cases were filed with Paltan Model Police Station while four with Ramna Police Station over violence on October 28, said Fakhrul's lawyer Zaynul Abedin Meshbah.

The cases were filed on charges of killing a police constable, illegal gathering on the street, vandalising vehicles, rioting, snatching a police weapon, damaging properties, assaulting policemen and preventing them from discharging their duties.

On October 29, Fakhrul was arrested in connection with the case filed with Ramna Police Station over the attack on the residence of the chief justice during a clash with police on October 28.

His bail petition was rejected by Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam on October 29 after he



AZMIN AZRAN and SHUCHISMITA TITTHI

The Dhaka University Metro Station became the latest station to open on the MRT-6 line yesterday. After a one-year wait, since the Agargaon Uttara section of the MRT-6 was opened on December 28 last year, the station at DU welcomed students and commuters for the first time.

Located on the mouth of the road leading from the university's Teacher-Student Center (TSC) to Doyel Chattar, the station provides direct access to the university for students, as well as commuters who may be travelling to some of the major destinations in adjoining areas.

At the station, The Daily Star spoke to students and commuters who were excited to be finally able to use the station.

Meheraj Hasan Shishir, a first-year student at the Institute of Health Economics at DU, said, "I am excited to be able to use the metro to come to university, as I live in Uttara. It will be hugely



Dhaka University students will finally be able to easily commute to and from their campus as the metro station there opened yesterday, after a year's wait. Alongside students, the services will also be beneficial to others who have to take that route. The Bijoy Sarani station on the Agargaon-Motijheel section of the metro rail was also opened to public yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

beneficial for me."

Mahdi Muhammad Hossain Noki, a third-year student of Computer Science and Engineering at DU, expressed his joy at how much easier life has

become because of the metro rail.

"Reliable smooth rides, timely arrivals and a stress free journey—navigating Dhaka has never been easier. A station right on the campus takes a lot

of stress away from getting to lectures on time," he said.

With many large educational institutions in surrounding areas, this station will not only serve DU students, but also provide much needed connectivity for others.

A final-year resident student of Electronics and Electrical Engineering at Buet, who was exiting the station after a short trip to Motijheel in the morning, said, "Normally, it takes me 40-45 minutes to make this trip in the morning, as there are office-goers who cause a lot of rush hour traffic. Today, it took me five minutes. The initial timing of 7:30am to 12:30pm will not help students who need to travel outside campus for tuition or other work. So we want it to be fully operational as soon as possible," he added.

While there were initially protests in 2015 and 2020, opposing the idea of the metro rail going through DU, the overall reception to station opening has been positive.

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