

Two new envoys present credentials to president

UNB, Dhaka

Newly appointed Ambassador of Portugal to Bangladesh João Ribeiro de Almeida and Ambassador of Bahrain Abdulrahman Mohammed AlGaoud presented their credentials to President Mohammed Shahabuddin at Bangabhaban yesterday.

A contingent of Presidential Guard Regiment received them with a guard of honour at Bangabhaban, president's press secretary told UNB after the meeting.

Welcoming the ambassadors, President Shahabuddin said Bangladesh is working to develop bilateral and multilateral relations with all the countries.

During the meeting, the ambassadors highlighted the contribution of peace-loving and skilled Bangladeshi workers to the economic development of their countries.



Terminal 3 of Dhaka airport will be handed over to CAAB tomorrow, as it is almost complete. A Japanese company will operate the third terminal, which cost Tk 21,300 crore. The building houses 115 check-in counters, 66 departure immigration desks, 59 arrival immigration and 3 VIP immigration desks. Terminal 3 is expected to be fully ready by October.

FILE PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

30 private universities have no valid VCs: UGC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University Grants Commission (UGC) recently issued a warning to prospective students about 30 private universities nationwide.

A notification published on Wednesday night by Omar Faruque, director of private universities at UGC, said 30 out of 104 private universities in Bangladesh lack a validly appointed vice-chancellor.

It raises concerns about the legality of their operations and the validity of student certificates.

The UGC also identified five universities facing legal issues.

Among the five, IBAS University, University of Comilla, and America Bangladesh University were flagged for operating illegal campuses and conducting unauthorised educational activities.

Furthermore, UGC suspended new student admissions at Central University of Science and Technology in Dhaka until further notice, due to an expired temporary permit, absence of a VC and treasurer, and legal issues surrounding board of trustees.

Additionally, the notice mentioned that Victoria University of Bangladesh remains barred from

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HAZRAT SHAHJALAL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT 3rd terminal to be handed over to CAAB tomorrow

RASHIDUL HASAN

The highly anticipated third terminal of Dhaka airport will be handed over to Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) tomorrow, as construction of the iconic building is almost complete.

CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said as per the government decision, Japanese company will operate the third terminal under Public Private Partnership (PPP).

As it will take the Japanese company some time to begin the operation of Terminal 3, CAAB will start the initial operation on a limited scale, with its own manpower and assistance from Biman Bangladesh Airlines, added the CAAB chief.

The government has decided to operate and maintain the terminal through a Japanese consortium under a public-private partnership.

"Aviation Dhaka Consortium, contractor of the third terminal will hand over the building to us on Saturday," Mafidur said, adding, "System integration, calibration and testing of different equipment of third terminal has been completed. The terminal will be fully ready in October."

CAAB expects the necessary manpower will be available by early next year and the third terminal will be fully operational by then.

A preliminary estimate of the manpower required for operations and maintenance at Terminal 3 has been made by Nippon Koei,

a consultancy firm for the HSIA Expansion Phase-1 project.

According to the estimate, around 6,000 manpower is required to operate the terminal, round the clock in four shifts.

4,000 personnel will be required for security only.

CAAB officials said that 28-29 organisations work in the airport - related to passenger services, ground handling, immigration, and customs.

With the completion of the third terminal, the annual passenger handling capacity of HSIA will be 24 million, which is currently only eight million. It will also be able to handle 500,000 tonnes of cargo each year.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, on October 7 last year, partially opened the third terminal. The project, costing Tk 21,300 crore, commenced on December 28, 2019.

Covering an area of 5,42,000 square metres, the third terminal will boast a floor space of 230,000 square metres - housing 115 check-in counters, 66 departure immigration desks, 59 arrival immigration and 3 VIP immigration desks.

Upon full-fledged operation, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport's annual passenger and cargo handling capacity is expected to double.

Some 35 foreign airlines are operating 167 flights, every day, carrying around 40,000 passengers at HSIA, according to internal sources.

The annual passenger handling capacity of HSIA will be 24 million, which is currently only eight million. It will also be able to handle 500,000 tonnes of cargo each year.

International Finance Corporation (IFC) will provide transaction advisory support to the PPP Authority and CAAB to assist the government in preparing a concession agreement for a private operator to operate and maintain Terminal 3, CAAB chairman said.

The IFC team will provide a report in which the terms and conditions will be described, he also said. CAAB expects to receive the report by April.

While the Japanese company will be responsible for operational activities of the terminal, CAAB will look after its security.

The new terminal will be connected with the elevated expressway, underground railway (MRT-5, Kamalapur to airport portion) and also with the airport railway station through an underground tunnel.

Besides, hajj pilgrims will be able to access the third terminal from Ashkona hajj camp through an underground tunnel.

CURBING DENGUE DNCC to buy discarded items

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has decided to purchase discarded items left in the open from people to tackle dengue outbreak.

At the 26th council meeting, held at the hall room of Gulshan-2 Nagar Bhaban in the capital yesterday, DNCC decided to buy polythene, chips packets, coconut shells, and more to curb Aedes mosquito breeding.

Anyone can collect cash by depositing specified items at ward councillor offices.

The cleaners will regularly collect the abandoned items in each ward and remove them at the nearest Secondary Transfer Station (STS).

Prices were set at Tk 100 for 100 packets of chips, Tk 100 for 10 ice cream cups, Tk 50 per kg for unused polythene, and Tk 2 per green coconut shell.

Additionally, each clay/plastic/melamine/ceramic container will be purchased at Tk 3, each abandoned tyre at Tk 50, each condensed milk container, abandoned commodes/basins at Tk 100, and other discarded plastic items at Tk 10 per kg.

Mayor Atiqul Islam said, "A campaign will be launched after Eid, led by

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'Don't try to influence upazila polls'

Quader warns party leaders, lawmakers, and ministers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League once again cleared its position not to nominate any party candidate for the upcoming upazila polls, scheduled to be held in phases from May 8.

The AL camp, however, asked party grassroots leaders to take measures to minimise the number of party candidates, although the field would be open for party men to contest, said sources.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday made the party's position clear to party grassroots leaders from Khulna division during a view exchange meeting with them at party headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Quader also asked grassroots leaders of Khulna division not to engage in any confrontation centring the upazila polls that might worsen internal feuds of the party, according to meeting sources.

While talking to reporters, AL second-in-command warned party leaders, ministers, and lawmakers not to try to influence the election.

"If anyone from the party wants to be a candidate, there is no barrier. The party is not providing party symbols due to some practical circumstances. But if anyone acts on their own centring the election, they will have to face music," Quader cautioned.

The AL general secretary also asked the party's responsible leaders to act responsibly.

"If you want to continue with Awami league, you will have to follow party discipline. You all should know your common enemy... the enemy is communal forces led by BNP," he said.

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'Allow us to practise politics on campus'

Six Buet students urge PM

DU CORRESPONDENT

Six Buet students - who support Bangladesh Chhatra League - appealed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday to ensure a "safe campus" to express their opinions.

They said they want to practise "progressive politics" safely and courageously at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

Of the students, Ashiqul Alam and Aritra Ghosh read out the written statement at a press briefing on the campus.

"We have to go through various complications including life threats. Our personal information starting from name, mobile number, and student ID is being spread using messaging apps. Twenty-

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NIKO GRAFT CASE Court to record testimonies May 14

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed May 14 for recording statements of prosecution witnesses in the Niko graft case filed against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and seven others.

Judge Sheikh Hafizur Rahman of the Special Judge's Court-9 of Dhaka passed the order, said a court staffer.

During hearing yesterday, the court recorded statement of witness AKM Anwar Islam, and also partially started recording statement of another witness Abdul Baki, said Mohammad Ziauddin, a lawyer for Khaleda.

Ziauddin represented Khaleda at the court in her absence yesterday as she is ill and receiving treatment at her Gulshan residence.

Teacher or torturer?

Madrassa student suffers kidney complication following beating

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Nine-year-old Rakib (not his real name), a student at Darul Quran Halijjiya Madrasa in the capital's Mirpur, was unable to attend class for a day due to a sudden fever.

Little did he know that this single day of absence would turn into a nightmare, as he would fall victim to physical abuse at the hands of his madrasa teacher Saddam Hossain on March 20.

Rakib's ordeal began when he was forced to kneel down and take a beating from his teacher, who hit him repeatedly with a cane. Two of the strikes directly hit his testicles.

This brutal assault resulted in Rakib suffering from kidney complications, leading to his admission at the National Institute of Kidney Diseases & Urology (NIKDU) for the past 15 days.

Dr Noor Dida, a medical officer at NIKDU, expressed concern over Rakib's condition.

She said, "Rakib had previously been dealing with a kidney

infection. However, the injury to his testicles might exacerbate his illness."

"We are providing comprehensive treatment to Rakib and are hopeful that he will recover gradually," Dr Noor told The Daily Star.

Rakib was released on Tuesday. But he was advised to be admitted to the hospital again after Eid.

Recalling the harrowing experience, Rakib said, "When I returned to madrasa the following day, the teacher punished me without listening to any explanation. He struck me repeatedly with a cane, causing excruciating pain."

Following that, Rakib experienced intense pain and difficulty when urinating, with traces of blood appearing in his urine the following day.

The victim's father, Raees Uddin (not his real name) a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, told The Daily Star, "I am the only breadwinner of my five-member

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Newly elected City Corporation mayors Tahsin Bahar Suchona of Cumilla and Ekramul Haque Titu of Mymensingh taking oaths at a ceremony yesterday. New chairmen of five Zila Parishads -- ANM Obaidur Rahman of Kurigram, Abdul Majid of Thakurgaon, Shamim Talukder of Sirajganj, Billal Miah of Brahmanbaria and Aleya Akhter of Habiganj -- also took their oaths at the event. The oaths were administered by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office.

PHOTO: PID