

'ZOHA DAY' AT RU Students call for Nat'l Teachers' Day recognition

NURAHSAN MRIDUL

Dr Shamsuzzoha, a professor at Rajshahi University, sacrificed his life to protect his students during the mass uprising of 1969.

On this day in 1969, he was shot by the Pakistani army while attempting to defuse tensions between protesting students and the military.

During the anti-Ayub Khan movement, RU students defied Section 144 and gathered in front of the university gate on February 18. As tensions escalated, Prof Shamsuzzoha, then the university proctor, rushed to the scene and urged the students to retreat.

When they refused, Pakistani army officer Captain Hadi ordered his troops to open fire. In a final act of defiance, Prof Shamsuzzoha stepped forward and declared, "Shoot me before you shoot my students." An officer then drew his pistol and shot him around 11:00am. Prof Shamsuzzoha died on the way to a hospital.

Since then, the day has been observed as Shaheed Zoha Dibas, but calls for it to be recognised as National Teachers' Day have gone unanswered.

Abu Sayed, the first martyr of the July uprising, had posted on Facebook before his death: "Sir! We desperately need you right now, Sir! It is far more honourable, glorious, and fulfilling to die as a 'Shamsuzzoha,' lamenting the absence of teachers beside them.

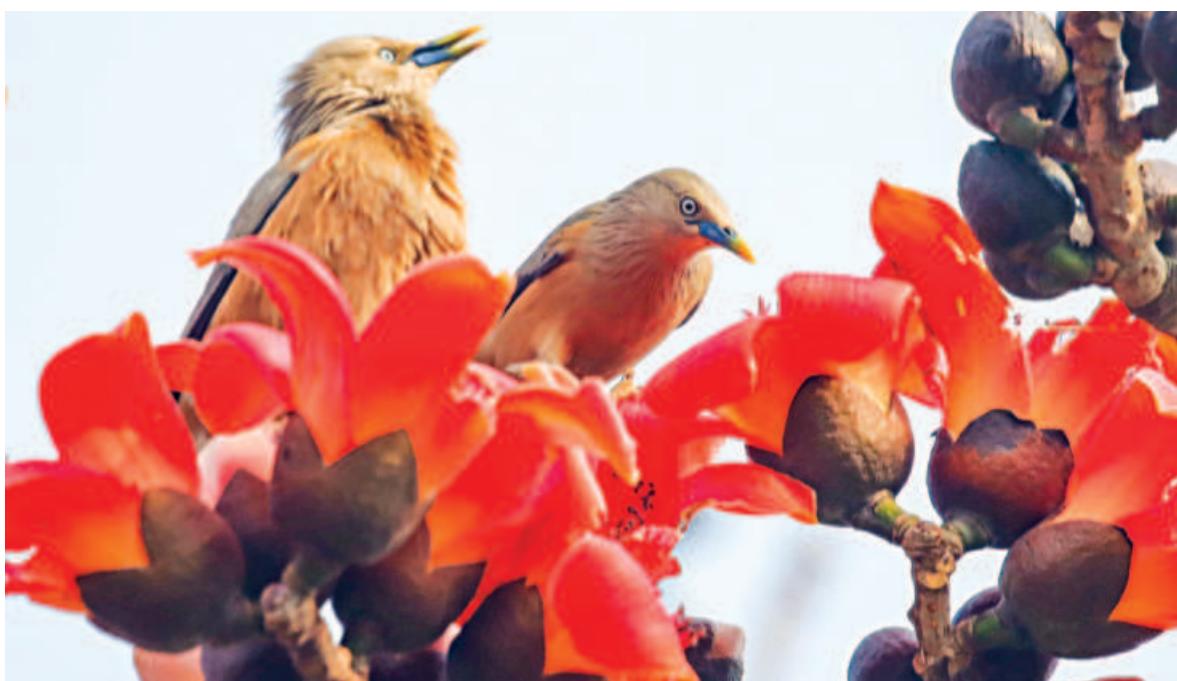
Each year, as February 18 approaches, discussions about honouring Prof Shamsuzzoha resurface, with renewed calls for state recognition. However, the momentum fades once the day passes, said RU student Torpona Dey.

To push for official recognition, Salahuddin Ammar and Mehedi Sajid, coordinators of Students Against Discrimination at RU, recently submitted a memorandum to the education and home affairs advisers, urging the government to declare the day as National Teachers' Day.

"During the July uprising, we truly understood the spirit of Zoha Sir. We desperately needed someone like him -- someone who would shield the students. What has Bangladesh done to honour a man whose name continues to inspire



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Two Shaliks feed on the nectar of a Shimul flower in Khulna. With the arrival of spring, nature gradually shakes off the dull shades of winter and reveals the vibrant colours of the new season. This photo was captured yesterday in the Amvita village of the Terokhada upazila.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

MYMENSINGH MEDICAL COLLEGE Teacher shortage disrupts academic activities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

An acute shortage of teachers has long been disrupting academic activities at Mymensingh Medical College.

Some 100 posts of professors, associate and assistant professors at the college are lying vacant for years.

Due to the vacant posts, the medical facilities in the 1,000-bed Mymensingh Medical College Hospital are also being disrupted, said sources.

Established as Liton Medical School in Mymensingh city's Baghpara area in 1924, it was later upgraded to Mymensingh Medical College in 1962 on an 84-acre campus with 32 students.

According to MMC sources, at present there are over 3,600 students studying in the college, including 1,505 students under MBBS programme and others studying

different post-graduate courses.

Teaching posts are currently lying vacant in many important departments including pathology, microbiology, pharmacology, community medicine, rheumatology, forensic medicine, respiratory medicine, neurology, physical medicine and

pediatric hematology and oncology, psychiatry, and dermatology.

MMC's present scenario deprives its students of quality education, said a postgraduate student.

"If the students do not get adequate classes and smooth progression through their curriculum, it will surely pose obstacles to their academic pursuits," said an MBBS student.

Dr Ranjan Kumar Majumder, a retired medicine specialist and an alumnus of MMC-13 batch, called for immediate measures to appoint teachers against the vacant posts.

Prof Dr Nazmul Alam Khan, principal of MMC, said many teachers either got transferred or went on retirement, creating the vacant posts.

"The authorities are informed about the vacancies. However, it is not certain when teachers would be appointed against the vacant posts," he added.



Man beats 7-year-old son to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Moulvibazar court sent a man to jail yesterday after he was arrested in connection with the murder of his son in Moulvibazar's Sadar upazila.

The deceased, Mahid, 7, is the son of Khokon Mia of Jagannathpur village, said police.

Locals said Khokon used to live with his second wife Tania Akhter and his two children -- Mahid and Rafid, 6.

Neighbours alleged that he was a drug peddler who often tortured the children over trivial matters.

Talking to The Daily Star, Tania said Mahid defecated on the bed on Sunday afternoon, which angered Khokon. He dragged Mahid out of the house and started beating him.

At one point, Mahid ran and took shelter at a neighbour's house, said Tania.

The neighbour, Zabeda, said Khokon got hold of Mahid at her house, took him outside, and repeatedly hit his head against a pillar. At one stage, Mahid started bleeding from his nose.

Later, Khokon took Mahid to a hospital as his condition worsened, said Tania.

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154 citizens protest expulsion of 10 CU female students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One hundred and fifty-four citizens in a statement yesterday demanded that the Chittagong University authorities immediately revoke the expulsion order of ten female students, conduct a fair investigation, and take appropriate action against the proctor for his unprofessional behaviour.

They said the students were expelled based on vague allegations, without a proper investigation or the opportunity to defend themselves. The statement mentioned that the university's proctor made sexist remarks on social media about the protesting students.

"We have also learned that when a group of male students attempted to vandalise a boat sculpture in front of the university's female dormitory at midnight, the administration remained passive. An assistant proctor verbally abused the female students and labelled them as associates of Awami League, putting their safety at risk," the statement read.

The signatories include former JU teacher Anu Muhammad, anthropologist Rehnuma Ahmed, DU teacher Samina Lutfu, Supreme Court advocate Jyotirmoy Barua, CU teacher Maidul Islam, and RU teacher A-Al Mamun.



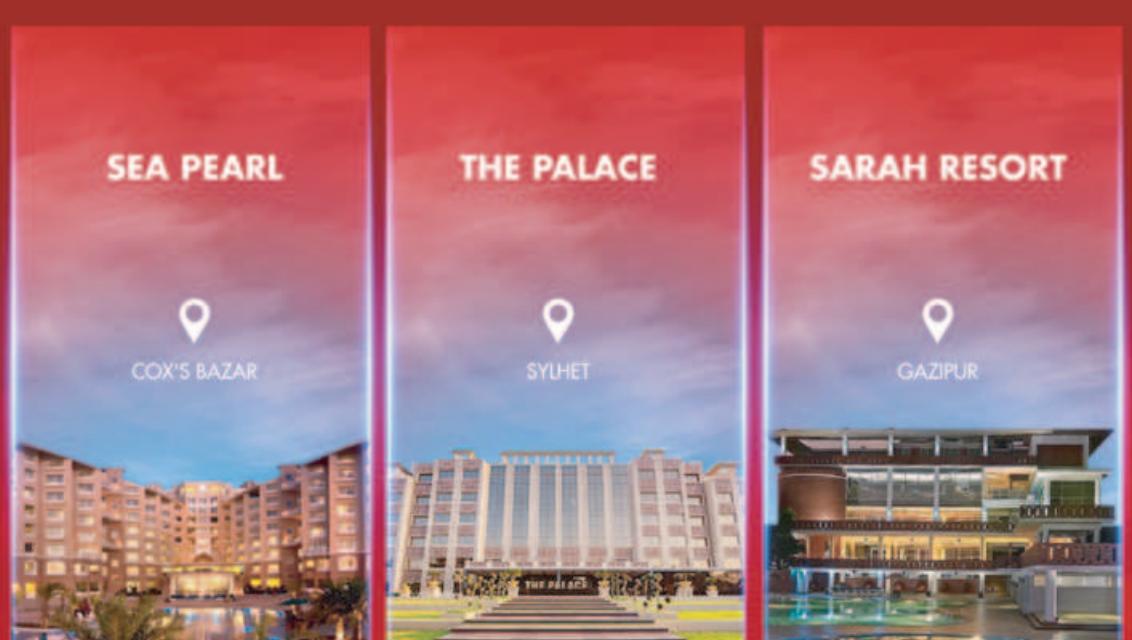
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