

‘ZOHAN DAY’ AT RU

Students call for
Nat’l Teachers’
Day recognition

NURAHISAN 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 Baghmara 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



rehabilitation, gastroenterology, cardiology, endocrinology, burn and plastic surgery, pediatric orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery, pediatric nephrology, physical medicine and hematology, pediatric surgery,

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.

OPERATION DEVIL HUNT

529 more arrested
across the country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The joint forces arrested 529 more people across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday afternoon as part of the “Operation Devil Hunt”, according to the Police Headquarters.

This brings the total number of arrests under the operation to 5,319 as of yesterday afternoon.

Additionally, 974 others, who were either accused or wanted in previous cases, were also arrested during this period.

Law enforcers recovered two firearms and 11 sharp weapons during the drive.

The government launched the operation on February 8 to restore law and order following an attack on “students and people” in Gazipur.

Meanwhile, at a programme in Sirajdikhan upazila of Munshiganj, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said Operation Devil Hunt will continue as long as “devils” (criminals) exist in the country.

Analysing reports from some districts, this newspaper found that the arrestees are mostly members of the Awami League and its associate bodies. Many are accused in cases filed after the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5.

DHAKA-MAWA EXPRESSWAY

15 hurt in four-
vehicle pileup



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

At least 15 people were injured in an accident involving four vehicles on the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway in Sreenagar, Munshiganj, yesterday morning.

The identities of the injured could not be confirmed immediately. They were rescued and provided treatment at local hospitals, Abdul Kader Zilani, officer-in-charge of Hassara highway police outpost, said quoting the fire service.

The accident occurred around 7:30am in

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SEA PEARL

COX'S BAZAR

THE PALACE

SYLHET

SARAH RESORT

GAZIPUR

VOUCHER CARD

BDT 500

CONDITIONS APPLY

EVERY 14 DAYS, A LUCKY WINNER WILL BE SELECTED IN A LIVE RAFFLE DRAW TO ENJOY A ONE-NIGHT STAY WITH THEIR FAMILY.

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