



বাংলাদেশ
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From the Desk of the Editor

The Annual Report-2019 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has been submitted to the Hon'ble President Md. Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban on 27 December 2020. A delegation from UGC led by its Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah presented the report to the Hon'ble President.

The present government is firmly committed to improving the quality of higher education as it is the global standard. In this context, the activities of UGC are more vibrant to achieve the vision as well as UN's SDG-4 within its timeframe. Accordingly, UGC annual report recommended increasing research budget, formulating uniform financial rule, introducing a uniform admission system in all private universities, establishing Central Research Laboratory and National Research Council, setting up University Teachers' Training Academy for producing qualified teachers, revising the Private University Act, 2010 and scrapping the evening, weekend and other executive courses at public and private universities. Government should take the necessary steps to implement the recommendations made by UGC in its annual report which will be helpful to raise the standard of country's higher education.

Hon'ble President while talking to the UGC delegation emphasized on expanding the research activities in the university and ensuring its quality. Alongside, he advised UGC to play a strong role in eliminating any irregularities in public and private universities. Hon'ble President Md. Abdul Hamid also mentioned that uniform policies should be formulated to ensure the recruitment of qualified candidates for teaching and academic administration.

It is expected that execution of the constructive recommendations of UGC and very thoughtful advices of Hon'ble President can take our higher education to the next level of excellence.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thanks all concerned, who have rendered their services and support for publishing this bulletin.

Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher
Member, UGC

UGC's Annual Report-2019 submitted to Hon'ble President Md. Abdul Hamid



A delegation from University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh led by its Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah submitted UGC's Annual Report-2019 to the Hon'ble President Md. Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban on 27 December 2020. UGC Members- Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda and Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Secretary to the President's Office Sampad Barua, Military Secretary Major General SM Shamin Uz Zaman, Press Secretary Md. Joynul Abedin and Secretary (attached) Md. Wahidul Islam Khan were present on the occasion.

Mentioning irregularities in the recruitment of teachers in different universities published in the media, President Abdul Hamid said that uniform policies should be formulated to ensure the recruitment of qualified candidates for teaching. He said education is not a commercial product. So there is no way to

compromise on the quality of education.

The Hon'ble President also emphasized on expanding the research activities in the university and ensuring its quality so that the students can move forward keeping pace with times. Alongside, he advised UGC to play a strong role in eliminating any irregularities in public and private universities.

During the meeting, the UGC Chairman briefed the President on the overall activities of the Commission, universities and various aspects of the annual report, including the progress of the admission test in a cluster manner.

The UGC Chairman informed the President that 41,501 students of government universities have been given loans to buy smart phones so that they can continue their educational activities using digital methods during the pandemic situation.

The President expressed his satisfaction over the recent activities and overall functioning of the UGC.

UGC plans to start performance based budget in public universities



University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh is considering to determine the budget for public universities of the country after scrutinizing their competency and efficiency from the next fiscal year. At the same time, Chairman of UGC, the apex body of country's tertiary education, has said that the allocation for research will be increased to establish higher education institutions as center of excellence.

The university regulatory body came up with the remarks at the concluding ceremony of a two-daylong budget meeting for public universities at the UGC auditorium on 19 October 2020. UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah joined the meeting virtually as the Chief Guest. Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Member, UGC presided over it while UGC Members- Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir and Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda spoke on the occasion as the Special Guests. The programme commenced with a welcome speech by the

Secretary(Additional Charge), UGC Dr. Ferdous Zaman. Directors of different divisions of UGC were also present at meeting.

While speaking UGC Chairman said, "Financial discipline is imperative in public universities. There is no room for error in financial matters. Not a single penny could be discounted here." He advised the officials to ensure that the money allocated in the budget does not keep unused or put lazily. He also requested all to perform their official duties following the government and university rules as well as UGC guidelines.

Professor Md. Abu Taher, in his presidential speech, observed that the allocation for research will be increased so that the country's public universities can become center of excellence, maintain quality in education and secure a respectable place in the world rankings. Regarding the forthcoming budget in public universities, he opined that University Grants Commission is thinking of allocating budget for

higher education in the public sector after evaluating their performance and efficiency, because, when the efficiency of the university decreases, the standard of the university, as a whole, goes down.

Academic freedom and financial freedom are not same in the university. Each university has its own laws, policies and regulations. These have to be fully complied with. He said money is the lifeblood of an organization. If there is no discipline here, the university cannot be run properly.

While talking about the demands of the officials of public universities regarding formulation of uniform grades and salary, Professor Md. Abu Taher said, salary and benefits of a university cannot be given to other universities as different universities are run by their own rules and regulations. UGC Member also urged the university authorities to follow the financial rules and guidelines properly.

While speaking at the event, Professor Muhammed Alamgir said the budget allocation would have to be increased if public universities are to reach its desired goal. Increase in budgetary allocation has been mentioned in the Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh 2018-2030 in education sector. However, the money allocated head wise has to be spent as per the need, he added.

UGC to take action against financial irregularities at public universities



Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah, Chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh, at a programme in the city, warned that no financial irregularities would be tolerated at public universities in the country and necessary action will be taken against anyone involved in financial wrongdoing.

UGC Chairman issued the cautionary message at an inaugural ceremony of a two-daylong budget meeting of public universities at the UGC Auditorium on 18 October 2020. The head of the regulatory body of country's universities also called upon all concerned to respect the law and follow the existing financial rules.

Regarding the UGC's expectations for the public universities, he said "We want to ensure transparency, accountability, and proper use of resources at public universities." On the autonomy of public universities, the UGC Chairman

noted that academic and financial freedoms are not the same thing. Every university has its own laws, guidelines and regulations that must be followed. Terming the money as lifeline for any institutions, UGC Chairman said, a university can not run properly unless it ensure proper utilization of money.

He added "There is no scope of taking advantage of arbitrary interpretations of the law. If the Vice-Chancellor (VC) steps out of line regarding financial matters, it is your [the Treasurer and Director of Finance] responsibility to inform him/her first. If the Vice-Chancellor commits any wrongdoing even after that, then he or she will be held responsible."

"If there is external pressure on you [Treasurer and Director of Finance] to do certain work and if the matter is not settled through the law of the university, you can seek advice from the UGC," he added.

"Proper implementation of the budget has to be ensured. Money allocated for one sector cannot be used for another one — it is unacceptable," the UGC Chairman remarked.

Professor Md. Abu Taher, in his presidential speech, urged the authorities concerned not to spend money in public universities unnecessarily during COVID-19 pandemic. He laid emphasis on maintaining discipline in establishing a strong financial structure at tertiary level education. Besides, he called upon the university authorities to prepare pension statutes and not to recruit manpower on master roll, daily basis and adhoc basis in universities. He, at the same time, urged the university authorities to recruit manpower against the posts of fourth class employees taking approval from UGC, if needed.

UGC Members- Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir and Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda delivered their speeches as the Special Guests while Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), UGC delivered the address of welcome. Treasurers, Directors of Finance and budget officers from 23 public universities participated in the event where they discussed the revised budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 and the budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.

UGC agrees with the public universities' desire to hold final exams



Public Universities of the country can hold their honours and masters' final year examinations as per decisions taken by their respective academic councils, following proper health safety measures.

The University Grants Commission of Bangladesh after a virtual meeting with Vice Chancellors (VC) of 39 public universities on 13 December 2020 took the decision.

UGC held the meetings with the VCs as authorities of many public universities want to hold the exams to negate session jam and ensure that students qualify for sitting in the upcoming BCS exams.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah at the meeting said academic council and dean's committee will have the final say regarding exams at the public university.

He also urged all to keep an eye so that no question could be raised about the quality of exams.

At the meeting, UGC Member Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir placed a seven-point recommendation over the semester final examinations and practical classes and assessments at the country's public universities amid the pandemic. These are:

- (i) The public universities may take necessary steps as per the decisions of their respective academic councils regarding the semester final examinations of undergraduate and postgraduate students to recover their irreparable losses of education due to the global pandemic of Covid-19.
- (ii) The unfinished practical classes in science, technology, agriculture, medicine, and other disciplines and their assessment should be completed in phases following health rules.
- (iii) The students of the final semesters will be given priority in completing the semester exams, practical classes, and assessments.
- (iv) The residential halls of the universities should be kept

closed as the educational institutes remained closed due to the coronavirus crisis as per government directives.

(v) The examinations and practical classes will have to be completed in full compliance with health safety guidelines keeping in mind the health protection of the students. For this, students will have to enter their campuses one hour before the examination and practical classes and leave the campuses within one hour after the exam and practical classes.

(vi) The online academic activities of the educational institutions will have to continue due to Covid-19.

(vii) The universities will have to properly follow the health safety guidelines issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) to prevent further spread of the deadly virus.

The meeting also decided to maintain other restrictions imposed by the government due to COVID-19.

UGC Members- Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossen, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman and Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Dr. A K M Shamsul Arefin, among others, were present in the meeting.

UGC provides interest-free loans to 41,501 indigent students for purchasing smart phones



University Grants Commission(UGC) of Bangladesh has decided to provide interest-free loans for the purchase of smart phones to indigent students to ensure their participation in online education activities in public universities in the wake of the Corona epidemic.

A maximum of Tk. 8,000 per student will be provided to 41,501 indigent students of 39 public universities in the country for purchasing smart phones under the soft loan. This money will be allocated to the revised budget of the concerned sector as an advance against the annual allocation of the university for the fiscal year 2020-2021.

A virtual meeting chaired by Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah on 04 November 2020 took a final decision to provide interest-free loans to students for the purchase of smartphones.

Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad

Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Members of UGC, Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division and Md. Shah Alam, Director (Additional Charge), Finance and Accounts Division, UGC were virtually connected with the meeting.

UGC Member Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, in charge of Finance and Accounts Division, UGC presented the working paper at the meeting.

At the meeting, UGC Chairman said that indigent students will be able to meet an important need of the present times through this initiative. It will play a positive role in initiating online education activities of public universities. This will make students more focused on online learning. They will also be able to make up for the loss of education life, he added.

The UGC Chairman urged the Vice-Chancellors of the public universities to form a soft loan approval committee as fast as possible and take appropriate steps to provide interest-free loans to financially insolvent students.

It was decided at the meeting that not more than Tk. 8,000 would be allocated to students through bank accounts by 31 January 2021 in the light of the recommendation of the Soft Loan Approval Committee constituted by the Vice-Chancellor of the concerned university. The students have to pay the actual amount only. They will be able to repay this loan in 4 equal installments or one time after the reopening of the university or during the study period.

The UGC sent letters to the Vice-Chancellors on August 9 asking for a list of indigent students to purchase smart phones at public universities in the country to ensure online education due to the coronavirus epidemic. In this context, the universities sent a list of 41,501 indigent students to UGC.

The highest number of financially insolvent students in the list is 8,556 (19.89 percent) in Dhaka University and the lowest number 197 (3.36 percent) in Khulna University of Engineering and Technology.

Cluster Admission Test to be held with 19 public universities

The Vice-Chancellors of 19 general and science and technology public universities of the country, decided to hold admission tests for 2020-21 academic year in a single cluster.

At a meeting held on 31 December 2020 with the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, it was decided that tests on humanities, commerce and science subjects would be held on three separate days and question papers would be prepared based on the syllabus of higher secondary level.

The admission seekers would have to sit for the examinations at the centres.

The decisions were taken at a view exchange meeting held at UGC where the Vice-Chancellors of the universities and the Commission officials were present.

Earlier on February 26, UGC decided to hold admission tests in four clusters — agriculture, science and technology, engineering and general — at the public universities in the academic year 2020-21, reviewing its previous decision in favour of a centralized admission test system for all public universities in the country.

The 19 general and science and technology public universities are Islamic University, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Khulna University, Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Noakhali Science and Technology University, Jagannath University, Comilla University, Jatiya Kabi Nazrul Islam University, Jashore University of Science and Technology, Begum Rokeya University, Pabna University of Science and Technology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University, University of Barishal, Rangamati Science and Technology University, Rabindra University, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University, Sheikh Hasina University and Bangamata Sheikh Fojillatunnesa Mujib Science and Technology University.

Seven agricultural universities held admission test under the cluster system for the first time in Bangladesh in the academic year 2019-20.

Professor Dr. Mijanur Rahman, Vice-Chancellor, Jagannath University and Joint Convener of

general and science and technology university cluster, said that the central admission test committee would fix the method for the cluster system.

He further said that the committee would also give a score to the students after taking tests and the universities would admit students based on the scores. No separate admission tests would be taken before admission, he said adding that the universities would publish advertisements on newspapers for admission tests based on own conditions and demands.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah was virtually connected with the meeting. He urged the authorities of the universities to organize admission tests on direct and easy ways to facilitate the students and their guardians. He also said that the authorities of the universities had no opportunities to step back from holding tests under the cluster system.

The meeting was, among others, attended by UGC Members-Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda and Professor Dr. Md Abu Taher.

Online Admission not possible at present stage : Experts

Experts at a review meeting said that it would not be suitable to take admission test in country's public universities by using 'Proctored Remote Examination System' software in present context. The country is yet to develop the capacity for taking

admission test with software. Taking admission test with this software can create confusion in the minds of the people. Most students' assessments may not be accurate due to network and technical problems.

According to the experts, no

country of the world conducts large-scale test with single software. The committee recommended UGC for formulating a guideline if admission tests are to be conducted with the software. Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah



presided over the review meeting held at UGC on 03 November 2020.

Professor Dr. Moonaz Ahmed Noor, Vice-Chancellor, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University highlighted various aspects of his developed 'Proctored Remote Examination System' software. He said that this software was originally created for the purpose of evaluating the internal examinations of the universities. It is not suitable for taking online university admission test at present.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah and Member Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum joined the meeting virtually. Besides, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Member, UGC,

Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Member, UGC, Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), UGC, Professor Dr. Hafiz Md. Hasan Babu, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, University of Dhaka, Professor Dr. Md. Mostofa Akber, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, Professor Mostafa Azad Kamal, Dean, School of Business, Bangladesh Open University, Sohel Nadim Rahman Shuvo, Executive Director, Eduken International, Md. Fazle Munim, Technology Expert, a2i, Shamim Hossain, Executive Director, Orange Business Development Limited, Mushraful Haque Anik, Technical Director,

DSI and Moinul Islam, Head of Product and Business Development took part in the meeting.

Experts remarked that the 'Proctored Remote Examination System' software can play a much more effective role than the method followed in assessing in current online course exams of the students. According to them, this software can be used to take and evaluate examinations in all universities including Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Digital University in small scale. The expert committee stressed the need for further development of the 'Proctored Remote Examination System' software.

It may be mentioned here that last week, the UGC took the initiative to seek expert opinion on the software being discussed in online admissions tests at public universities. In addition, the UGC has also initiated integrated or cluster admission tests for public universities in the current academic year. The Minister for Education, on 01 November 2020, called upon the Vice-Chancellors of the public universities to take the admission test in an integrated or cluster system.

Four Engineering Universities yet to decide to go for cluster Admission system

Four engineering and technology universities of the country are yet to make a final decision over taking admission tests in cluster systems in the 2020-2021 academic year.

The four universities are Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Rajshahi University of

Engineering and Technology (RUET), Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) and Khulna University of Engineering & Technology (KUET). The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh held a meeting with the Vice-Chancellors and Pro Vice-Chancellors of four

universities in this regard on 30 December 2020. At the meeting, the university authorities said everyone, including the universities' academic council, agreed in principle to take the admission test in a cluster system. However, they could not reach consensus over the chairmanship of the admission test committee and test centre.

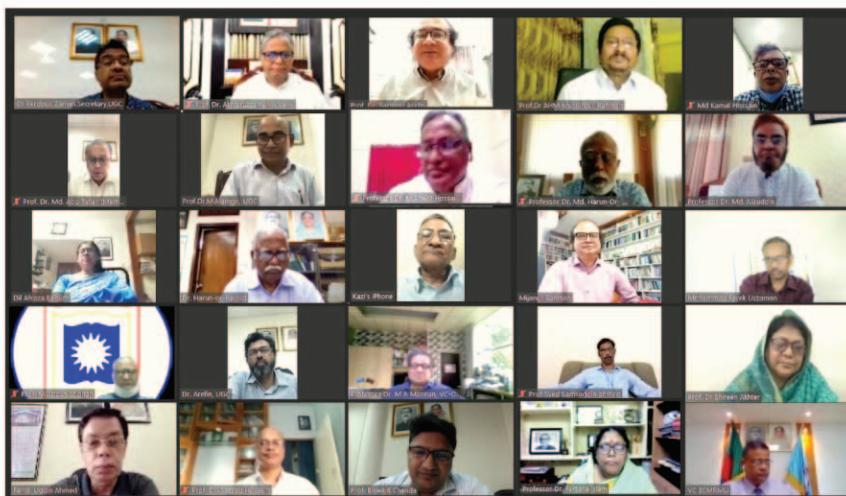


Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Member, UGC informed the meeting that BUET academic council submitted a proposal to conduct the admission test. The other three

universities would soon send their opinions on BUET's proposal. A decision will be taken based on that, Professor Alamgir said.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah presided over the virtual meeting while BUET Pro-VC Professor Dr. Abdul Jabbar Khan, RUET VC Professor Dr. Md. Rafiqul Islam Sheikh, CUET VC Professor Dr. Md Rafiqul Alam, KUET VC Professor Dr Quazi Sazzad Hossain were also present. Director of UGC's Public University Management Division Md. Kamal Hossain and three BUET professors also joined the meeting. Earlier, the UGC decided to use a cluster admission test system for the 2020-2021 academic year.

UGC calls for speeding up online education in public universities



University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has called upon the Vice-Chancellors to expedite online education in public universities of the country and to involve students in the curriculum to a great extent. UGC will continue to provide interest-free loan for purchasing smart phone and low cost internet bandwidth to the students.

This was conveyed at a view exchange meeting with the Vice-Chancellors on 15 October 2020 on conducting online classes in public universities.

A decision on admission test in country's public universities, in principle, will be taken at the meeting of the university council to be held on 17 October 2020. However, the admission test

sought by UGC should not be questioned in any way.

Also, considering the coronavirus infection situation, reopening a university now would not be advisable at all. According to Public University Vice-Chancellors, reopening of the hall would be a suicidal decision. They cited examples of the spread of corona infection after the reopening of many universities across the world.

Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah, Chairman, UGC chaired the meeting on the current state of online education and how to make this system more effective. At the meeting, the UGC Chairman said the entire nation was seeking a specific direction on the admission test at the university level. A final decision is needed on taking the university admission test.

UGC Member Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum moderated the meeting. UGC Members-Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Md. Akhteruzzaman, Rajshahi University Vice-Chancellor

Professor Dr. M Abdus Sobhan, Bangladesh Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor Professor. Dr. Lutful Hasan, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Satya Prasad Majumdar, Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Shireen Akhter, Jahangirnagar University Vice-Chancellor

Professor Dr. Farzana Islam, National University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Harun-Or-Rashid. Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division and Md. Kamal Hossain, Director, Public University Management Division, UGC, among others, were present at the meeting.

Ten researchers get UGC Post-Doctoral Fellowship

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has awarded UGC Post-Doctoral Fellowship 2020-2021 to country's 10 researchers.

The decision was taken at a meeting of UGC Post-Doctoral Fellowship Selection Committee held on 19 November 2020 with UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah in the Chair.

UGC Post-Doctoral Fellows were- Professor Dr. Mesbah Uddin Ahmed (Mesbah Kamal) Department of History, Dhaka University; Professor Dr. Md. Golam Rabbane, Chairman, Department of Fisheries. Dhaka University, Professor Dr. Mohammad Nurul Islam, Department of Arabic, Chittagong University; Professor Dr. Sharmin Sultana, Department of Physics, Jahangirnagar University; Professor Dr. Milton Biswas,

Department of Bangla, Jagannath University; Professor Dr. Md. Sarwar Alam, Department of Mathematics, Jagannath University; Professor Dr. Abdullah Abu Sayed Khan, Sociology Discipline, Khulna University; Professor Dr. Jasim Uddain, Department of Horticulture, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University; Professor Dr. Muhammad Sheikh Sadi, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology and Dr. Paritosh Chandra Roy, Department of Genetics and Plant Breeding, Government Shahid Akbar Ali Science and Technology College, Affiliated by Hazi Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University.

It may be mentioned here that 39 researchers from different public, private universities (only

permanent campus) and government colleges submitted their applications for UGC Post-Doctoral Fellowship 2020-2021. UGC selected only 10 researchers out of 39 applications for UGC Post-Doctoral Fellowship 2020-2021 considering the applicants' educational qualifications, experience, publications, research titles and supervisor's recommendations as per the guideline.

UGC Members-Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher and Director (Current Charge), Research Support and Publication Division, UGC Md. Omar Faruque, among others, were present at the meeting.

UGC to publish two research books on Bangabandhu



The University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (UGC) will publish two books based on interviews and research on the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as part of the

celebration of his birth centenary.

The decision was announced at a meeting of the committee formed by UGC on the implementation of election manifesto and celebration of

Mujib's birth centenary held at UGC on 30 November 2020.

Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Member, UGC and Convener of the committee presided over the meeting while UGC Members- Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Md Abu Taher and other members of the committee were present at the meeting.

The meeting decided that two books would be published — one titled 'Bangabandhu's thought on higher education' and another 'Bangabandhu in the thought of youth'.

Besides, the progress made in setting up 'Bangabandhu Corner' at UGC and public universities was also discussed at the meeting.

UGC's guidelines on practical classes and examinations for Honors and Masters finals at private universities

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has issued seven guidelines for holding the latest semester practical classes and examinations at Honors and Masters level in private universities in a bid to secure future careers for students in the wake of prolonged situation caused by the novel corona virus.

The letter containing instructions signed by Dr. Md. Fakhrul Islam, Director, Private University Division, UGC has been sent to the Vice-Chancellors and Registrars of all the private universities on 02 November 2020. According to the letter, due to the protracted situation from COVID-19, a significant number of applications from private universities were received by the Commission seeking guidance on practical classes and how to

complete the examinations and assessments.

The letter reads that this instruction will only be applicable for taking practical classes and examinations in the last semester of the Honors and Masters level. Not more than one practical classes and exams of one program could be taken in a single day. Hygiene rules of the Department of Health and guidelines of World Health Organization must be strictly followed (such as: wearing of mandatory face mask, maintaining physical distance, ensuring supply of sanitizer on campus and in class, etc.). Practical classes and examinations should be completed with the participation of not more than 10 students in each class. Students must ensure that they arrive on campus only half an

hour before the start of practical classes and exams and leave within 10 minutes of the end. In case of practical classes and examinations, the distance between each student should be at least six feet. The issue related to maintaining that distance in university campus also must be ensured. And it is the responsibility of the respective universities to arrange for the treatment of any student, teacher and staff member infected with the coronavirus due to practical classes and examinations. The Commission will not take any responsibility to this end.

Apart from these, viva voce of the relevant course alongside assignment, case study, virtual presentation, quiz test, etc has been asked to be completed online, the letter added.

UGC requests private universities not to admit students before publishing of HSC results

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has requested the private universities not to start student admission process before publishing of the results of higher secondary or equivalent public examinations. Letters to this end signed by Dr. Md. Fakhrul Islam, Director of Private University Division, UGC on 11 November 2020 have been sent to the Vice-Chancellors and Registrars of the private universities of the country. The letter states that the results of this year's higher secondary or equivalent public examinations have not yet been

published. However, the Commission is observing with anxiety that a significant number of private universities have started student admission process / education activities before the results of HSC or equivalent public examinations are published.

It may be noted that as per the rules, there must be a minimum second division or GPA of 2.50 or equivalent grade in each stage of SSC and HSC or equivalent public examinations. However, if one of the exams has a minimum GPA of 2.00, then the total GPA of both the

exams must be at least 6.00. Under such situation, there is no chance of student admission in the university before the results of the higher secondary or equivalent public examination of 2020 are published.

The UGC earnestly requested the private universities to initiate the students' admission process after publishing of the results of the Higher Secondary or equivalent public examinations and maintaining the student admission eligibility guideline set by University Grants Commission of Bangladesh.

MoU signed between UGC and GP to facilitate online learning in tertiary level



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh and Grameen Phone Limited (GP) on 12 November 2020 to facilitate online education in public and private universities in the wake of the Corona epidemic. Under MoU, Grameen Phone will provide internet data packs to students and faculty members of

public and private universities at an affordable rate for online education activities.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah presided over the meeting held in zoom platform. UGC Members- Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda and Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher

spoke at the signing ceremony. Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), UGC and Kazi Mahbub, CBO, GP signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations. Besides, Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division, UGC, Mohammad Tawrit, CEO, BdREN and high officials from Grameen Phone, among others, participated in the event.

The UGC Chairman sincerely thanked Grameen Phone for coming forward with this great initiative. He said that the participation of Grameen Phone in the field of higher education in times of crisis caused by COVID-19 is a demand of the time. This will meet an important need of the present time for the students studying in higher education, he observed.

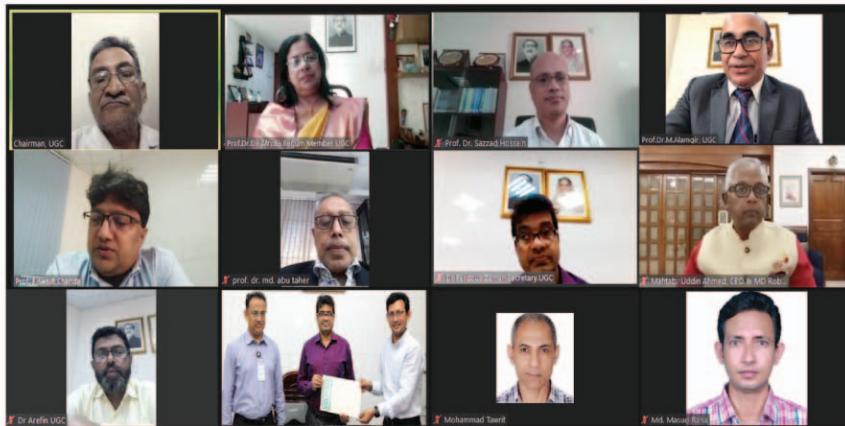
Professor Kazi Shahidullah also

said it will play a positive role in the online education activities of public and private universities. Students will be more focused

on online learning. He expressed his optimism that the bonding between UGC and Grameen Phone would not end here but

the country's largest telecom operator would come forward in the future to facilitate and promote higher education.

Robi to give low cost data packs to teachers and students



Robi, the country's top digital service provider, will provide affordable internet data packs to university teachers and students to continue online education. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to this end, was signed between University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh and Robi on 15 November 2020. Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), UGC and Md. Adil Hossain, Chief Enterprise Business Officer of Robi signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations.

Under the agreement, users will get 30 GB data for Tk.220 for one month. This facility will be available from today. Through this, teachers and students will be able to use Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, Google Classroom and Gmail. However, Netflix, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter cannot be used with this data pack.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah chaired the ceremony virtually. UGC Members- Professor Dr. Dil Afroza Begum, Professor Dr.

Banglalink to offer special data pack for university teachers and students

Banglalink, one of the largest mobile phone operators in Bangladesh, will offer special packages for the university teachers and students to support them in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman and Director of Banglalink Enterprise Business Rubaiyat A. Tanzeen signed the MoU on behalf of their organizations.

Students and teachers will get the opportunity to use 10GB, 15GB and 30GB date packs for a month with a low cost for BdREN Zoom.

UGC Members- Professor Dr.

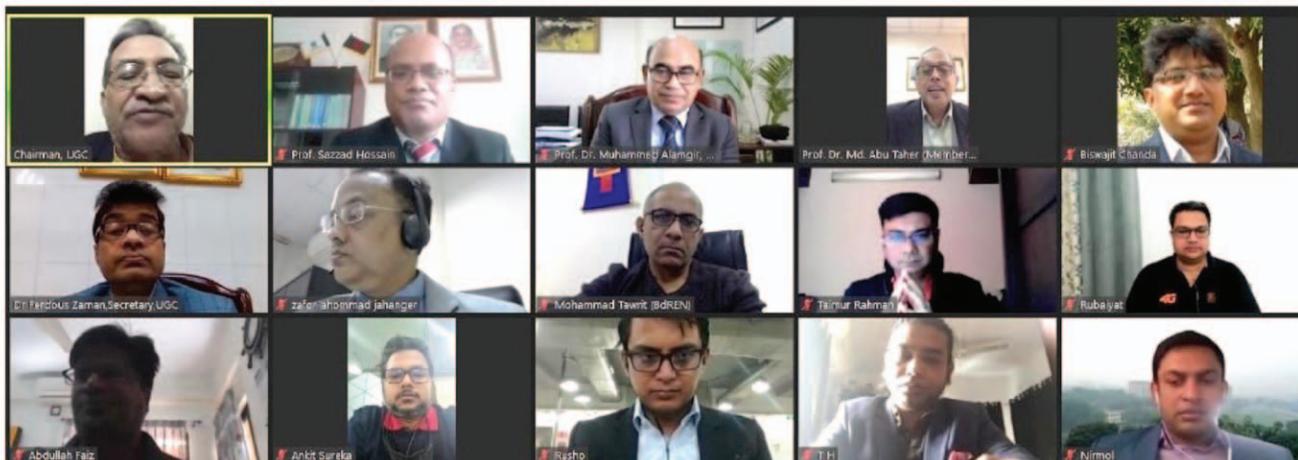
Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda and Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher and Managing Director and CEO of Robi Mahtab Uddin Ahmed spoke at the event. Besides, Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division, UGC, Mohammad Tourit, CEO of BdREN and high officials from Robi, among others, participated in the event.

UGC Chairman, in his virtual speech, said that the two main problems of online education activities are devices and data. In the meantime, UGC has taken proper measures to address these issues. He thanked Robi to come forward with the offer to provide low cost data pack to the students.

Robi's CEO Mahtab Uddin said Robi is committed to providing online services to the new generation through its strong network.

Mohammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Chief Corporate and Regulatory Affairs Officer of Banglalink Taimur Rahman, among others, addressed the virtual meeting with UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah in the chair.

In his speech, UGC Chairman thanked the mobile operators of the country for helping students



and teachers in online education during the Covid-19 epidemic.

He said that teachers and students are immensely

benefited through attractive data packages of mobile operators.

No approval of Bangabandhu International University in Syedpur: UGC

The Bangabandhu International University in Nilphamari, Syedpur, had no government approval. The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh, on 23 December 2020, issued a notice in this regard, cautioning those seeking jobs there.

Professor Biswajit Chanda, Member of UGC said that the Commission was unaware of any educational institution under the name of Bangabandhu International University. No project proposal had even been sent to UGC to this end.

UGC has sought cooperation from the Ministry of Education

and others concerned to bring a halt to the unlawful activities of this non-existent institution.

According to UGC, ABM Sharifuzzaman Shah, claiming to be the founder of the university and its founder Vice Chancellor (acting), recently placed advertisement in national dailies, stating that they would be appointing a Pro-Vice chancellor, teachers and other staff. Rabeya Alim, a Member of Parliament, was said to be the founding chairman of the university's broad of trustees.

News of the university's founding stone being laid, the advertisement for staff and other

matters drew the attention of UGC. The Commission cautioned students, teachers, parents and job providers against such universities. Interested persons could visit the UGC website for the list of approved universities and academic programmes.

Also, under the Private University Act 2010, it is the President who appoints the Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellors and Treasurers of private universities on four-year terms. So if any university authority appoints anyone to these posts, this will be a violation of the law.

UGC holds 159th Full Commission meeting

The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh held its 159th Full Commission meeting on 29 December 2020. UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah presided over the virtual meeting, moderated by Commission Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman.

UGC Members- Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Bishwajit Chanda,

Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Islamic University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Sheikh Abdus Salam, Chittagong Veterinary and Animal Sciences University Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Goutam Buddha Das, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University Vice-Chancellor Professor AQM Mahbub, Khulna University Law School Dean Professor Dr. M. Waliul Hasanat and other

members were present at the meeting.

The meeting approved the recommendations of Selection Committee to recruit manpower in different positions of UGC. House loan policy for the UGC employees, UGC Mujib Year Publication Policy-2020, UGC Book Publication Policy-2020 and UGC Bangabandhu Fellowship Policy-2020 were also approved in the meeting.

UGC urges universities to admit students with disabilities

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has requested the country's universities to implement the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 in admitting students with disabilities and maintaining quota at an equitable rate. Letters signed by UGC's Joint-Secretary Zafor Ahommad Jahanger to this end have been sent to the Registrars of all universities of the country on 03 November 2020.

It may be mentioned here that the Gazette of the Rights and Protection of Persons with

Disabilities Act, 2013 was published in October 2013 to establish and ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. The Act provides for the equitable and effective preservation of quotas for persons with disabilities in educational institutions for merit-based admissions and the formulation of curricula based on their ability considering the differences in demand according to the type of disability.

In addition, a letter written by the Ministry of Social Welfare to the UGC Chairman in January 2020 states that various ministries are

involved in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by educating people with disabilities and integrating them into the mainstream. Therefore, the Ministry of Education has a responsibility to enroll students with disabilities in universities for higher studies.

Afia Kabir Anila, a student with disabilities at North South University, applied to the RTI designated officer in UGC on last September to provide relevant information under section-3 of Right to Information (RTI) Act.

Gratitude expressed to UGC for its initiative to preserve the disability quota



Afia Kabir Anila, a student with disabilities at North South University expressed her gratitude to University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh for taking initiative to maintain an equitable quota for admission of students with disabilities in universities. She expressed her feelings in a letter written to UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah saying, "Students with disabilities will have the opportunity to pursue higher

education and will be able to lead a dignified life by integrating into the mainstream of society as a result of this decision."

She further said in the letter, "On behalf of the students with disabilities, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all concerned with University Grants Commission of Bangladesh for taking groundbreaking decisions in implementing the long-standing aspirations of students with

disabilities and to inform all universities to create learning opportunities subject to the preservation of university admission quotas for students with disabilities and relaxation of other regulations in line with the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013."

Afia Kabir Anila, on 08 November 2020, paid a courtesy call on UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman. Her father Ashfaq Kabir and Md. Imran Hossain, Assistant Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division, UGC were present during the time. Dr. Ferdous Zaman wished Anila every success in her higher education. He urged all university authorities for making efforts to protect students with disabilities in accordance with the law.

Anila is a 3rd semester student in the Law Department at North South University. She received award from the Hon'ble Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina in 2019 as a successful disabled person of the country.

It may be mentioned here that UGC, on 03 November 2020,

requested the universities of the country to maintain the quota for the admission of disabled students at an equitable rate as per the law. Moreover, the

Ministry of Social Welfare in a letter in January requested the UGC Chairman to take steps for educating people with disabilities and bringing them into the mainstream.

Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation submits memorandum to UGC



A delegation from Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation submitted a memorandum containing eight point demands to University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh. The delegation presented the written memorandum to UGC at a programme on 05 November 2020. UGC Member Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher presided over the ceremony while Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Secretary (Additional Charge), UGC moderated it. Zafor Ahommad Jahanger, Joint-Secretary, Md. Shah Alam, Director (Additional Charge), Finance and Accounts Division, UGC and Amirul Islam Sheikh, President, Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation, among others, were present on the occasion. Secretary General of the

Federation Mir Md. Morshedur Rahman presented a written statement on the demands.

The demands of the Federation included refixing the initial pay scale of the officers, formulating uniform guidelines for officials in all public universities of the country, making the appointment of officers in non-teaching posts including all section heads compulsory, raising the retirement age of officers to 65 years, ensuring participation of the Presidents and General Secretaries of the Officers' Associations of all the universities in the meetings related to the interest of officials, ensuring representation of the officials in the Syndicate, Senate/Regent Board, providing corporate loans at 4% simple interest, making the foundation training for the officers

compulsory, and implementing guidelines prepared for the higher education of university officers and implementing the provision for counting the continuation of past service experience of officers.

Terming some demands put forward by the Bangladesh Inter-University Officers' Federation as logical, UGC Member Professor Md. Abu Taher said UGC will take necessary steps with regard to demands placed by the Federation as per the government rules and regulations. He said a request has been made by the Commission at a meeting of the Vice-Chancellors of public universities to give charge to the most qualified officers including Registrars and other non academic heads. He agreed to give charge / appoint officers in non-teaching posts. Regarding the pay scale, he observed that financial autonomy was not provided anywhere in the Acts of different public universities and even, in the 1973 Ordinance. So, no university can set its own pay scale. He expressed his optimism that if there is a uniform guideline for teachers, an initiative will be taken to formulate an uniform guideline for officials as well.

UGC calls for updating syllabus in private universities

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh urged the private universities to take proper initiatives to update the syllabi of ongoing programs.

The call was made on 16 November 2020 in an order sent to the Vice-Chancellors and Registrars of Private

Universities. Instructions were issued in 2019 to update the approved syllabus every four years from the date of program approval.

Modern and updated curriculum, diversification of subjects, unveiling of horizon of new knowledge in science and

technology are essential for achieving the desired quality in higher education. The Commission considers quality higher education as imperative in global context. The UGC has requested private universities to take necessary steps to update the approved ongoing programs.

UGC calls for participatory teaching online



UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah at a programme in city called for online teaching participatory, attractive and effective in the country's universities. He was speaking as the Chief Guest at an inaugural ceremony of a workshop entitled 'Students' Participation in Online Teaching' organized by Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance (SPQA) Division, UGC on 23 November 2020.

The UGC Chairman, in his speech, noted that participation of the most students in online-based learning activities is not promising. To this end, teachers need to be more aware. "Online teaching should be made more lively and interesting", he said adding that

teachers need to take classes with sincerity and in a suitable environment.

Effective students' participation in lessons needs to be ensured so that the learners could benefit from online lessons. He advised teachers to use modern technology to keep students' attention in online lessons.

Professor Kazi Shahidullah further said that the two main problems (devices and internet) in online education have already been solved. He called upon the Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) and the Center of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to take effective steps for smoothly conducting online education activities.

With UGC Member Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda in the chair, the workshop was, among others, attended by Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, Member, UGC, Dr. Sultan Mahmud Bhuiyan, Director, SPQA Division, UGC and Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director, Public Relations and Right to Information Division, UGC. The resource person at the workshop was Professor Dr. Yusuf Mahbubul Islam, Dean of School of Engineering, IUB.

On the opening day, a total of 52 Directors and Additional Directors of IQAC and CETL from 23 public universities participated in the workshop.

It is to be noted that the educational institutions of the country have been closed since 17 March 2020 due to the corona virus infection. UGC recommends continuing online education in universities in the first stage of corona infection. Arrangements have been made to provide soft loans to students for purchasing affordable internet data package and smartphone.

UGC forms human chain protesting vandalism of Bangabandhu's sculpture



University Grants Commission of Bangladesh formed a human chain protesting vandalism of an under-construction sculpture of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Kushtia. The protest rally was held in front of the UGC Bhaban on 09 December 2020.

UGC Members- Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher

and UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Director of Public Relations and Right to Information Division Dr. Shamsul Arefin, Director of Public University Management Division Md. Kamal Hossain, Acting President and Joint Secretary of UGC Officers' Association Md. Omar Faruque and Md. Golam Dostogir addressed the rally.

At the rally, speakers vehemently protested the

vandalism of sculpture of Bangabandhu and said that fundamentalist and communal groups behaved arrogantly through demolishing sculpture of Father of the Nation. It poses a serious threat to the country's art and culture.

The speakers also said that those who cannot tolerate progress of the country are trying to create a volatile situation by breaking sculpture of Father of the Nation.

Speakers also demanded an investigation to figure out the motive of the incident. They urged government to find out the people who are in favor of breaking the sculpture.

Miscreants vandalized the face and some portion of the right hand of the sculpture of the Bangabandhu set up at Panch Rasta intersection in Kushtia at night on December 4.

UGC seeks Doa for Education Minister for her recovery from Covid-19

University Grants Commission of Bangladesh wished the Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni MP, quick recovery from corona virus.

UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah, in a message, sought Doa for Education Minister to get relief from Covid-19

Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni has tested positive for Covid-19 at first week of December.

UGC signs MoU to get house building loan



The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh, on 15 December 2020, signed a Memorandum of

Understanding (MoU) with the Finance Division, MoF and Janata Bank Ltd to avail house loans for UGC employees.

The MoU was inked at the auditorium of the Finance Division in line with the government's house building loan policy.

UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman, Additional Secretary of Finance Division Md. Ekhlasur Rahman and Managing Director of Janata

Bank Md. Abdus Salam Azad signed the deed on behalf of their respective sides.

Addressing the function, the UGC Secretary said that the UGC officials and employees will be able to fulfill their dreams of buying houses or flats availing the soft loans. "Their long-cherished dreams will be materialized through this agreement," he said.

He extended thanks to the

Ministry of Finance and Janata Bank Ltd for signing the agreement and expressed gratitude to the Prime Minister for providing loan with easy terms to the public servants.

Under the agreement, an employee of the UGC will get a house building loan of Tk 20 lakh to Tk 75 lakh at four percent interest. The government will pay the remaining five percent interest for a period of 20 years.

Md. Ekhlasur Rahman also spoke on the occasion. UGC Joint Secretary Zafor Ahommad Jahanger, its Additional Director Mohammad Maksudur Rahman Bhuiyan, Deputy Managing Director of Janata Bank Md Ismail Hossain, high officials from the Finance Division under the Ministry of Finance, Janata Bank Ltd, Sonali Bank Ltd and Agrani Bank Ltd were present at the function.

UGC places wreath at Martyred Intellectuals Memorial



University Grants Commission of Bangladesh paid rich tribute to the martyr Intellectuals by placing a floral wreath at the Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial at Mirpur on 14 December 2020. One minute silence was

observed in memory of martyred intellectuals.

Later, UGC paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreath at his portrait at Dhanmondi 32 and

Bangabandhu's mural at UGC.

UGC Members-Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman, SPQA Division Director Dr. Sultan Mahmud Bhuiyan, Public Relations and Right to Information Division Director AKM Shamsul Arefin, Public University Management Division Director Md. Kamal Hossain, Research Support and Publication Division Director (Current Charge) Md. Omar Faruque and General Secretary of UGC Officers' Association Dr. Md. Mohibul Ahsan, among others, were present during the time.

UGC pays tributes to martyrs on Victory Day

University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh paid tributes to the martyrs of the Liberation War by placing wreaths at the National Mausoleum in Savar marking the 50th Victory Day on 16 December 2020.

Later, UGC paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

Rahman by placing wreath at his portrait at Dhanmondi 32 and Bangabandhu's mural at UGC.

After placing wreath, UGC Members expressed their hope to ensure quality higher education for building a developed country as well as knowledge-based society. They called upon people from all walks of life to get united to

materialize the dream of Bangabandhu.

UGC Members Professor Dr. Md. Sazzad Hossain, Professor Dr. Muhammed Alamgir, Professor Dr. Biswajit Chanda, Professor Dr. Md. Abu Taher, UGC Secretary (Additional Charge) Dr. Ferdous Zaman, SPQA Division Director Dr. Sultan Mahmud Bhuiyan, Public Relations and Right to



Information Division Director Dr. AKM Shamsul Arefin, Private University Division Director Dr. Md. Fakhrul Islam, Research Support and Publication Division Director (Current Charge) Md. Omar Faruque, Finance and Accounts Division Director (Additional Charge) Md. Shah Alam, UGC Officers' Association and Karmachari Union Presidents and General Secretaries were also present at that time.

Professor Haseena Khan selected as UGC Professor



University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh has selected country's renowned researcher Dr. Haseena Khan, a

retired Professor of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, University of Dhaka as UGC Professor. UGC Professor Selection Committee has selected her as UGC Professor for the next two years. Her term will be calculated from the date of joining. The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by UGC Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah on 25 November, 2020.

According to UGC Professorship Guideline, the retired renowned researchers are given the UGC professorship. The UGC professors will receive a monthly

honorarium, which shall be equivalent to the highest monthly salary of a selection grade professor. The UGC professor will be attached to a university or an approved research institution of his/her choice. Professor Haseena will conduct her research activities in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, University of Dhaka.

Haseena Khan, the Independence award winner and also renowned scientist was directly involved in the discovery of the genome sequence of Hilsa and jute.

UGC condoles death of its former Member Professor Atful Hye Shibly



University Grants Commission of Bangladesh Chairman Professor Dr. Kazi Shahidullah, on 29 December 2020, expressed deep shock at the death of prominent educationist and historian Professor Dr. Atful Hye Shibly.

Professor Shibly, a former member of the UGC and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University, passed away at the age of 77 in a city hospital.

In a condolence message, the UGC Chairman said Professor Shibly was a renowned academician and a man of human qualities. The death of the former teacher of Rajshahi University is an irreparable loss for the country and the nation.

The UGC Chairman also extended his deep sympathy to the bereaved family members and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.



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