

Report  
25

## 'Withdraw VAT, tax on private varsities'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Association of Private Universities of Bangladesh (APUB) yesterday called upon the government to withdraw value added tax (VAT) on tuition fees and tax on private universities as proposed in the national budget for 2007-08 considering the academic career of students.

At a press conference, the association leaders said VAT is a business-related issue and it has no conceptual linkage with non-government universities which are engaged in imparting education and developing human resources for the society.

APUB organised the press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium where vice-chancellors, founders and chairmen of different private universities termed the newly imposed VAT and tax on private universities as 'illogical'.

"The private universities have substantially reduced the burden on public exchequer. They are now enrolling around 85,000 students with no grant from the government. The proposed VAT is not only conceptually incoherent but also discriminatory because VAT has been proposed only for private universities and not for public

universities," said A Kashem, chairman of APUB.

He said from a statistics of the University Grants Commission it is found that, of the total students enrolled in higher education in the country, 10 percent are admitted to public universities while six percent to non-government universities.

Prof M Shamsheer Ali, vice-chancellor of Southeast University, said VAT and tax are not imposed on universities anywhere in the world and totally unheard in Saarc countries.

"In harmony with the practice of supporting higher education institutions in the region and around the globe, the proposal for VAT and tax should be withdrawn," he added.

Abul Quasem Haider, founder chairman of Eastern University, said it will have negative impact on education as around one lakh students are now studying at private universities and their numbers are increasing day by day.

Vice-chancellor of Independent University of Bangladesh Bazlul Momen Chowdhury and Vice-chancellor International University of Business Agriculture and Technology Prof M Alimullah Miyan were also present at the press conference.