

DU students to go for bigger action against job criteria

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Students of Dhaka University are getting united to launch a movement to protest the new initiatives of the Public Service Commission (PSC) regarding prerequisite for the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination.

While talking to this correspondent yesterday many agitating students of DU opted to go for hard action under the banner of 'General Students Sangram Parishad (GSSP)' if the PSC did not cancel the new proposal and fulfil their demands.

"The students of DU will never accept the PSC's initiative regarding the BCS exam and if needed we will resist the upcoming 24th BCS examination in the city", some students said.

The students have been protesting the PSC's new initiatives regarding prerequisite for the BCS examination for about a month.

"We will fight against the PSC and the government if they do not cancel the new decision and fulfil our demands". We will go for tough action against the PSC as we can sacrifice our lives for the sake of the country's student community, they added.

GSSP yesterday submitted a memorandum to the PSC Chairman Z N Tahmidia Begum, demanding cancellation of the prerequisite for the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination.

The students also demanded immediate implementation of

their 'six point demand' including cancellation of the quota system, punishment to those involved in question leakage of the 24th BCS and cancellation of the 200 marks viva voce system.

The students alleged that under-qualified students are getting through the BCS examination due to 30 per cent 'freedom fighters wards quota', loopholes of the 200-mark viva voce and 300 marks optional papers.

According to the new proposal of the PSC, a candidate must have 45 per cent marks in both Bangla and English in the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination to be eligible for the BCS examination.

GSSP were to lay siege the PSC office and for this they brought out a procession from the DU campus to the PSC. But police stopped the procession near the Public Library at Shahbag and five students went to the PSC office to submit memorandum.

Earlier, while addressing a rally on the campus, the agitating students opposed the PSC's new proposal and alleged that the government is trying to create discrimination among students.

"The students will never tolerate the move of the PSC", they said urging the student community to be united against the PSC scheme.

They also threatened to continue their movement across the country, as the PSC Chairman has not given any specific assurance to fulfil their 'six point' demands.



PHOTO: STAR

Visitors crowd a stall of a real estate developer on the concluding day of the housing fair organised by the Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. at Sheraton Hotel. (Story on Page 7)

Ministerial changes

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The swap of portfolio raised the hackles of many ministers and ranked by their political parties. Jamaat leaders termed Nizami's transfer to industries ministry was 'without any reason', but the minister himself seemed indifferent.

Two other alliance partners, the BJP and IOJ, are highly annoyed as none of their representatives had a cabinet berth in the last 19 months.

On the first working day since the reshuffle, most of the 11 ministers whose portfolios were redistributed took over charges. Nizami's exception was, however, a widely talked-about topic that made rounds in the political circles.

Official sources said Nizami came at the agriculture ministry at about 10:50am to say bye to the officials and employees. A farewell reception was also accorded to him.

"Cabinet reshuffle in a parliamentary democracy totally depends on the desire of the prime minister. I

have no grievances at the change of my portfolio," Nizami told the officials.

State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakrul Islam Alamgir, Secretary Ayub Quadri, Additional Secretary Abul Kashem and other officials in their speeches heaped accolade on the leadership of Nizami.

Nizami yesterday deleted files on Jamaat-Shibir activities on his computer at the ministry and asked his personal staff to copy his action.

Many allege that the minister spends much of his office time dealing with party affairs.

Two axed state ministers Ahsanul Haque Mollah and Ebadur Rahman Chowdhury went to their ministries yesterday and said goodbye to staff.

"I am now a free man," Mollah told reporters in his reaction. He said his ministerial duty drove a wedge between him and people in his constituency.

"I will now give them ample time.

Nowadays, there is no value of honesty. The person who can spend money might keep well," he said philosophically.

The 72-year-old Mollah said he had no desire to contest elections in future. "Last time I fought the polls at the request of Khaleda Zia," he said.

"I did never lobby with the party for a ministerial slot and I don't know why I was picked up and then fired."

DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka took farewell from his fisheries and livestock ministry on the day.

He welcomed Ukil Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan, who was made minister in charge of the ministry, and introduced him with the ministry staff. He handed over responsibility to the new minister in style and wished his success.

The new agriculture minister, MK Anwar, yesterday did his old office, but did not bid farewell to the staff.

He then went to Gazipur as the minister in-charge of the district and held a meeting on law and order.

Water Resources Minister Major (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, State Minister for Jute Lutfur Rahman Khan Azad, State Minister for Labour and Manpower Amanullah Aman and State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Prof Rezaul Karim took over new charges.

New Deputy Minister for Land Ruhul Qudus Talukder, the deputy minister for relief and deputy minister for industries were also seen at their old or new offices, busy in dealing with the changeover.

Nazrul

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the freedom fighters in 1971. The then Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra would begin its programme with his famous song 'Kandari Hunshiar'.

Nazrul, popularly known as 'Rebel poet', wrote thousands of lyrics, poems, dramas, short stories and novels in his short writing period.

President Iajuddin Ahmed said in a message Nazrul used to sing in the song of life. His work was always for the deprived and against the injustice of society.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in her message said Nazrul was the brightest star in Bangla literature. She asked all to work together for peace and prosperity imbued with the inspiration of Nazrul.

Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina expressed her respect for Nazrul in a message. She said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman brought the poet to the country, remembering his influence in the culture and life of the Bangladeshis.

Chhayanat observes the day with a programme at the Public Library auditorium. The Bangabandhu Shangkrikrit Jote, Sur Manjari, Nazrul Academy and Bangladesh Nazrul Shena will also stage special programmes.

Businessman murdered in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A businessman was stabbed to death by an armed group in the city last night.

The victim was identified as Shahed Ahmed, 28. He hailed from Kharpura of Mirabazar.

Victim's cousin Abdul Jalil Jewel alias 'Kala' Jewel, a cadre of JCD and reportedly belonging to Mizan Group, was also injured seriously in the attack.

Sources said, Shahed and Jewel came under attack while they were returning home from Osmani Airport at around 8pm.

Some JCD cadres belonging to Shabin group stabbed the two near Electric Supply area. They were taken to the medical college hospital where doctors declared Shahed dead.

The reason behind the attack could not be known immediately. But sources alleged that the incident took place over sharing of drug trade money.

SSKOP calls for payment of salary arrears

BSS, Dhaka

Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP), a platform of journalists, press workers and general employees of the newspaper industry, yesterday criticised the management in-charge of the Bangladesh Observer for non-payment of 15 months' salary to its staff.

"The management in-charge must clear the outstanding salary, otherwise it should quit," SSKOP leaders said at a rally in front of the Observer office. The rally was held as part of its campaign for realisation of seven-point demand.

Presided over by President of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) Elahi Newaz Khan, the rally was addressed by SSKOP leaders Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Abdus Shahid, Omar Faruque, Afzar Uddin Khan and Abul Hashem.

The newspapermen also called for implementation of their seven-point demand, including formation of the sixth wage board and formulation of a national policy for the industry.

China allows

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cent duty reductions were given on 129 items from China, 288 from Sri Lanka and 220 from South Korea.

Commerce ministry sources said Bangladesh benefited in trade with China following its inclusion in the agreement. Dhaka's exports to Beijing grew around 73 per cent during July-December 2002 over the previous year's corresponding period.

Bangladesh fetched \$11.54 million from exports to China during the period as against only \$6.47 million during the same period in the previous year, the sources said.

The major items exported from Bangladesh to China are leather and leather goods, frozen shrimps, jute, jute goods and camera parts.

Bangladesh's import from China is however very high at over \$600 million annually.

Death anniversary



press release.

The third death anniversary of Dr Jahan Ara Rabee, former additional director general of Health Services, will be observed today, says a

They further alleged that Nizami had failed to add a spark to the development of the sector and kept himself obsessed with strengthening Jamaat-Shibir activities.

They said he gave a good number of jobs to the Shibir activists at the agriculture ministry at the cost of BNP men.

Jamaat leaders brushed aside the allegation, saying their chief was "very methodical" and devoted himself completely to the ministry.

No WMDs in Iraq

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The security situation made it impractical for UN inspectors to return and work alongside the US, Dr Blix said. Collaboration might also be tricky for political reasons. "I also have the impression that the negative attitude to UN inspectors ... is turning into a generally defensive attitude towards the United Nations."

AFP from Washington adds: Congress Friday asked the CIA to "reevaluate" the quality of US intelligence on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq, and on that country's links with the al-Qaeda terrorist network.

"It is now time to reevaluate US intelligence regarding the amount or existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and that country's linkages to terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda," members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence told CIA director George Tenet in a letter.

"The committee wants to ensure that the intelligence analysis relayed to our policymakers from the intelligence community was accurate, unbiased and timely," said the letter, signed by committee vice-chairman Porter Goss, a Republican, and committee member Jane Harman, a California Democrat.

The letter, a copy of which was furnished to the AFP, asked Tenet to respond by July 1 to these points:

-- Was the gathered intelligence sufficient in quantity and quality?

-- Were the sources of the intelligence reliable?

-- How was the intelligence analysed and disseminated?

-- Were divergent analyses taken into account, or swept aside, and, in the latter case, why?

The demand of the Central Intelligence Agency came as Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld made a request that the CIA conduct an internal analysis of the quality of secrets collected by various US intelligence agencies.

US and British forces have not yet found any WMDs in Iraq, nor have they established links between the former regime of Saddam Hussein

Sultana Panni

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Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Sultana Khan Panni, wife of former deputy speaker Humayun Khan Panni, was strangled at her Dhanmondi residence in the early hours of Monday.

Although the killers had ransacked the residence to make it look like a case of robbery, Dhanmondi police confirmed that it was not so. They believe family members might have been involved in the crime.

Dhanmondi police arrested the four including three domestic helps from the residence on Tuesday.

PM to pacify

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agriculture as 'a demotion' and it rankled with the party.

The press also speculated that the swap of portfolio stemmed from his failure to handle the ministry affairs.

But Khaleda dismissed the Jamaat leaders' anguish and said she honoured Nizami very much.

She told them that the change was brought 'with the good intention of fulfilling the government's requirement', not for what is being bandied about as his failure.

"The industries ministry is a big one and there are many things to do there for the welfare of the country," sources quoted the premier as telling the Jamaat leaders.

Meanwhile, BNP sources alleged that Nizami was removed from the agriculture ministry as he dealt with party activities from his secretariat office, giving little time to the vital office.

They further alleged that Nizami had failed to add a spark to the development of the sector and kept himself obsessed with strengthening Jamaat-Shibir activities.

They said he gave a good number of jobs to the Shibir activists at the agriculture ministry at the cost of BNP men.

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and al-Qaeda, the two main premises on which Washington and London justified their invasion of Iraq.

"Since some questions have been raised and it is taking a long time to find out about the WMDs, we think it is prudent to ask," said Harman, ranking Democrat on the committee.

Several critics have suggested that President George W. Bush and the Pentagon cooked intelligence on Iraq's possession of WMDs to support an invasion.

"This could conceivably be the greatest intelligence hoax of all time," said Harman. "I doubt it, but we have to ask."

In the Senate, as well, Democrats were attacking US intelligence services, whose performance, said John Rockefeller of West Virginia, had been "wholly unimpressive."

Rockefeller called for internal investigations by the Pentagon and CIA to determine whether the Bush government had been manipulating documents to show that Iraq had tried to buy uranium from Niger for its nuclear programme while the CIA was denying it.

Alleged thief beaten to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob allegedly beat up and killed a thief, Sayed Ali, 27, in Demra yesterday.

Sayed and three others entered one Jahangir Alam's residence at Rayerbagh at about 9:30 am. to burgle.

While the thieves were leaving the house, local people rushed there and caught Sayed who was carrying a television set on his head. Others managed to escape.

Seriously injured Sayed was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died in the afternoon. The victim lived in the City Polli in Demra, sources said.

A case of burglary was filed with Demra Police Station.

Algeria quake

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The Algerian town of Boumerdes boomed and threw stones at president Abdelaziz Bouteflika yesterday when he went to view the devastation caused by the massive earthquake there.

As Bouteflika toured the ruins of buildings that were shattered in Wednesday night's quake, dozens of plainclothed police held back hundreds of people who shouted: "Rulers, murderers!".

Bouteflika cut short his visit after just a few words of thanks to international aid workers and the convoy of official vehicles sped away under a hail of stones as the crowd aimed kicks at the car doors.

3 criminals

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(DMCH) under police custody. They will be produced before the court on recovery.

Sub-inspectors (SIs) Abdur Rouf, Mosharraf Hossain and Monirul Islam got hurt in the firefight.

SI Abdur Rouf filed two separate cases one under arms act and another for obstructing police from carrying out their duty and attempt of murder.

There are several cases of murder, extortion and hijack against the arrestees, said police, adding that Manik is a close associate of notorious criminal Tofail Ahmed Joseph.

62 pushed in

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Narrating their woes Sekander said in broken Bangla that they were taken to Sarallah Musafir Khana where the number of inmates rose to 70 in a couple of days. They were transported to Kolkata and again to Maldaha, Shilguri, Jalpaiguri, Haldibari and Koochbehar rail stations.

"About 62 of us were handed over to BSF at Jalpaiguri Friday morning," said Sekander. They were divided into more than a dozen groups, brought to the border and pushed in through Kantivita, Parya Beurbari, Kiragaon, Sonapatia, Jotdarpara and Darkhor, he added.

Consultation meet

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session. CPD Executive Director Debapriya Bhattacharya gave the welcome address while Mayor of Barisal City Corporation Majibur Rahman Sarwar was chief guest. Three lawmakers from Barisal, high officials, social workers, cultural activists and NGO workers spoke on the occasion.

Editor of the Prothom Alo Motiur Rahman was present.

Former director of the Bureau of Anti-corruption Md Badiuzzaman presented the booklet paper at the dialogue.

Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar said every sector needs cleansing to ensure good governance and eradication of corruption.

Lawmaker Abul Hossain said corruption should first be removed from the Bureau of Anti-corruption itself to free the society from this vice.

Legislator Zahiruddin Sawpan said if salaries of bureaucrats is raised to an 'acceptable level', it might help check corruption.

Joint Secretary of district Awami League Monirul Ahsan said while in power, politicians say one thing and then say just the opposite when out of power. They must give up this habit, he added.

President of Sangskritik Sangstha Samonnaya Parishad Syed Dulal said investment of illegal money should be stopped to curb illegal influence in different fields.

The others who spoke included former adviser of the caretaker government Hafizuddin Ahmed, Prof. Kaniz Fatema of North South University, Chairman of Barisal

education board Anowarul Huq, Borhanuddin Ahmed of Manobik Unnayan Sangstha, former secretary Al-Amin, BNP leader A Rashid Khan, Rani Bhattacharya of Mahila Parishad, Communist Party of Bangladesh leader Majibur Rahman Talukdar, Hafiz Ahmed of Association of Development Agencies of Bangladesh, freedom fighter Nurul Alam Farid, social worker Habibur Rahman Khan and Awami League leader Talukder Yunus.

Cop murder 7 accused remanded again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Seven members of Minto Ghosh Group, a crime cartel, arrested in connection with the murder of police constable Noor Jahid, were placed on a three-day fresh remand yesterday.

The arrestees -- Jahid Hasan, Anwar Hossain, Azizul Haq, Sohel, Alamgir, Liton Burman, and Abdul Alim -- were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM)'s Court, Dhaka yesterday afternoon with a prayer for a seven-day remand. But the magistrate Al-Mamun granted them a three-day remand for interrogation.

Noor Jahid, 27, was gunned down and some other law enforcers, including a sub-inspector, were injured during a shootout with a gang of criminals in front of Azad Cinema Hall in old Dhaka on May 18.

Bar civil servants

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chief guest, Mattiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo and Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of the CPD, also spoke.

Most of the speakers came down hard on politicians.

Criminals are being patronised by the politicians, said Enayet Pir, adding that they would not have survived a single day without the support of their political godfathers.

He also said society couldn't have the rule of law when justices get appointment on the strength of their political inclination.

Echoing Enayet Pir's sentiment journalist Shawkat Milton said criminals could go scot-free because of politicians. "But the irony is that those politicians linked with criminals shed crocodile tears in public meetings," he said.

Abdul Hai Mahbub, a prominent Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader, stated that politicians do not care for the country, but their party.

Anwar Jahid, an NGO worker, meanwhile, proposed that if any lawmaker remain absent in the parliament, his or her honorarium should be cut.

Shawkat Hossain Hiron, joint secretary of Barisal Awami League, said that had all the political parties refrained from nominating criminals the parliament could have been an ideal place to work for the people.

Advocate Abdul Majid Munshi observed that lawmakers should not stay away from the parliament for long as it is the only way to keep democratic process alive.

Dr Kaniz Siddique of the North South University (NSU), Pilu Kabir of the Association of Development

Agencies in Bangladesh, Advocate Abdul Gaffar of Manabadhikar Bastobayan Sangstha, Awami League leader Talukdar Mohammad Enamul, Rahima Sultana Kazol, NGO worker Ranjit Datta, freedom fighter Nurul Alam Farid, Aminul Haque, Nurzahan Begum of Mahila Parishad, Advocate Abdul Hai Mahmud and Saiful Alam Chowdhury also addressed the dialogue, chaired by leading businessmen of the district Md. Jalal Ahmed.

Mamata

Democratic Alliance (NDA) government has been kept in abeyance. We have been informed about this by the highest authority."

Sources within the party informed that the Prime Minister's Office had conveyed the news of holding the ministerial posts in abeyance. Mamata Banerjee is miffed because Sudiip Bandyopadhyaya was being considered for a ministerial post without her consent, they said.

Banerjee, yesterday called a party working committee meeting after learning that Bandyopadhyaya too was to be given a ministerial berth.

The party then wrote to Prime Minister Vajpayee seeking a clarification. Bandyopadhyaya, who is close to Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has been in New Delhi for the past few days. He did not attend the party's meeting here yesterday.

His differences with the party chief grew over the question of quitting the BJP-led central coalition in 2001. But, Banerjee, who was then the railway minister, has since patched up with the BJP and is believed to be eagerly awaiting a cabinet recall.

Girl foils 'kidnap' attempt

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on Wednesday afternoon Marjina told her and her friend Nasima that she would treat them to sweets and give them attractive toys if they went to her residence. Both of them agreed, but Nasima suddenly parted midway.

"Sensing something wrong, I ran from her and a rickshawpuller took me to my residence," Nasima said yesterday. Fathers of both Nasima and Soma are rickshawpullers living at a slum near Motijheel AGB Colony.

Nasima described the incident to her parents and Soma's father Abdul Hye. The guardians took Nasima with them and went out to look for Soma. But she failed to identify the place where she last saw Marjina.

Yesterday morning, as Marjina was passing by the AGB Colony, Nasima identified her and immediately called her and Soma's fathers. The two later followed Marjina to her residence in Shantinagar.

The guardians later informed the

Motijheel police who raided Marjina's residence at around 12:30pm yesterday.

Police rescued Soma and two other girls -- Chhabi, 8, and Teresa, 6, -- from Marjina's residence. They took the four girls and Marjina to the Motijheel Police Station.

Detailed address of Chhabi and Teresa could not be known immediately.

Motijheel police said they have evidence that Marjina is involved in trafficking in children. The girls were kidnapped to be smuggled out of the country, police said. "However, we are trying to find out where they were to be trafficked to," the duty officer at the Motijheel Police Station said.

Daughter of one Abul Hossain Gazi of Nabagram Road under Kotwali Police Station in Barisal, Marjina lives alone in her Shantinagar residence as her husband has been living abroad for long.

Soma's father Abdul Hye filed an abduction case against Marjina

with the Motijheel Police Station.

Police will produce Marjina before court today to remand her for interrogation.

Meanwhile, fathers of Soma and Nasima waited at the police station throughout the day yesterday to get back their children. But police said they would return the children only after getting court directives.