



Wearing shrouds, employees of the Department of Women Affairs working under a project continue fast-unto-death at Eskaton in the city yesterday for transferring their jobs to revenue sector and payment of arrears.

JOB UNDER PROJECT 772 employees threaten to immolate tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 772 officials and employees of a project titled 'Development of Poor Women Without Food Security' under the Directorate of Women Affairs have decided to immolate themselves tomorrow if their demands are not met by today, says a press release.

After a three-day sit-in programme from July 9 to 11, the officials and employees have been observing fast unto death in the city to realise their demands for arrears salaries of 25 months and transfer of jobs to revenue sector.

The decision to immolate themselves was taken after getting no specific assurance during their discussions with the minister, the secretary and the director general of the ministry regarding their demands on three occasions, the press release added.

Make Hajj policy public

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged the government to make the Hajj policy public for facilitating the pilgrims to perform the holy Hajj smoothly.

They also underscored the need for coordination among the concerned ministries in order to help the Bangladeshi pilgrims perform their Hajj easily.

The roundtable was organised by the daily Amar Desh at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers said a large number of the Hajj pilgrims are mainly rural people and they do not know the norms and code of conducts after going to Makkah, which often causes difficulties for them.

They urged the Ministry of Religious Affairs to initiate a briefing

programme about the code of conducts for the Hajj pilgrims at all the mosques in the country prior to the Hajj so that the pilgrims may know the code of conducts.

They also said the media can play an important role to make the pilgrims aware by disseminating information about the Hajj.

They also suggested that the ministry should launch training programmes for the pilgrims at the district level.

Dr M Shamsheer Ali, VC of South-East University, demonstrated the difficulties that the pilgrims face during their Hajj period.

Mohammad Mafizur Rahman of Darus Sunnah Islamia Complex said the Bangladeshi pilgrims are still facing many difficulties, including housing, transportation and health services problems.

Justice Muhammad Abdur Rauf said though the neighbouring countries have a lot of volunteers, who guide the pilgrims, the number of volunteers for Bangladesh is a few.

He urged the government to make the Hajj policy a public.

Speaking at the roundtable as the chief guest, Mosharref Hossain Shahjahan, state minister for religious affairs, said the Hajj policy will be made public soon.

He underscored the need for increasing manpower at Bangladesh mission in Saudi Arabia to get a better service.

Ataus Samad, advisory editor of the Amar Desh, and representatives of the Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (Haab) also spoke on the occasion.

Nizami perplexed at JCD joining BCL in fight against Shibir

UNB, Dhaka

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami has urged the senior BNP leaders to seriously look into the incident at Jagannath University where JCD and BCL jointly stood against Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS).

"It has created a serious repercussion and anger among all leaders and workers of Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir," he told the news agency in a sharp reaction to the incident.

Nizami, also the industries minister, said, "When our alliance is against Awami League, how could the student wing of our main ally join the student front of Awami League and stand against Islami Chhatra Shibir? This is against the interest of the alliance."

The Jamaat chief said the incident that took place at Jagannath University is not single one. "Perhaps, the police resorted to repression on ICS workers as JCD stood for BCL against ICS."

As a student organisation, ICS is not weaker than BCL or JCD, the Jamaat chief claimed, questioning why Shibir would not be allowed to carry out its activities in certain educational institutions.

"This is undemocratic," he said, adding that despite having its dominance in Chittagong, Rajshahi and Islamic Universities, Shibir allowed other student organisations to work in those institutions.

Nizami said, "Senior BNP leaders must look into this incident in the interest of the alliance."

ACCESS PROGRAMME

15 lakh women, children to get healthcare services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a view to reducing maternal and newborn deaths and improving the health of mothers and newborns, ACCESS programme was launched yesterday.

The ACCESS programme, a USAID-sponsored global programme, will be implemented at seven upazilas in Sylhet district in five years in collaboration with ICDDRDB and two local NGOs Shimanatik and FIVDB.

Under the programme, at least 15 lakh women and children will be provided with health care services at different stages of maternal and neonatal health in Golapganj, Bishwanath, Balaganj, Fenchuganj, Companyganj, Jaintapur and Gowainghat.

A two-day Intervention Design

Course on 'TV Journalism' ends

The concluding and certificate awarding ceremony of a month-long training course on 'Television Journalism', organised by Bangladesh Institute of Communication Studies and Public Relations (BICSPR), was held on Monday at the institute's conference room, says a press release.

Khondokar Mahub Uddin Ahmad, chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee, Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliament Affairs was present as the chief guest and distributed certificates among the participants while Mirza Tarequl Qader, executive director of BICSPR, presided over the function.

A total of 24 participants including 6 females took part in the course that was conducted by the senior journalists of different TV channels.

Workshop also began at the Spectra Convention Centre in the city following the launching of ACCESS programme.

Save the Children-USA and Directorate General of Health Services under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare jointly organised the workshop.

In her welcome address Dr Lubna Ahmed, programme manager of ACCESS, said the overall objective of the programme is to increase the practice of healthy maternal and neonatal behaviours in antenatal, childbirth and postnatal periods in a sustainable manner.

Community mobilisation, action and demand for practice of healthy maternal and neonatal behaviours are at the heart of the ACCESS programme, she said, adding, "Community advocacy would play a significant role in service delivery."

Sylhet was selected for the ACCESS programme as the access of maternal and newborn care is poor in the district for geographical position, said concerned sources.

Moreover, national level surveys show that under-five mortality rate is 50 percent higher in the district than others, the sources told The Daily Star.

While explaining the objectives of the workshop Dr Nizam Ahmed of Save the Children-USA said it will focus on developing technical issues and strategies for delivering messages at household level.

He said experts from the government, UN agencies and implementing partners will identify strategy for linkage of ACCESS programme and clinical services in the target areas.

Prof Dr Shahadat Hossain, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services under the Ministry of Health and Family

Welfare was present as chief guest at the inaugural session.

ACCESS Director Dr Koki Agarwal and Nahed Mattra of USAID Washington also spoke on the occasion.

Jugantor editor, publisher asked to appear before court on Sept 21

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued summons upon the editor and publisher of the Jugantor to appear before the court on September 21 after the Bashundhara Group filed a defamation case against the Bangla daily and its owner Jamuna Group.

Metropolitan Magistrate AJM Abdullahel Baqui issued the order after Shamsuddin Ahmed, a senior executive director at Bashundhara Group, filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The defendants in the case are the daily's Editor Golam Sarwar and its Publisher Salma Islam.

However, the court did not summon the Managing Director of Jamuna Group Nurul Islam Babul, whose name was also included in the complaint.

In his complaint, Shamsuddin mentioned that on July 9 the defendants published a false, fabricated and fictitious news item titled "Investigation of Bashundhara Group director" with an intention to tarnish the image of the complainant as well as his business reputation.



Leaders of different garment workers' organisations exchange views with the leaders of the Communist Party of Bangladesh at Muktibhaban in the city yesterday.

RMG workers seek CPB support

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of 16 garment workers' organisations yesterday exchanged views with the leaders of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) as part of their programme to mobilise support for proper implementation of the recently signed tripartite agreement among the workers, owners and government.

"We want to meet all political parties so that all points of the agreement are implemented without any delay," said Bangladesh National Garments Workers Employees League President Sirajul Islam Rony.

The demands included appointment letters and identity cards for workers, provision of eight-hour working a day and overtime for working extra-hour, maternity and other leaves, trade unionism and minimum wage as set by the wage board.

During the meeting at its office in the city, the CPB leaders reiterated their support for their demands and said they had always upheld the rights of the oppressed and marginalised people.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan said, "Recent uprising in garment factories is only a dress rehearsal for greater awakening of garment workers in the process of realising their due rights."

CPB General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim said due to predatory policies of the successive governments, the garment owners gained disproportionately at the expense of worker's rightful interests.

Bangladesh Apparel Workers Federation President Md Towhidur Rahman said implementation of the demands was supposed to start from July 1, but even the appointment letters and identity cards were not issued so far, let alone other demands.

He alleged that some quarters are now conspiring to lower the minimum wage than Tk 3000 and urged all garment workers to resist the evil design.

Jatiya Garments Sramik Federation General Secretary Amirul Huq Amin, Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Garment Sramik Federation President Salahuddin Swapan, Shadhin Bangla Garment Sramik Karmochari Federation President Shamima Nasrin and Bangladesh Garments Sramik Trade Union Kendra General Secretary Ruhul Amin were also present at the meeting.

The RMG leaders will hold similar view-exchanging meeting with Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal on July 20.

Seminar titled 'Building Links with Bangladesh' in UK today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seminar titled 'Building Links with Bangladesh' will be held at The John Hartshorne Lecture Theatre, Hulme Hall of Victoria Park Campus in The University of Manchester in the UK today, says a press release.

The British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury will be present at the inaugural lecture of a series of seminars designed to inspire today's young people, in particular the graduates and undergraduates, to maximise their potentials as future leaders on the international stage.

Seamark will sponsor the seminar that will focus on opportunities in enterprise, investment and services in Bangladesh.

It will also focus on the young generation of Bangladeshis who are born, brought up and educated in England and building bridges that can help improve understanding and benefit the social and economic relationship in both countries.



Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote stages a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday to press their six-point demand.

PHOTO: STAR