



Motijheel area during the 14-party alliance's sit-in in front of Bangabhaban in the city yesterday. The 14-party staged the protest to press its 11-point demand.

Saarc agriculture ministers' meet in Islamabad Dec 12

BSS, Dhaka

Saarc ministerial meeting on agriculture and food will be held in Islamabad on December 14.

Senior officials meeting on December 12 and 13 will be followed by ministerial meeting, official sources said.

CM Shafi Sami, Adviser, Ministry of Agriculture, will represent Bangladesh at the ministerial meeting.

The agendas of the meeting include review of activities of the Saarc technical committee on agriculture and rural development, review of activities of Saarc Agriculture Information Centre (SAIC) and its expansion taking into consideration the changing nature and scope of agriculture and the emerging challenges in South Asian agriculture, sources said.

Saarc Food Security Reserve, launched in 1987 in the third Saarc Summit to maintain storage of food grains for meeting emergency in member states, will also be discussed at the Islamabad meeting, the sources said. Since the inception of Saarc Food Security Reserve, it experienced hindrances which made it almost non-attractive to member states, sources added.

The 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka gave new guidelines to revamp this mechanism. The Saarc secretariat has revised a concept paper for establishment of food bank instead of food reserve.

The Islamabad meeting is expected to give practical solutions to some of the difficulties, the sources said, adding that once the solutions get the nod, an inter-governmental expert body will finalise agreement on operation of the food bank.

MBBS ADMISSION TEST

HC stays results for 6 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed for six weeks the results of MBBS admission tests for 14 government medical colleges and the notice regarding the admission under 2006-07 session.

A division bench of Justice Mohammad Awlad Ali and Justice Mainul Islam Chowdhury also issued a rule upon the government to explain why the results and the notice should not be declared unlawful.

The health secretary, director general of Directorate of Health, director of Medical Education and Health Manpower Development and the principals of Dhaka and Salimullah medical colleges were made the respondents.

The rule came following a writ petition filed by admission test candidates Tanvir Ahmed, Kazi Nahida Sultana, Hasan Moudud, Sadia Nujhat and Md Faysal Talukder.

In the writ, the petitioners said the question paper was leaked eight hours before the test began on November 17. As a result, meritorious students could not qualify in the competitive test.

Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam and Advocate Hari Sadhan Deb Brahma appeared for the petitioners.

Meanwhile, the admission seekers continued their agitation yesterday for the sixth consecutive day demanding cancellation of the test results and a fresh examination.

The students and their parents have also decided to stage sit-ins in

front of the Central Shaheed Minar on December 3, 10, 17 and 24 to press their demands.

When contacted, Director of Medical Education Prof Dr Khandakar Safayetullah said they have held several meetings on the issue at the health ministry. "We will not accept any allegations of question leaks as the results of the admission test have already been published," he added.

A five-member committee comprising Md Manirul Islam, additional secretary of Health (chief), Mr Sadaruddin, joint secretary (coordination), Prof Dr Hosne Ara Tahmin, addition director general, Prof MA Hayee and Ziaul Haque, senior assistant secretary, has been formed to investigate the allegations.

Scientists protest recruitment from admin cadre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Scientists of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) protested recruitment of officials from the administration cadre in the BCSIR violating the council's ordinance.

At a press conference at Dhaka University Reporters' Association, the scientists demanded cancellation of the appointment of two deputy secretaries as member and director of BCSIR.

Among them Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury joined as a member of the board yesterday while Mohammad Golam Mostafa is yet to join the post of director. Two more officials from administration were illegally recruited as members of the

council prior to this appointment.

According to the ordinance, the post of the director should be filled up only by the Chief Scientific Officer or equivalent to the post with at least three years of working experience and one should be promoted to the post of director according to the conditions of the council, the speakers said.

Protesting the recruitment, the scientists have been observing one-hour work abstention everyday since Thursday. They also announced to go for a tougher agitation if their demand is not met immediately.

President of the council Shamsul Haque, General Secretary Shahidul Islam and Executive Member Kazi Akhtaruzzaman spoke at the press conference.

Tk 3.5cr Indian clothes seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N' Ganj

Smuggled Indian clothes worth around Tk 3.5 crore were seized from a sand-laden trawler in the Balu river at Demra in Dhaka early yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Coast Guard and Department of Customs intercepted the trawler 'Mayer Doa' during a raid and recovered Indian sarees, salwar kameez and shawl from two secret chambers of the trawler.

However, the trawler crew managed to escape. Customs officials said the Indian clothes, smuggled into the country through Sundarbans, were being brought to Dhaka.

The trawler belongs to Ruhul Amin Navigation Company Limited, Superintendent of Department of Customs Golam Mostafa said, adding that they are trying to track down the smugglers' syndicate.

ROBBERY AT JEWELLERY SHOP Traders blame security agency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Traders of Holland Centre Shopping Complex at North Badda in the city kept their shops closed yesterday protesting the robbery that took place at the market on Sunday.

Eight closed-circuit televisions (CCTV) that were installed inside the shop recorded the robbers in action who made off with ornaments, cellular phones and cash worth Tk 86 lakh in the incident.

The traders of the complex blamed the negligence of the market security authorities for such a robbery, second in just four months.

"We want adequate compensation from the market authorities so that we can start our business once again," said Saiful Islam, the owner of Mayer Doa Jewellers in a heart-rending voice.

President of Bangladesh Jewellers Society MA Wadood Khan while talking to Daily Star demanded immediate recovery of the stolen goods and arrest of the criminals.

Meanwhile, Sub-Inspector (SI) Ramjan Ali after raiding the house of Tajuddin, one of the burglars seen on the CCTV, at Muktagacha in Mymensingh, reported that Tajuddin gave fake home address to the security agency as they found none at his village home by that name.

Police further said four teams of police are in action to arrest the criminals.

BSSMU admission test on Friday

UNB, Dhaka

The postponed admission test of MD, MS and FCPS part-1 of January 2007 under Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) will be held at Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (Buet) from 9:30am to 11:00am on Friday.

6th Wage Board Award soon: Mahbubul Alam

BSS, Dhaka

Professional excellence should get top priority in journalism.

Information, Water Resources and Religious Affairs Adviser Mahbubul Alam said this while visiting Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) yesterday.

Mahbubul Alam, also former managing director and chief editor of the organisation, said journalists working in the agency should put in their best efforts to strengthen its image further.

He emphasised the need for in-house training programme for journalists and formation of a board of directors to ensure its transparency and accountability to subscribers and also to the people.

In response to a demand from journalists and employees for announcing the wage board award, he said, "You will get the 6th Wage Board Award soon."

Information Secretary Kamal Uddin Ahmed, BSS Managing Director and Chief Editor Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury, Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) General Secretary Omar Faruque, BSS unit chiefs Kazim Reza and Ehsanul Karim Helal, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) executive committee member M Enamul Haque Babul and BSS Employees Union President Afazuddin Mondol also spoke.

They demanded announcement of 6th Wage Board award, introduction of pension scheme for BSS journalists and employees, formation of body to investigate into the irregularities, expediting construction of BSS Bhaban and reinstatement of terminated journalists.

2 brothers get life for killing boy in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court in Chittagong yesterday sentenced two brothers to life imprisonment for killing a teenage boy in the city in 2001.

Third Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge Md Ekramul Haq also fined the convicts -- Korban Ali, 23, and Rehan Ali, 21, -- Tk 50,000 each.

The court, however, acquitted Lal Mia, father of the convicts, sources said.

According to the prosecution, Korban and Rehan had a quarrel with Md Imran, 17, of their locality over a trifle matter at Roufabad under Bayezid Police Station on December 11, 2001. At night, the two brothers called Imran out of his house, beat him up and then strangled him.

The charge sheet of the case was submitted on May 21 in 2002 and charges were framed against the two brothers and their father on August 2, 2003.

The court handed down the verdict after examining 12 witnesses, the sources added.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina presides over a meeting of AL presidium at the party's Dhanmondi office in the city yesterday.

'Ministry's approval a must for women job seekers abroad'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

November 17.

The government will install closed-circuit cameras to properly monitor the activities of immigration section of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET). Henceforth, the approval that the BMET gives for jobs will have to be taken from the ministry also.

"The BMET will issue emigration clearance only after the ministry approves the documents," he added.

Acting Secretary to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Didarul Anwar said this at a press briefing at the ministry following the recommendations of a committee formed to probe the incident of holding up 31 Lebanon-bound women at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on

The women were about to fly for Lebanon without any emigration clearance.

DU 'Ga' unit test now on Jan 12

DU CORRESPONDENT

The admission test of Dhaka University (DU) under 'Ga' unit (business faculty) for first year honours courses under 2006-07 session will now be held on January 12 instead of December 1.

The date for the test has been changed due to unavoidable reasons, said a DU press release.

However, the admission tests under 'Ka' unit, 'Kha' unit and 'Gha' unit will be held as per schedule.

The government suspended four BMET officials who, along with a Biman official, were detained.

The government also made BMET Director Manzur Rahman (Immigration and Protocol) officer on special duty (OSD) as he did not inform the case to the BMET acting DG immediately.

"The plea of four welfare desk officials at ZIA that their computer was disturbed, is not true as neither the officials nor the immigration police informed the higher authorities of the matter," said Didarul Anwar.

The ministry's Joint Secretary Amir Hossain, Deputy Secretary Salauddin Akbar and BMET Additional DG Abdul Malek were present at the press briefing.



Dr Stefan Frowein, head of the delegation of the EC to Bangladesh, speaks at a workshop on 'Political parties and people's representation' at Spectra Convention Centre in the city yesterday. European Public Law Centre, Organisation of Development Programme for the Underprivileged, Odhikar and Bangladesh Centre for Communication Programmes organised the workshop.



Four-party alliance rally in front of the BNP central office at Naya Paltan in the city yesterday. The alliance organised the rally to welcome the announcement of election schedule by the Election Commission.