

Striking teachers lock up school rooms of mentally retarded

REAZ AHMAD

Striking teachers yesterday locked some rooms of the SWID School for "intellectually disabled" students at Eskaton in the city demanding withdrawal of termination letters served on a teacher and two support staff.

There are about 235 students in the school run by the Society for the Welfare of Intellectually Disabled (SWID), a voluntary organisation, with assistance from the social welfare ministry.

The teachers are demanding withdrawal of the termination letters before the annual *milad mahfil* at the school today. State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan is scheduled to attend the *milad*.

The school authorities sought police help to break open the locks but uncertainty continued over immediate resumption of classes and peaceful holding of today's *milad*.

When contacted, SWID Vice President Sajeda H Kabir said she along with general secretary of the school committee Prof GWH Chowdhury filed a general diary with Ramma police and sought their help to break the locks.

She said the school authorities assured the teachers of reconsidering cases of the support staff but not of the teacher because he faces charge for misconduct. "We offered them an amicable solution of the problem after Friday's *milad* but they would not listen."

Sajeda Kabir said the teacher was terminated earlier but the termination order was reconsidered to give him some time for correction.

"As he did not rectify himself and as our intellectually disabled students were being affected by his misconduct, the authorities took the decision of termination as per the rules of the institution."

Ramma police said a police team visited the school following a complaint and found some rooms under lock and key.

This correspondent tried to talk to the striking teachers over tele-

Manikganj JCD leader shot dead

BSS, Manikganj

A local leader of Jatiyatabdil Chhatra Dal (JCD) was killed by some unidentified miscreants in the early hours of yesterday.

The victim was identified as Shafiqul Islam Titu, 28, son of Gias Uddin.

Police and witnesses said Titu was shot by some armed miscreants while returning home from a fair (Baishakhi Mela) at Chandabori village at about 11 pm. He was rushed to Manikganj Sadar Hospital at around 4:40 am where he succumbed to his bullet injuries at about 5 am.

Titu was the former president of ward No. 1 of JCD Manikganj poura unit.

A case was filed with Manikganj sader police station in this connection.

Rejoinder, our reply

FROM PAGE 12

30 dredgers. PT Rukindo has much more experience, stronger fleet and better knowledge in channel dredging than the other bidders like Hyundai and China Harbour, but is second to Ham Voa as far as technical capabilities are concerned. Ham Voa's bid was Tk 22 crore higher than PT Rukindo's and 'technical capabilities' was never raised during the awarding process."

The allegation that the joint venture company has a record of violating contract agreements is totally baseless as the present contract with Mongla Port Authority (MPA) is the first and so far the only contract of the joint venture company."

The dredging activities are in progress and have never been suspended. Sabur Beacon having 50 per cent of the cutter suction dredging job had been completed in August 2001. The cutter suction dredger is working in jetty front and the work there would be completed before July 2002."

The BDCL also mentioned that it was not aware of "heavy siltation in Passur river, which was never reflected in tender documents as well as in the pre-bid meeting."

Regarding the departure of the Indonesian origin trailing suction hopper dredger ARU-11 it said, "Indonesian ambassador in Dhaka, Bangladeshi ambassador in Jakarta and even the Shipping Ministry had been trying to bring back the ARU-11 by taking up the matter with appropriate authorities in Indonesia at the diplomatic level. But the bid has so far been unsuccessful."

"BDCL must clear all the siltation

phone yesterday afternoon but none was available at the school. An accounts official said the teachers left the school.

Secretary General of the SWID National Executive Committee M A Baten, when contacted said the strike by teachers was unfortunate. "As father of an intellectually disabled child, I can say that we're trying hard to find an immediate and amicable solution to the crisis for the sake of the poor children," he said.

The social welfare ministry provides sixty percent of the teachers' salary of 40 such schools run by SWID, founded in 1977.

SWID authorities said, they provide education to only 6,000 'intellectually disabled' children whereas their number in the country is about 36 lakh.

Graft cases

Hearing on Dr Alamgir's bail petition tomorrow

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, on Wednesday fixed May 18 (tomorrow) for hearing on bail petition of former state minister for planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir in connection with three graft cases.

Magistrate Mohammad Nurul Karim Majumder passed the order on three separate petitions, submitted by the defence lawyers on behalf of the accused.

The court also directed the jail authorities to produce Alamgir before it during the hearing.

The prosecution side opposed the petition.

After hearing both the sides, the court fixed the date.

In the first case, filed with Tejgaon thana, it has been alleged that during the Awami League rule, the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Alamgir and five other ministers embezzled Tk 21,57,050 by appointing consultants for the Bangabandhu Nono Theatre without bidding.

Judge Mohammad Shah Alam Miah accepted the charge sheet and fixed the date for next hearing of the case.

The two others accused are Kamal's brother Anwar Hossain Majumder and Nazma Hossain.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka on April 18.

In the case, filed with Pallabi Police Station, it has been alleged that on December 30 last year, eight men forcibly took a 35-year-old woman to Kamal's political office at Mohana in the city's Pallabi area where Kamal tried to rape her.

Later, the victim filed a rape case with Pallabi Thana under the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act 2000 against Kamal Majumder and two others.

Following the case, Kamal Majumder was arrested from his Banani residence in the city on January 1.

Later he was granted ad-interim bail by the High Court on January 31.

The court granted bail till submission of the police report.

The two other accused were granted bail by the Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka in February.

Meanwhile, the High Court on April 8, extended the ad-interim bail of Kamal Majumder for six months from the date of issuing the order.

CU meets Khosru today to discuss railway link

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong University (CU) Syndicate meets Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury today to resolve rail communications problems facing the students.

At the meeting at 10:30am, the syndicate members will inform the minister about the rundown condition of rail tracks and seek his help for a sanction of Tk 9 crore for their immediate repair, sources said. Classes of the university were not held yesterday on the authorities' order for a two-day suspension from Wednesday.

However, the administrative activities were held, although shuttle trains and university transports did not ply between the campus and the city. Meantime, the syndicate meeting chaired by the pro-vice-chancellor, Mohammad Samsuddin, Tuesday night in the absence of the CU vice-chancellor has prompted teachers to question its legality. The meeting decided on suspension of classes.

On the other hand, a faction of the Jatiyatabdil Chhatra Dal (JCD) protested the inclusion of Sujauddin Suja, the expelled president of the JCD CU unit into the five-member committee that will meet the government immediately to resolve the rail communications problems. The university shuttle trains will be plying from tomorrow, although a little has been done to renovate the rail tracks, the sources said.

Attempted rape case

Kamal Majumder 2 others asked to appear before court Jan 1

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The First Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka yesterday directed former Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder and two others accused in an attempted rape case to appear before it on June 1.

Judge Mohammad Shah Alam Miah accepted the charge sheet and fixed the date for next hearing of the case.

The two others accused are Kamal's brother Anwar Hossain Majumder and Nazma Hossain.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka on April 18.

In the case, filed with Pallabi Police Station, it has been alleged that on December 30 last year, eight men forcibly took a 35-year-old woman to Kamal's political office at Mohana in the city's Pallabi area where Kamal tried to rape her.

Later, the victim filed a rape case with Pallabi Thana under the Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act 2000 against Kamal Majumder and two others.

Following the case, Kamal Majumder was arrested from his Banani residence in the city on January 1.

Later he was granted ad-interim bail by the High Court on January 31.

The court granted bail till submission of the police report.

The two other accused were granted bail by the Special Court for Prevention of Women and Children Repression, Dhaka in February.

Meanwhile, the High Court on April 8, extended the ad-interim bail of Kamal Majumder for six months from the date of issuing the order.

ADP

FROM PAGE 1

announced. The June 6 proposed budget will also beef up its effort to these sectors in the form of tariff breaks, sources said. This is a necessary step to spur the economy as well as to collect more tax, sources said.

On the expenditure side, the finance ministry is still holding on to its projected Tk 22,038 crore revenue outlay for the next fiscal. But the reported transfer of some Tk 25,000 staff from different projects to revenue budget will work as a strain at the seams.

Now, the new ADP will have no growth if compared with the original one of this fiscal. However, this fiscal's ADP has already been scaled down to Tk 16,000 crore, meaning an 18 per cent growth for the next fiscal's.

Meantime, the Planning Commission had been 'very selective' in choosing projects for the new ADP. Unnecessary projects were chopped, and those with very low fund demand were put under harsh scrutiny to save money here and there to be channeled to more important areas.

In the next ADP, agriculture will get Tk 419 crore in local currency and Tk 413 crore in project aid (PA), rural development will get Tk 1250 crore in local currency and Tk 484 crore in PA, power sector Tk 1450 crore in local currency and Tk 849 crore in PA, transport sector Tk 1535 crore in local currency and Tk 1744 crore in PA, and education sector Tk 1800 crore in local currency and Tk 1107 crore in PA.

Our only intention was to bring the facts to the readers, and not to put any aspersion on BDCL.

We regret the use of the word "dubious" in our heading and report, which we acknowledge was improper.

accumulated so far in southern anchorage at their cost when they would bring a suitable trailer suction hopper dredger from Dredging Company of India with whom the agreement to that effect is in the final stage."

The BDCL also said it should get appreciation for "raising an indigenous dredging company in Bangladesh, having two big cutter suction dredgers, and that outdoing the Dutch, Korean and Chinese contractors is not an easy job. Dutch contractors having a homeland with characteristics similar to Bangladesh are dominating the sector whereas Bangladesh could not produce a single entrepreneur who could risk such an unexplored engineering job. And in such an endeavour, accidents / delays/unforeseen incidents do happen, and the present episode is one such case. In 2003, the project would be completed and Basic Dredging Co Ltd will come out of this glitch."

Our reply

We are not against development of an indigenous dredging company. Rather we would also feel proud if a local company can compete with foreign companies in dredging.

Our only intention was to bring the facts to the readers, and not to put any aspersion on BDCL.

We regret the use of the word "dubious" in our heading and report, which we acknowledge was improper.



A roundtable on 'Children in Jail' jointly organised by Save the Children, UK and The Daily Star in progress at the conference room of the daily yesterday.

Unionism capped

FROM PAGE 1

the financial health of the company. Petrobangla, the parent company of Titas, is so desperate to bring the Titas unions under control that it has decided to take up the matter with the prime minister as a last ditch effort.

Theft of gas by some meter readers who are also trade union activists has put the Titas gas in the red, causing a headache for the Petrobangla.

Protected and sponsored allegedly by the ruling party, the union activists cum-meter readers are beyond any actions by the Titas gas authorities though their involvement in gas theft is a fact known widely.

Petrobangla management had been 'lobbying' extensively with some cabinet members who have direct and indirect influence over the trade unions in Titas to hold them back.

State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain also endorsed the effort.

Against this backdrop and following a report in The Daily Star on Wednesday which described how a petty meter reader and union activist of Titas has become a millionaire, the Jatiyatabdil Sramik Dal president and food minister summoned the Titas union leaders yesterday.

However, Hossain said apart from carrying out their usual activities no meeting between the trade unions and Titas management or interference by the unions in the affairs of the Titas should be allowed. The meeting also decided that no union activists can enter the room of any Titas officers.

Titas is the country's first and biggest commercial gas field that launched operation in 1968.

Coaches

FROM PAGE 1

way through every 90 minutes.

"It's FIFA's regulation on the pitch so I can't confirm that, but in the public spaces it is all non-smoking," Ko Yamaguchi, a spokesman for Japan's organising committee told AFP.

"FIFA and WHO (World Health Organisation), have come to an agreement to strengthen their ties over their anti-tobacco stance in promotion of health. They have requested us (the organising committees in Japan and South Korea) to make this tournament tobacco-free."

"The organising committees have agreed and decided to make this a smoke-free tournament."

FIFA has refused tobacco sponsorship since 1986 and has agreed to display anti-tobacco messages before, during and after matches during the World Cup.

Last month it criticised South Korea's state run tobacco monopoly of trying to exploit the tournament by producing a new "Time 2002" brand of cigarettes featuring images of players.p

FIFA has granted US brewing giant Anheuser-Busch -- the makers of Budweiser -- permission to sell beer at stadiums, however, despite concerns it could fuel hooliganism.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Nagoric Committee took out the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.

Witnesses said police went into the procession from Alappata area in the afternoon as part of its nine-day agitation programme demanding cancellation of Rajshahi City Corporation Election held on April 25.