

Rift in pro-BNP teachers led to JUTA agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing "non-cooperation" by the Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) against the authorities is the result of squabbles between two groups of pro-BNP teachers of the university, sources said.

JUTA began the programme on Monday to realise its 11-point demand which includes holding of elections of VC panel, Senate, Syndicate and Deans; removal of Proctor Enamullah Parvez, regularisation of teachers appointed on temporary basis earlier and withdrawal of police from the campus.

The teachers will continue to boycott all programmes till tomorrow where VC Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad will be present, abstain from work on September 23, observe one-hour work abstention from September 24 to 28 and go on an indefinite strike from September 29 if the demands are not met.

The non-cooperation programme was adopted at a JUTA meeting on September 15 when a faction of pro-BNP teachers led by Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman proposed it. The proposal was supported by the pro-Awami League teachers.

Though the pro-AL teachers had made the demands much earlier, JUTA did not take up the issue at any of its previous meetings, even for discussion.

Prior to the September 15 meeting of JUTA, the Mustahidur-led group held a meeting on September 2 where they observed that some of the actions of JU authorities tarnished the image of the government. Prof Mafiz Uddin Ahmed, a BNP-leaning teacher who was the first vice chancellor of JU, presided over the meeting.

Nine out of 15 JUTA office bearers are aligned to BNP and they all belong to Mustahidur Rahman group.

Talking to The Daily Star, some senior teachers said the division among the pro-BNP teachers has been created as the faction led by VC Jasim Uddin Ahmad ignored the

International Day of Peace today

AGENCIES, Dhaka

The International Day of Peace will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the 190 member states of the United Nations today to remember the victims of conflicts and to build a safe, peaceful and more just world.

The 57th session (2002) of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has decided that from now on the International Day of Peace on 21st September will be "A day of global cease-fire and non-violence".

In a message from New York yesterday on the eve of the Peace Day, UN Secretary general Kofi Annan said: "The peace bell at the UN headquarters, cast from coins donated by children from all continents, is a symbol of global solidarity. A gift from Japan, it is also a reminder of the human cost of war."

"Long live absolute world peace reads the inscription on the bell.

Kofi Annan urged all nations and all people to cease all hostilities for the entire day.

"Twenty-four hours: to give relief workers a safe interlude for the provision of vital services, to offer mediators a building block towards a wider truce, to allow all those engaged in conflict to reconsider the wisdom of further violence," he said.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia also issued a message yesterday urging the international community in general and the United Nations in particular to redouble efforts to address the threats to world peace aiming to secure a peaceful abode for mankind.

War-era bomb forces UK to evacuate people

AFP, London

Around 700 people were evacuated from in and around a British naval base after an unexploded wartime German bomb, weighing 450 kilograms (1,000 pounds), was discovered by workmen, a Royal Navy spokesman said Friday.

"The bomb is being dealt with on the basis that it is unstable and highly dangerous," said Lieutenant Commander David Welch, leading a six-strong Royal Navy bomb disposal team working through the night to defuse the device.

The bomb was unearthed by a mechanical digger late Thursday at the heart of Portsmouth Naval Base, on the south coast.

Five hundred Navy personnel living in accommodation blocks on the site have been evacuated, said the Navy spokesman.

faction led by Mustahidur Rahman since he took office on November 12 last year.

"Since taking over, the VC-led group under the banner of Jayatabadi Gonolatrik Shikkhak Parishad held three meetings, but they did not invited us to any of those", one teacher belonging to Mustahidur group said seeking anonymity.

They (VC group) joined hands with pro-Jamaat and pro-Jatiya Party teachers, ignoring pro-BNP teachers, he said.

The situation went against the VC-led group when a teacher -- Kawsar Hossain -- died in a road accident in front of the university on February 1 and many students were arrested for protesting it.

"We contacted the VC on that day but he did not pay heed to our suggestions. He rather listened to his Jamaat allies and turned the campus situation volatile", he added.

Police had arrested the students as the VC and Proctor Enamullah Parvez approved the police action on the campus, he claimed.

Two assistant proctors -- Mostafa Nazmul Mansur and Mohammad Ali Akand -- resigned saying that it was not possible to work with Proctor Enamullah Parvez.

The JU authorities kept the feud between two factions of Jayatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) on the campus alive by patronising one faction and harassing leaders and activists of the other faction by filing cases on different occasions, another teacher said.

Meanwhile, many teachers belonging to Mustahidur group have joined pro-AL teachers in making allegations that the authorities did irregularities in recruitment of teachers, officials and employees in a bid to politicise the administration.

The agitating pro-BNP teachers also alleged that the VC, Pro-VC and many other top officials had joined the pro-AL teachers when Awami League was in power.

Putrid wheat

FROM PAGE 12

rainy season test relief (TR) programmes now and plans to start vulnerable group feeding (VGF) shortly.

It may be mentioned that the jail authorities in Gaibandha and Patuakhali and several local government bodies have reportedly refused to take government-supplied wheat for prisoners and destitute women respectively as those were found putrid.

The government gave forced retirement to three senior food officials and made four others officers on special duty (OSD) following two official probe reports on corrupt practices in the purchase of an additional one lakh tonnes of wheat involving Tk 30 crore at the end of the wheat season (late July).

The probe reports also mentioned involvement of some ministers and ruling party lawmakers in the foul play, but the government is yet to take any action against them.

Road accidents

FROM PAGE 12

Police detained the bus drivers.

In another incident, two young men were killed when a town-service bus hit their motorbike in front of the Holy Crescent Hospital at OR Nizam Road killing.

Nurul Alam alias Javed, 18, and his friend Shamsuddin Babu, 19, on the spot.

Two separate cases were registered in connection with the two accidents.

UNB from Savar reports: Two people were killed and 15 others injured in an accident at Boliarpur in Savar thana on Dhaka-Aricha highway.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place at about 1:30 pm when a Manikganj-bound minibus rammmed two rickshaws, killing two persons on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Hasan, 18, of Boliarpur area in Savar thana and a rickshawpuller aged about 35.

Police recovered the bodies from the spot and sent them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with local police in this regard.

GDP growth

FROM PAGE 1

cent. Remittance grew by 9.53 per cent during the period, he said.

"Even if Bangladesh can achieve the consistent growth rate, fears will still remain as the existing LDC criteria might be changed at that time," he said. The trend of export, remittance and FDI will define the future growth.

Dr. Debapriya observed that the present flow of remittance is giving the country 'the best result'. "Export and remittance have now appeared to be the driving force of the economy", he said.

In FY 1980, the country's exports were 32.46 per cent of the import. The figure rose to 39.54 per cent in FY 1990 and 69.07 per cent in FY 2001.

Similarly, the flow of remittance gradually increased, and now it is helping the economy more than the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). Bangladesh reduced its dependence on ODA by half in the last ten years, he said.

He termed the 1990s as the decade of transition from aid dependence to trade orientation for Bangladesh.

According to him the country is going through 'a decade of breakthrough -- from trade orientation to an investment driven economy'.

"The key to the breakthrough lies in effective integration of Bangladesh in the global economy. Although the global economy lacks equity, opportunities are also there and we have to use the opportunities properly", he said.

Watchdog

FROM PAGE 1

paper titled "Dr A Gafur Memorial Lecture on Economists' View of Corruption: The tension between what is needed and what is possible".

Corruption permeated airports, hospitals, large bridges and tunnels, highways and exploration of minerals, gas or oil pipe lines, large public enterprises, major administrative changes, major arms deals and large public procurement, Professor Dey mentioned.

In the panel session, Prof Mosharrif Hossain said the flow of black money is tiding high with the days going by.

Different incorrect statistics by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics obscured the real picture of the economy.

Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said loan default is going up, as defaulters are not being punished.

Prof Muhammad Yunus, managing director of Grameen Bank, said that there was no alternative to the knowledge-based economy. He underscored integration of information technology into general education.

Prof Sanat Kumar Saha and Professor Sikandar Khan also took part in the panel discussion with Dr Muinul Islam, outgoing president of the BEA, in the chair.

Tk 88 lakh irregularities in 23 missions abroad detected

UNB, Dhaka

Serious financial irregularities involving more than Tk 88 lakh were detected in the country's 23 missions abroad during 1999-2000.

The audit report submitted in the just ended autumn session of parliament said it found 99 grave financial anomalies under the heads of house rent, and telephone, travel, medical and education allowances in 23 out of the 60 foreign missions.

The missions are Abu Dhabi, Amman, Ankara, Washington, Colombo, Karachi, Cairo, Kuala Lumpur, Kuwait, Jeddah, Tehran, Timpu, Doha, Dubai, Tokyo, New York, Pretoria, Bangkok, Baghdad, Brunei, Mascot, Manama and Los Angeles.

The report on irregularities and flaws only reflects part of transactions of the stated financial year that

was examined by the audit team.

According to the audit report, more than Tk 15 lakh were disproportionately received as daily allowance, transit, terminal charge and transfer grant by diplomats and officials in Bangladesh missions in Cairo, Los Angeles, Jeddah, Mascot, Kuala Lumpur, Colombo, Brunei, Amman, Tehran and Baghdad.

Another financial loss of more than Tk eight lakh was detected in receiving excess Biman fare by officials in the missions of Tokyo, Jeddah, Brunei, Karachi and Baghdad.

More than Tk 8 lakh were received unfairly as education allowance and Biman fare by officials in Tokyo, Timpu, Washington, Doha, Mascot, Jeddah, Kuala Lumpur, Amman and Baghdad.

Besides, a loss of more than Tk

10 lakh was detected for not curtailing diet charge in the missions of New York, Ankara, Washington and Pretoria.

An amount of Tk five lakh was received unfairly for medical allowance in the missions of Ankara, Washington, Cairo, Jeddah, Mascot, Tehran, Pretoria, Karachi, Manama, Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

The government incurred financial loss of more than Tk 6 lakh for receiving irregular foreign and entertainment allowances in Timpu, Washington, Jeddah and Brunei mission.

Other irregularities include receiving transport bills against personal cars, festival and duty allowances, refreshment and overtime bills, batman allowance, taxi fare, house rent, personal telephone bills, purchase of mobile phones and payment of their bills.

Govt-approved coaching centres to replace private tuition

UNB, Dhaka

The government plans to control the much-talked-about private tuition by arranging authorised coaching by teachers in educational institutions.

A specific portion of teachers' income from such coaching will go to the school funds under the new plan that will prohibit unauthorised private tuition, which is widely blamed for an alarming decline in the standard of education.

An official announcement said under the new system teachers could conduct coaching classes in schools after class hours or on holidays but would be barred from conducting such classes elsewhere.

Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk made the announcement on the government plan at a seminar titled "Qualitative Development of Education in the Secondary Level"

here yesterday.

Education Secretary M Shahidul Alam chaired the seminar while State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon, Deputy Minister Abdus Salam Pintu, director general of Secondary and Higher Education Department Abdur Rashid and Director Mozammel Huq also spoke on the occasion.

Headmasters of government secondary schools of different districts and senior officials of the Education Ministry were also present in the seminar.

Dr Farruk said the government is doing and is always ready to do everything for welfare of the teachers. "But, the teachers must perform their duties duly for the welfare of the students," he said.

He noted that the number of educated people in the country would increase if pass percentage

increased by any means, but that would not ensure quality education. The minister urged the teachers to teach their students with utmost dignity and skill aiming to ensure quality schooling for them.

The education minister also underscored the need for building cohesive teacher-student, teacher-guardian and student-student relations for ensuring an atmosphere congenial to proper academic activity.

Voicing warnings, Ehsanul Hoque Milon said corruption in education could not be tolerated. "Those who will take the noble profession of imparting education for business will be resisted."

Abdus Salam Pintu said there is a need for reform in the education administration system and the teachers have a great role in developing the standard of education.

Security reviewed for next round Kashmir polls

AFP, Srinagar

Another political activist was gunned down in Indian-administered Kashmir, as India's top election official Friday reviewed security arrangements for next week's second phase of voting in the volatile Himalayan state.

Two Muslim militants shot dead Azad Ahmed Khan, an activist of the ruling National Conference (NC) party, in Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar late Thursday, police said.

The killing brings to 28 the number of pro-India political activists killed since New Delhi announced the dates for the Kashmir state polls in early August. Eighteen of them were from the NC.

Two candidates were among the victims, one of them Kashmir's law minister, who was seeking re-election.

Three NC activists, including Khan, have been shot dead in Srinagar in as many days.

Srinagar, along with Jammu and Budgam districts, is due to go to the polls on Tuesday in the second of the four-phase elections for the state assembly.

"We are taking all precautionary security measures for the safe conduct of the remaining three phases," said India's chief election commissioner J.M. Lyngdoh, who is on two-day visit to Kashmir.

He said he was "very happy" at the first phase of voting and denied

allegations that some voters had been forced to polling stations by Indian troops.

"The voting was one of the best in India so far," he said.

Lyngdoh and the state's senior police, army and administrative officials Friday reviewed the security and other poll-related arrangements during a meeting in Srinagar's high-security government owned state guest house, an official said.

The venue that overlooks Srinagar's famous Lake Dal was ringed by police and paramilitary forces.

On Thursday Lyngdoh headed directly to the southern districts of Anantnag and Pulwama, which are going to polls in third phase on October 1.

"There were no lapses at all during the first phase," he said, adding arrangements of all kinds have been made to for the "free and fair" second round voting in Kashmir.

Posters, meanwhile, have started appearing urging people to boycott the polls and warning political workers to dissociate themselves from parties that are contesting the election.

Witnesses said posters of the Hizbul Mujahedin militant group had been posted up in mosques warning activists associated with parties taking part in the polls.

"The militants are attacking our cadres as they know people have

rejected them through the ballot," said senior NC leader Ali Mohammed Sagar, who is seeking re-election in the Khanyar constituency in Srinagar.

He said people have braved threats in the first phase and had come out to vote for "peace" in large numbers.

Turnout in five districts which voted on Monday was 47 percent, according to Indian officials.

Indian troops, meanwhile, Friday shot dead three Islamic militants trying to cross into Indian-administered Kashmir from Pakistan.

A police spokesman said the three had crossed the Line of Control (LoC), the de facto border between Indian- and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, in northwestern Baramulla district.

A defence ministry statement issued in New Delhi said the three had been killed in an exchange of fire with Indian troops on the LoC, claiming it was the seventh such incident in the past 20 days.

"Pakistan has stepped up infiltration with a view to disrupting the elections in (Indian Kashmir)," the statement said.

On Thursday, US ambassador to India Robert Blackwill said Islamic militants have been crossing from the Pakistani to the Indian zone of Kashmir in increasing numbers since New Delhi announced on August 2 dates for elections in Kashmir.

Jatiya Sangsad roundup

FROM PAGE 12

dictates of either side, mostly the Treasury Bench.

This prompted the aggrieved side to shout at the Chair apparently confusing him in deciding his next course of action.

In the process, there were lots of verbal salvos directed at both benches and at the Chair, at times. This often caused chaos, making it difficult for the Speaker to maintain order. Interestingly, the opposition preferred to stay back in the House most of the time making an exception to the usual way of protest -- a walkout.

The AL lawmakers walked out thrice, twice in protest at Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina's being denied the floor despite the fact that they had plenty of opportunities to do so.

In all the four sittings, each lasting for several hours and marked by unscheduled debates, it was the country's law and order that dominated the House proceedings.

In fact, discussions on rising crimes and alleged political persecution and corruption made the autumn session all the more siz-

zling. Unfortunately though, the parliament failed to resolve the crucial task of devising ways to fight crimes as the government-opposition debate turned out to be nothing but an exchange of accusations of committing crimes now and before.

Their actions and deliberations demonstrated that neither side was sincere about resolving the crisis. While the opposition appeared to have tried to highlight the crimes to have taken place since the coalition government came to power, the latter referred to the ones that took place during the AL rule.

Both sides confined their statements to blaming each other apparently to gain political mileage. Prime Minister and Leader of the House Khaleda Zia was absent from the House most of the time. She and Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury were the notable absentees during the scheduled discussion on the law and order.

Thanks to the Treasury Bench, the much-anticipated discussion turned into a midnight drama, starting late night and ending early in the morning. The Speaker following an

opposition request made late night of September 15 deferred the discussion until the evening of the following day.

But he kept the crucial debate for the second consecutive late night as he lingered the question-answer session and entertained freestyle deliberations by the Treasury Bench. And, the Chair allowed the one-hour debate to continue for nearly four hours until 2.25am.

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina and her colleagues in the AL left no stone unturned to paint a grim law and order scenario. And, for obvious reasons, the ruling BNP stalwarts did not acknowledge it.

Stormy protests defined both ends of the fourth session. It opened with a protest at a political statement pronounced against the AL during a prayer for those who died since the third session and rounded off with a chaos arising from an unprecedented event -- switching off of the opposition leader's microphone five times as she refused to finish her speech even after 63 minutes.

Ten years of WEIC Only 595 out of 8081 job seekers were fortunate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 595 women secured jobs through the assistance of the Women Employment Information Centre in the capital in the last 10 years although about 8,081 women had registered themselves as job seekers.

The centre, a component of 'Women Support Programme', which in turn is a development project under the Directorate of Women Affairs, registers 40 women job seekers on average a month.

It acts as a mediator between women job seekers and employers. It takes in the résumés of the women and then forwards them to different government as well as private organisations when contacted. Monitoring newspapers for employment information is also a part of the job.

"We try to assist women to get jobs as per their qualifications," said Shahan Shahin Dilluba, programme officer of the centre. "We even prepare them to face interviews," she added.

However, some job seekers expressed their frustration at not getting any response long after they registered with the centre. "I have

submitted my résumé to the centre five years back but have not yet been contacted for any job," complained Ferdousi Begum from Mohammadpur who is still jobless.

In defence, the officials concerned clarified that the centre can provide women only with information about the job but not with the job itself. "Women can get a job only when they fulfill the criteria required by the employers," said Md. Abdul Mannan, project director of the Women Support Programme. "We can only recommend them to prospective employers," he added.

However, there are women who could secure a job through this centre. "I got this job when I desperately needed it," said Sharmin Jahan who is working at the headquarters of the Local Government Engineering Department. "It is because of their help that I could reach here," she said in gratitude.

The centre offers some training courses to enhance the skills of the women. It arranges a two-month English course where 30 women can participate. It also offers a two-month long computer course for 12 women.

US forces come under attack in Afghanistan

AFP, Kabul

US special forces hunting al-Qaida and Taliban diehards in eastern Afghanistan came under rocket fire during an operation to recover a cache of weapons, a US military spokesman said Friday.

He said several rockets were fired, the nearest landing within 300 metres of the US troops, but there were no casualties.

"Two A-10 aircraft were mobilised following the attack in the Lwana area of eastern Afghanistan," the spokesman said, without giving further details.

Coalition troops operating in Afghanistan regularly come under attack, but there are seldom any severe casualties.

Two US special forces soldiers were injured on Sunday when their vehicle hit an explosive device during an operation in eastern Kunar province.

Neither was seriously injured and both have been returned to active duty.

Meanwhile, an anti-aircraft missile found on the outskirts of the Afghan capital was aimed along the flight path of civilian passenger jets using Kabul's airport, a government information official said Friday.

Afghan police acting on intelligence found the missile armed and ready to fire at Maidan Shahr in Wardak province west of Kabul, said Sidiq Ullah Tawhidi, deputy director of the information service.

"It was on the flight path of commercial jets, but the target may just as easily have been military planes belonging to coalition forces in Afghanistan," Tawhidi said.

"There had been a tip off about the missile so the whole area was cordoned off before the discovery was made."

Tawhidi said no one had been arrested and there was no indication who was involved. "Police tell us their investigations are ongoing, so far they do not have any suspects."

A spokesman for the International Security Assistance Force which patrols Kabul said he was unaware of the missile find.

"It is in an area which is outside our jurisdiction, but we will be looking into it," said Squadron Leader Terry Hay.

Commercial air traffic to and from Afghanistan has increased steadily in the months following the collapse of the hardline Taliban regime, under whom international aviation links were virtually severed.

Iraq attack

FROM PAGE 12

Daschle, D-S.D., agreed that there is absolutely no difference of opinion with regard to the threat that Saddam Hussein poses and the need to address that threat in a multitude of ways." He said Democrats wanted some changes in the wording of the proposal, but were confident a broad consensus could be reached.

Bush originally said he didn't need the approval of Congress to take military action against Iraq. But a show of support from Capitol Hill would be a boost to the president as he presses for a UN Security Council resolution authorising force and tries to put together an international coalition to force Iraq to disarm.

Police raids: AL

FROM PAGE 1

times, they said.

Describing one such raid, a senior AL leader said, "Plainclothes police came to my house and asked for my passport. I did not oblige. Rather, I asked them to explain under what authority they were asking for my passport. Everyone should assert one's legal position against such unlawful raid and search."

Protesting such raids, AL Presidium member Suranjit Sengupta said, "Democracy can not function without rule of law. The way the government is raiding houses of national leaders without any search warrant shows it (government) itself is breaking law. Use of state machinery to harass opponents out of vengeance or for party interest is anti-state activity".

He said if such things continue the only option for political parties will be to unite the people and overthrow the government.

Awami League (AL) President and Leader of Opposition Sheikh Hasina condemned police raid at residences of AL leaders in the city on Wednesday night.

The opposition leader in a statement on Thursday said police raided the residences of opposition leaders without any search or arrest warrant, which is illegal and a violation of the constitution.