

NON-GOVT PRIMARY SCHOOL
Nationalisation of teachers' service remains elusive

MAHUBA ZANNAT

The nationalisation of some 90,000 non-government primary school teachers' jobs seems to remain a far cry, despite being one of the electoral pledges of the ruling BNP.

The teachers of over 22,000 registered primary schools have been waging a movement for nationalisation of their jobs for 11 years, but their demand remains unheeded.

While the previous three budgets of the present government did not reflect the teachers' aspiration, they hope the government will meet their demand this time as the fourth budget is being placed today.

In its electoral manifesto in 2001, the BNP mentioned that "the Department of Primary and Mass Education will be reinforced and all the non-government primary schools will be converted into government schools."

Sources said the teachers were informed in April that the secretary of the primary and mass education ministry has sent a recommendation to the prime minister to consider

the nationalisation of teachers' service and other facilities.

But a senior official of the ministry said, "The annual budget has already been prepared and initial inputs have been furnished. Most probably there was nothing special in the recommendation."

Another official said that if the finance ministry gave its endorsement in writing for allocation of funds in this regard, the recommendation would reach the prime minister.

"We want the registered primary teachers to receive an increased salary and there is also a possibility of nationalising their service," he added.

Md Shamsul Alam, president of the Non-government Primary Teachers' Association, said, "Nationalising the service of the teachers was the electoral pledge of the prime minister. But now we see that it was just a political gimmick to win the support of teachers as there was no reflection of the electoral pledge even in the budget of 2004-05 fiscal year."

Beside 37,709 government primary schools in the country,

2,989 community schools and 22,836 registered primary schools are working to meet the millennium goal -- education for all by 2015.

But the registered primary schoolteachers have been struggling hard to make ends meet as the trained teachers receive only Tk 2,064 and the untrained Tk 1,858 as monthly salaries while the government primary schoolteachers receive between Tk 3,910 and 10,000, inclusive of various allowances.

Under the new pay scale, the government will provide 90 percent of the increased salary to the registered primary teachers, but they still do not know when they will start receiving the money.

"The primary and mass education ministry will need to take permission from the finance ministry as we are not government employees. We are appointed by the local managing committee and now we don't know when we will start receiving the salary as per the new pay scale," said Shamsul Alam.

Indo-Bangla irritants can be resolved thru' talks

FM tells Kolkata journalists

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday said that West Bengal could be a bridge between Bangladesh and India for improving contacts with Kolkata journalists.

"That is because people in West Bengal and Bangladesh belong to same culture, history, tradition and language," Morshed said when a Kolkata Press Club delegation paid a courtesy call on him at his office.

He said there is no major issue like Kashmir between Bangladesh and India. There are some irritants that can be resolved through discussions for the benefit of the two peoples.

He deplored that "when we make some progress in our relations, one small irritant would push us back. But we don't have any problem like Kashmir... We can overcome the small irritants that we have through discussions."

He said West Bengal journalists can play a significant role in improving the relations between the two next door neighbours. He also stressed that Bangladeshi journalists should maintain regular contacts with Kolkata journalists.

On the proposed river-linking project of India, West Bengal journalists said there are some opposition within India against the river-linking project, which is not feasible.

They said that the new Indian government might not go ahead with the project initiated by the past government as a "political stunt."

Kolkata Press Club President Raj Mithaulia of Hindustan Times and General Secretary Snehasis Sura of Dur Darshan led the six-member delegation. DG (South Asia) Fazlul Karim, DGP Zahurul Haque and National Press Club Vice-President Nurul Huda and General Secretary Sawkat Mahmud were present.



PHOTO: STAR

Parents of Sabequnnahar Sony, a Buet student, visit the memorial to her on the occasion of her third death anniversary yesterday. Sony was killed on the campus in a crossfire during a gunfight between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in 2002.

Take stern action against those creating anarchy on campus

Badruddoza asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, chairman of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB), yesterday demanded that the government take stern action against those disrupting academic atmosphere in the educational institutions.

"Thousands of students in the public universities are hostage to a few criminals, but the government remains indifferent," he said at a discussion.

The BDB and the Jatiya Oikya Mancha observed the 'Violence- and terrorism-free campus day' across the country yesterday to mark the third death anniversary of Sabequnnahar Sony, a student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, who was killed in a crossfire during a

gunfight between the two factions of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal.

The BDB chief warned that the country would face a grim future if crimes are not eliminated from the educational institutions.

"We cannot let a handful of criminals create a reign of terror on the campus in the name of student politics," he said, adding that everybody should come forward to drive out criminals from educational institutions.

Badruddoza also pointed out that it is time to think seriously whether teachers should involve themselves in mainstream politics directly.

Demanding more facilities for the teachers, the BDB chairman called for increasing budgetary allocation for the education sector to improve the quality of education.

Criticising the BNP-led coalition

government, he said the leaders and activists of the opposition parties are being tortured across the country.

Speaking at the meeting, Gono Forum General Secretary Saifuddin Ahmed Manik said, "If we want to make the educational institutions free from violence, we have to first make the country free from bad politics."

He said that a vested quarter is trying to deliberately make the educational institutions dysfunctional.

He also said that only unity among the students could drive out arms and black money from the campus.

BDB leader Firoz M Hasan, Oikya Mancha leader Mofizul Islam Khan Kamal and Sayedur Rahman also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Nari Pragati Sangha forms a human chain in front of the High Court yesterday demanding an increased allocation in the upcoming budget for women development.

'Stop building construction without professionals' help'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should formulate a guideline to refrain individuals from constructing buildings without the help of professional agencies, said Rehab President Dr Toufiq M Seraj yesterday.

"In the country, almost all the buildings are being constructed by individuals without proper knowledge in construction, which has to be stopped by the government's initiative," said the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) leader.

He was speaking at a view exchange meeting with the journalists at a city hotel yesterday on the success and economic significance of the recently organised Rehab Overseas Housing Fair in London and New York.

He claimed that the Rehab members construct buildings following appropriate guidelines, including proper soil test, but their projects represent less than one percent of the total construction in the country.

Referring to the recent garment factory collapse in Savar, Rehab president said, "It should be identified who constructed the building, who was the engineer, whether the labourers were trained up or not."

He said the recently organised two overseas housing fairs received bookings of flats, plots and commercial spaces worth Tk 165 crore. It also received commitment of purchase worth Tk 200 crore from the New York fair and Tk 80 crore from the one in London from more than 50,000 visitors, he added.

Being inspired by the success of the first ever overseas fair in New York last year, the developers, as part of their plan to organise such event every year, organised the fair to embark on new marketing missions.

In a bid to woo the non-resident Bangladeshis, Rehab is planning to organise such fairs in Japan, Dubai and other countries, where most of the expatriate Bangladeshis live, the Rehab leaders said.

Among others, Rehab General Secretary Engineer Mahmudul Hassan, Vice President SM Anwar Hossain, Joint Secretary Tanveerul Haque Probal and Organising Secretary Rabiul Haque attended the meeting.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling party cadres foiled the chehlum of Awami League leader Haji Mofizul Islam Duh Mia at Lalbagh in the city yesterday.

Duh Mia, joint convener of Meghna Upazila Awami League, was killed in a crossfire with Rab in May.

Duh Mia's wife Begum Kawsary Islam at a press conference told the journalists that JCD and Jubo Dal cadres ransacked the chehlum venue at Shayesta Khan Welfare Centre at Lalbagh in the city at the order of BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu. She demanded immediate arrest and trial of the cadres involved in the act.

"A gang of 20 to 25 BNP, JCD and Jubo Dal cadres led by ward commissioner Babul's brother Sharif, Jubo Dal leader Rafiq and Lalbagh Thana JCD President Sayeed Hasan Mintu damaged rice, pulse, spices and meat for the chehlum," she said.

Duh Mia's wife said local Jubo Dal also arranged a meeting at the same venue. Former Awami League lawmaker Haji Selim said lawmaker Pintu attended the programme as

chief guest.

The press conference was held at the Dhaka Reporters Unity's (DRU) auditorium.

Kawsary Islam said that she booked the community centre for the programme on June 1. "But lawmaker Pintu threatened from a Jubo Dal meeting in Lalbagh on June 6 of spoiling our programme at any cost and asked local JCD and Jubo Dal men to carry out his order," she added.

She demanded exemplary punishment to the perpetrators.

"We have decided to file a case with the court as the local police refused to register any case in this connection" she said.

"I filed a general diary with Lalbagh police station on June 5 for safety, but police did not take any step in this regard," she said.

Duh Mia's father Azimuddin, mother Alimunnesa, son Johnny, daughters Beauty and Seema were also present at the press conference.

BNP MP Pintu could not be reached over phone for his version despite several attempts yesterday.

'Resume power supply to Bihari camps'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the civil society in a joint statement yesterday expressed deep concerns over the authorities' decision to discontinue power supply to 66 Bihari Camps throughout the country.

They severely criticised the decision saying that such inhuman step greatly caused severe hardship to the people of the camps, including children, women and elderly.

Several death incidents have already taken place in the last few days in Geneva and Mirpur camps as the decision was taken when the country is experiencing an intolerable heat wave, the statement read.

The camp residents pay a certain amount for consumption of power but it never reaches to the state coffer, they added.

The signatories to the state-

ment included novelist Abdus Shakoor, poet Asad Chowdhury, litterateur Bashir Al Helal, Ittefaq editor in charge Rahat Khan, journalist Kamal Lohani, Prof Harun-ur-Rashid, Advocate Sultana F Nahar, journalist Afsan Chowdhury, lawyer Dr Shahdeen Malik and Prof Dr CR Abrar.

1,434 more held, 14 arms seized

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,434 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours as of 6:00am yesterday.

During the period, the law enforcers recovered four firearms, 14 other weapons, four bullets and four bombs, says a police headquarters press release.

BUDGET 2005-06

Non-govt teachers demand 100 pc govt salary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of the non-government schools and colleges yesterday said they would hold a national convention unless the government meet their 17-point demands, including nationalisation of their jobs.

Leaders of Bangladesh Shikshak Karmachary Oikya Parishad yesterday demanded allocation for 100 percent government salary as well as 30 percent dearness allowance in the upcoming budget.

They said these at a press conference at the Reporters Unity in the city.

Over 2000 teachers and employees of different non-government schools and colleges lost their jobs without any logical causes, some teachers and employees did not even receive their salaries for the last eight months, they alleged.

They also urged the government to stop all kinds of repression on them and take effective steps to meet their demands.

"We did not yet go for tougher agitation for the welfare of the students, but we will be left with no

other choices unless the government meet our demands this time," said Prof MA Awal Siddiki, president of Bangladesh Shikshak Samity while reading out the keynote paper.

Among others, Dr M Akhtaruzzaman, Pradip Chakrabarty, Prof Shahahahan Alam Saju, Abu Bakar Siddique, Prof AA Bari and Shamoli Nasrin Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

Missing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nurul Amin Chowdhury, an employee of the Oriental Bank, has been missing for the last one month.

Nurul Amin, 50, went out of his house on May 9 to go to his office at Motijheel in the city but did not return home since then, says a press release.

He hails from village Batia under Ramganj thana in Laxmipur.

Anybody knowing his whereabouts have been requested to contact Deen Mohammad, Kalampur, Kaliakoiri, Gazipur. Phone: 0176-409906 and 0189-660037.



PHOTO: STAR

Jubo Moitri stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding jobs for unemployed youths and reduction in budgetary allocation in defence sector.

WEATHER

T O D A Y

Moderately heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty to squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also expected at places during the period, Met Office said.

Mild heat wave may prevail over Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Noakhali, Rajshahi, Ishwardi and Tangail.

Highest temperature 39.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 24.0 degree Celsius at Rajshahi and Chittagong.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:46pm today and rises at 5:10am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.6	24.3	74	57
Chittagong	34.8	27.7	73	71
Rajshahi	37.0	24.0	63	62
Khulna	36.2	25.4	84	62
Barisal	35.8	26.6	81	65
Sylhet	33.3	24.3	96	76
Cox's Bazar	34.8	27.8	68	70

Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

Advocate Yar Ahmed, a senior lawyer of Bangladesh Supreme Court, died of old age complications at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the city on Tuesday at the age of 82.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and one daughter to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard at village Kochua of Feni after a namaz-e-janaza at Iqbal Road Jam-e-Mosque in Dhaka.

His quikhwari will be held at House No-12, Road No 32, Dhanmondi after Magrib prayers tomorrow.

A b u l K a l a m M d Samsuddin

Abul Kalam Md Samsuddin Azad, a freedom fighter and retired senior official of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, passed away due to cancer at Kushiya Sadar Hospital on June 2 at the age of 58, says a press release.

He is survived by his wife, one son and one daughter to mourn his death.

He was buried with state honour after namaz-e-janaza on the Kushiya poura graveyard premises after Juma prayers on June 3.

DHAKA

T O D A Y

Blue for Peace

Arally will be held as part of the 'Blue for Peace' programme demanding trial of the killers of former finance minister Shah ASM Kibria. Venue: In front of Malancha, House # 58, Road # 3/A, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:00pm.

Meeting

The national committee of Vested (Enemy) Property Act Resistance Movement will hold a meeting. Venue: Shaheed Asad Auditorium, 31/F Tophkana Road. Time: 6:00pm.

Premiere show

The premiere show of a video film on violence against children, produced by Ichchey, a children media house, will be held. Venue: Biam Auditorium, 63 New Eskaton. Time: 3:45PM.

Home Show-2005

The inaugural ceremony of Home Show-2005, an exclusive exhibition of furniture, electronics and home appliance, will be held. Venue: Sheraton Hotel. Time: 11:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights organises a seminar titled 'Downy is a social disease: It is duty of everybody to resist it', with Women and Children's Affairs Minister Begum Khurshid Jahan as chief guest. Venue: Cirdap Auditorium, Tophkana Road. Time: 10:30am.

Film show

Academy Film Society will screen two films titled 'Zeher' and 'Blade Trinity'. Venue: Academy Auditorium, 21/C Jigatola. Time: 3:30pm and 6:30pm.

Protest rally

DHAKA

T O M O R R O W

Rotary Greater Dhaka

Regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Greater Dhaka will be held. Members are requested to attend the meeting. Venue: Hotel Eastern Residence, House # 14, Road # 27, Block # J, Banani. Time: 6:00pm.

Drawing competition

Sylhet Division Development Students Action Council organises a drawing competition for children as part of its campaign to save Osmani Udyan. For participants aged 9 and under, the theme of the competition is 'Present condition of the Udyan', while for the children under the 9-12 age group, the theme is 'Portrait of Bangabir MAJ Osmani'. Venue: Osmani Udyan. Time: 4:00pm.