

'Implement tripartite MoU for peace in RMG sector'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Participants at a roundtable yesterday urged the government and owners of garment factories to implement immediately the tripartite memorandum of understanding (MoU) to restore peaceful atmosphere in garment sector.

(CPB)

In a keynote paper Economist Prof M M Akash said garment owners enjoy the lion's share of the profit from garment sector, but labourers are working there with minimum wages years after years leading to their resentment and subsequent agitation.

They become ironic when workers demand for their basic rights, they added.

Some garment factory owners however denied the allegation saying that they are always conscious about workers' rights.

They further said the so-called 'trade union' would create unstable situation in garment sectors and destroy small factory owners.

CPB President Monjurul Ahsan Khan, Columnist Sayed Abul Moksud, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra General Secretary Wazedul Islam Khan, Ain O Salish Kendra Executive Director Hamida Hossain, Mohammad Hatem of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association and Saptahik Ekota Executive Editor Shaheen Rahman also took part in the roundtable.

'Adopt protocol for smooth return of non-intruders to home country'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirteen fishermen, who returned home from India on Friday nine months after their trawler sank in the Bay of Bengal, have urged the Saarc countries to adopt a protocol to ensure that the non-intruders can return to their home country without any hassle.



STAR PHOTO

One of the 13 fishermen, who survived the capsizing of their fishing trawler in the Bay of Bengal, narrates the harrowing tales at a press conference organised by the South Asian Partnership (SAP) at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium yesterday.

"We stayed there with the generous support of local people and the Indian government," he added.

In December last year, the fishermen came across a group of human rights activists from the SAP who were on a tour of Bhadrak district.

"Since then, the SAP began to persuade the home and foreign ministries of Bangladesh to bring us back and on completion of long bilateral procedure, we finally reached our home," he added.

Fishermen Dulal Majhee, Md Milon, Md Julhash, Md Nantu Mia, Md Rustam Sardar, Md Siddiqur Rahman, Md Hiru, Md Alamgir, Md A Rab, A Manna, Md Afzal, Md Yunus and Md A Razzak were present at the press conference.

SAP Executive Director Syed Nurul Alam and Programme Officer Md. Nazimuddin Malik were also present on the occasion.

Formulate National Adolescent Policy Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for formulating a 'National Adolescent Policy' for comprehensive adolescent development covering 23 per cent of the population in the country.

address the vulnerability and potentials of the adolescents and we should find out a way to integrated development approach in this regard," said Sector Head of Women's Rights of ActionAid Bangladesh Khuku Chakrabarty.

Director of Youth Development Directorate Ramani Mohan Chakma, Dr Ahmadullah Mia of DAM, Idris Mia of Youth and Sports Ministry and Rina Parveen of the Establishment Ministry, also spoke with DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam in the chair.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy fall is also likely at one or two places, Met Office said, predicting that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 36.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 22.3 degree Celsius at Dhaka.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:48pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

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

Table with 4 columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Petrobangla to stay

FROM PAGE 1

early this month. But since he is 'politically blessed', he is attending office and using all official facilities.

The director (PSC) is due to retire on June 30. Establishment ministry sources said there are seven allegations of irregularity and corruption against them. "But there is pressure from the alternative centre of power of the government to appoint these two directors on contract," noted one source.

Late last year, Petrobangla formed a committee comprising the finance and PSC directors to look into audit objections involving \$300 million against Cairn for its Sangu field operation. Cairn had spent this sum without the approval of provisions of the contract. These objections were made in an audit review of Cairn's expenditure.

Reviewing the audit, the committee came up with a report suggesting that Petrobangla may give post-facto approval for an expenditure of \$ 250 million, while okaying audit objections involving \$46 million. Petrobangla then sent the report to its legal adviser for his opinion.

The legal adviser was surprised to see the recommendation and said the PSC does not give Petrobangla any scope for post-facto approval. Cairn has spent the money without approval from the Joint Review Committee, Joint Management Committee or Petrobangla, and therefore this sum is subject to audit objection. As a result, the report has now been shelved.

With an annual contribution of over Tk 2,700 crore to the national exchequer, Petrobangla is one of the top sources of funds for the government.

Petrobangla is now facing handling a number of challenges concerning two troubled mines, oil companies that tend to spend more 'recoverable' money at the slightest monitoring lapses and also holding the third round block bidding for oil and gas exploration by October this year.

Brac University Club Fair held

Brac University (BU) yesterday held Club Fair Summer 2006 in its indoor games room, says a press release.

A total of 22 clubs and forums took part in the fair inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury.

Tax cut on two-stroke 3-wheelers protested

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Citizens' Rights Movement (CRM), an initiative to save environment yesterday protested reduction of tax in importing two-stroke three wheelers.

Insisting on immediate realisation of the six-point charter of demands, CRM formed a human chain at 10 am and a rally in front of the national museum at Shahbag in the capital.

Chief Advisor to the Movement Syed Marghub Morshed, General Secretary Tushar Rehman, Advisor Ruhin Hossain Prince and MA Karim, Organising Secretary of Krishak League delivered speeches in the rally.

"Nobody" Syed Marghub Morshed said "follows the land conservation act - 1995, so land encroachers are filling up the rivers, canals and other water bodies randomly."

He stressed on bringing the land grabbers to book and stopping "filling up" the water bodies in order to consume water in dry seasons and check flood.

"The tax rate of two-stroke wheelers if necessary must be increased" he observed.

Besides, speakers demanded ban on hydraulic horns following the act of 1995, blackening of the parts over the headlight of all vehicles and saving the Buriganga from encroachers.

Nat'l Fan workers agitate for permanent jobs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Several hundred workers of National Fan agitated at the main entrance of the factory in Bscic industrial area at Tongi yesterday morning demanding that their jobs be made permanent.

The workers gathered near the main entrance of the factory at 7:45am and put up barricades, preventing officials and other workers from joining their work. As a result, all activities of the factory came to a halt.

Receiving information, Tongi Municipality Commissioners Ismail Hossain and Asadur Rahman Kiron and local labour leader status were also present on the occasion.

The commissioners then communicated with the National Fan authorities and they reached an agreement that the workers will return to their work today and a joint meeting of the workers and the owners will be held at 11:00am tomorrow to consider the demands.

The workers said they have been working in the factory for about 13 or 14 years, but the authorities did not make their jobs permanent.

Jobs of only 17 employees, out of over 900, are permanent, they added.

The workers also demanded fixing of minimum salary at Tk 3,000 and minimum attendance fee for new workers at Tk 60.

Train derails in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Rail communications on Dhaka-Mymensingh route remained snapped yesterday after two carriages of a Mymensingh-bound goods train from Kamlapur derailed at 5:00pm near Sreepur Station at Gazipur.

Eight trains on Dhaka-Mymensingh and Dhaka-Bahadurabad routes remained stranded on both the sides causing immense sufferings to several thousand commuters.

Assistant Station Master Wahiduzzaman said a relief train from Dhaka have already reached the spot and trying to restore rail communication. He, however, could not say cause of the derailment.

Railway sources said the rail communication could not be restored until 11:00pm.

Qulkhwani of Khurshid Jahan held

UNB, Dhaka

Qulkhwani of Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Huq was held at her Banani residence after Maghrib prayers yesterday for salvation of her departed soul.

Acting President Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, ministers, leaders and workers of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its front organisations, family members and admirers of Khurshid Jahan Huq attended the qulkhwani and took part in the munajat.

Earlier, a milad mahfil was held on the occasion.

Khurshid Jahan, eldest sister of Khaleda, passed away on June 14 and was buried at Faridpur graveyard in Dinajpur.



PHOTO: STAR

Wearing shrouds, members of a faction of Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers Association stage a hunger strike at Muktangan in the city yesterday to press their five-point demand, including nationalisation of jobs.

Budgetary allocation for haor areas demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists yesterday demanded special budgetary allocation for the development of haors (water bodies) and establishment of fish sanctuaries in order to protect biodiversity.

Such allocation and specific planning are also important for the development of agriculture, education and healthcare facilities and transport networks and the creation of employment opportunities in haor areas, they said at a press conference organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) and Nagorik Sanghati in the city.

The two organisations also announced that they will hold a citizens' rally at Shahbagh on June 23 to press home their demands.

Reading out a written statement, IT expert Mostafa Jabbar said special planning and budgetary allocation are needed for haor areas as the environment, biodiversity and living style of people in those areas are totally different from other parts of the country.

Development of haor areas through proper planning will eventually boost the national development, he said.

The health situation in haor areas is precarious, he said, adding

that there are not enough nurses and beds in hospitals.

Due to lack of proper planning and maintenance, aquatic resources have dwindled to a great extent, the environmentalists said and demanded cancellation of the system of leasing out haors.

They also called for special budgetary allocation for Monga-affected northern region.

Bapa General Secretary Mohidul Haque Khan, Nagorik Sanghati General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif, haor expert M Inamul Haque, former ambassador Abdur Rahim, former Wasa chief engineer Kazi Mohammad Shish and Mihir Biswas also spoke.

FOURTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY TODAY 'Publish writings of Neelima Ibrahim'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday underscored the need for compiling all the writings of Dr Neelima Ibrahim, late founding president of Bangladesh Mahila Samity, to spread her ideology among people.

They also emphasised that all the plays composed by Neelima, a pioneer of cultural movement in the country, be staged in the theatres.

Mahila Samity organised the discussion to mark the fourth death anniversary of Dr Neelima Ibrahim at the Neelima Ibrahim auditorium at New Bally Road in the city.

Addressing the function as a special guest, Editor of Anonnya, a fortnight magazine, Tasmina Hossain said the society is suffering from absence of competent leaderships like Begum Rokeya, Sufia Kamal and Neelima Ibrahim.

"All the writings of Neelima should be compiled to keep her alive among us for a long time," said Tasmina.

She assured that Anonnya would render all assistance in the compilation of Neelima's work.

General Secretary of the Samity, Advocate Sahara Khatun recalling her experience with Neelima said Neelima led the women community as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave her the responsibility after the liberation war.

"Nilima always thought how to make women self-reliant and therefore stressed the need for providing education and vocational training to them."

President of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation M Hamid said, Neelima Ibrahim was the shelter for the nation in the post-liberation period of the country.

Referring Neelima's contribu-



Publication of 'Khagrachhari 2001-05' slated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parbatya Chattagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJS) yesterday protested the publication of a booklet titled 'Khagrachhari 2001-2005' in which the deputy commissioner (DC) of Khagrachhari termed the Jumma people of Chittagong Hill Tracts as intruders, anti-Bangalees and uncivilised jungle people.

In a press release, the PCJS said the booklet published in April this year is aimed at tarnishing the image of the Jumma people by saying that they live on hunting.

The booklet also mentioned that the CHT peace accord is controversial and the PCJS is engaged in killing, abduction and extortion which is fabricated.

Demanding exemplary punishment of DC Mohammad Humayun Kabir, the PCJS said he must be withdrawn from Khagrachhari immediately.

It also demanded ban and confiscation of all the copies of the booklet that have already been sent to the ministers, lawmakers, government officials and donor agencies.

Termining the activities of the DC as 'politically motivated' the Janasanghati Samity said communal activities, attacks on the Jumma people and encroachment of Jumma land by the Bangalee settlers went up after his joining in Khagrachhari.

Our correspondent from Khagrachhari reports that Bangladesh Marma Sangathan Oikya Parishad demanded expunging of the comments printed in the booklet while Zila Nagorik Committee and United People's Democratic Front demanded the removal of the DC.

Community pry teachers begin fast-unto-death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Wearing shrouds, the community primary schoolteachers will begin fast-unto-death at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city today to press their five-point demand, including removal of salary discrimination, says a press release.

The leaders of Bangladesh Community Primary Teachers' Association at an emergency meeting yesterday urged the community primary teachers to make today's rally, demonstration in front of the prime minister's office and fast-unto-death programme a success.

Habibul Ahsan Bablu presided over the meeting.

The leaders at the meeting said they will continue their movement against wage discriminations of primary teachers in the country.

They said the community schoolteachers will also force the government to meet their demands.

The community schoolteachers began an indefinite strike on June 15 to press their demands.

Meanwhile, another faction of the community primary schoolteachers stage a hunger strike at Muktangan in the city yesterday to realise their five-point demand.

Two children killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least two children were killed in separate road accidents in Gaibandha and Narsingdi yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Gaibandha reports: A school going child was crushed under the wheel of a speedy truck at Kalitola on Bogra-Rangpur highway yesterday.

The dead was identified as Shima Akhter, 11, a student of Kalitola Govt Primary School. The accident occurred at 8:00am when a speedy truck hit her while she was crossing the road leaving her dead on the spot.

Angry people put up barricade on the highway disrupting vehicular movement for three hours following the accident. They also beat up the truck driver and helper.

They also damaged the truck. Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded for three hours.

Gobindaganj police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

BDNEWS from Narsingdi adds: A child was killed and another injured in a road accident near the Municipality gate of Narsingdi yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Rakib Hossain, 8, son of Rinku Mia of Dattapara area a student of Narsingdi Pilot High School and the injured Sapon, 9, son of Zakir Hossain of the same area.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at about 10:30am when Sapon and Rakib were returning home riding a bicycle. A sand-laden truck crushed them leaving Rakib dead on the spot.

Sapon was rushed to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital in a critical condition.

A case was filed with Narsingdi Sadar Police Station in this connection. Police seized the truck but the driver managed to flee.

Death anniversary

A CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Today is the first death anniversary of Gour Chandra Bala, former minister and an organiser of the War of Liberation.

He passed away on this day in 2005 at the age of 82.

On the occasion, various programmes have been arranged at his village Ullapara of Rajoir upazila and in the town today.

DHAKA TODAY Discussion: Citibank NA organises a discussion on 'Budget and the financial market'. Sharing meeting: Plan Bangladesh organises a sharing meeting on its Integrated Nutrition Project. Certificate giving ceremony: Russian Centre of Science and Culture will give away certificates among the participants on 'Russian-Bangladesh Tele-dermatology Training Programme on Arsenic Affected Patients'. Lecture: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh organises the FINAS Foundation Lecture 2006.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia offers munajat at the qulkhwani of Women and Children Affairs Minister Khurshid Jahan Huq at her Banani residence in the city yesterday.