

BFUJ, DUJ demand 300pc salary hike

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) expressed their deep concern at the dilatory by Information Ministry and Wage Board chairman in announcing the Sixth Wage Board Award for the newspapers and news agencies.

The unions also demanded a 300 percent increase over the wages awarded by the 1995 Wage Board.

BFUJ acting President Kartik Chatterji and Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan and DUJ President Altaf Mahmud and General Secretary Omar Faruk in a joint statement yesterday said Wage Board which should have been formed every five years was formed after 11 years due to lack of sincerity of the government.

They deplored that award has not yet been announced since the Wage board was formed one and a half years ago.

The leaders warned that no award, which would be incompatible to price hike of essentials and present standard of living, would be acceptable to the journalist community.

The two unions demanded immediate implementation of 40 percent DA in different newspapers and news agencies.

US Mission closed on Oct 2

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US Embassy offices, including The American Centre, Archer K Blood American Centre Library, and the student counselling service will be closed on October 2 on the occasion of Durga Puja, a Bangladeshi national holiday.



PHOTO: STAR

Campaign on Citizens' Right to Information forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday demanding immediate enactment of a law on right to information.

'Law and its proper enforcement needed to ensure right to know'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Not only a law but also its proper enforcement is a must for ensuring people's right to information, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

The people, who are the source of state power, should have access to information about government activities in order to institutionalise democracy, they said.

The Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) organised the seminar at LGED auditorium in the city on the occasion of International Right to Information Day.

Sayed Mahbubur Rahman, director general of National Institute of Mass Communication, underscored the need for raising mass awareness to ensure the right to know.

Without any struggle, the people's rights would not be established, he added.

Mizanur Rahman Shelley, chairman of Centre for Development Research, Bangladesh, said easy access to information helps strengthen democracy, reduce poverty and establish human rights.

The tendency to conceal information on various pretexts is a sign of autocracy, he added.

Access to information is a prerequisite for maintaining political, social, economic and cultural integrity, said Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of PPRC, who chaired the inaugural session.

The people need only primary information to get things done. Once they obtain their required information, they can do the rest by themselves, he added.

Ensuring the right to know is especially necessary for the poor who suffer a lot due to the lack of access to information, said Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

Emphasising the need for proper

presentation of information, she said newsmen should be careful while presenting any information to the public.

In the second session of the seminar, journalist Abu Naser Manju presented a paper on 'Access to information about disaster management and its limitation'.

In his paper on 'Media reporting

on land management', Shankar Lal Das said common people have virtually no access to information about their own lands. In most cases, they have to pay bribes to the officials concerned to know about the details of their landed property.

In his paper on 'Information gap', Mong Sing Pro said people in hilly areas of Chittagong do not enjoy the

basic constitutional rights. While the entire nation enjoys mobile phone facilities, the hills people are deprived of such services, he added.

Chairman of Unnayan Shamannay Dr Atiur Rahman moderated the second session.