



Awami League leader Motia Chowdhury talks to reporters after the police prevented her and other leaders from entering Sudha Sadan, the residence of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, at Dhanmondi in the city yesterday.

'Pay Tk 1662.50 as minimum wage to RMG workers'

Karmojibi Nari (KN) yesterday demanded that the factory owners should pay the garment workers Tk 1662.50 as minimum wage, says a KN statement.

Although the owners were told to implement the wage structure by June 30 at an intra-ministerial level meeting on May 10, a report of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) says that garment workers at 419 garment factories are not receiving Tk 1662.50 as minimum wage, the statement alleged.

In the statement, KN leaders said that garment workers have been playing a key role in the economic development of the country over the past two decades.

They added that it is highly imperative that the garment workers receive the minimum wage in accordance with the market price.

They called on the government and authorities concerned to ensure that the owners comply with their recent statement where they pledged to pay the minimum wage by July 15.

DU Day celebrated amid festivity

DU CORRESPONDENT

The banners read: 'We don't want dowry'; 'We want a Bangladesh free from corruption'; 'Say no to drugs'.

Carrying the banners, residents of Amar Ekushey Hall joined a colorful procession that paraded through the Dhaka University campus yesterday to celebrate the DU Day.

Several hundred resident and non-resident students in traditional dresses participated in the procession as the sound of drumbeats filled the air.

Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz led the procession from Teacher-Student Centre in the morning. Former VCs, distinguished personalities, teachers, students, alumni and others also took part in the procession, which was part of the daylong celebrations.

Festivity was in the air throughout the day as teachers, students and others marked the day with elaborate programmes. All the dormitories wore a festive look and special lunch was served at canteens and messes.

Former students and guardians also came to the campus to share the joy.

The Dhaka University Day was celebrated after a gap of 18 years. The last one was celebrated in 1989. This year, the Teacher-Student Centre organised the celebrations in cooperation with the DU Debating Society (DUDS) and DU Alumni Association (DUA) while DU Journalists' Association (DUJA) and Baishakhi Private Satellite TV Channel were the media partners.

The daylong programmes began

with the procession. Later, a discussion was held at the TSC with the participation of former minister Dr Osman Farrug, former VCs Prof Moniruzzaman Miah, Prof Emaz Uddin, Prof Shahid Uddin Ahmed and Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, deans of faculties, chairmen and directors of departments and institutions and provosts. Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam Azad presided over the session.

Speaking at the discussion, Prof SMA Faiz said the people of the country are looking towards the students of the university with the hope that they would build a developed and prosperous Bangladesh.

"You, the students, will have to fulfil their dreams after preparing yourselves for this task by studying hard. You will have to prepare yourselves to meet the challenges of globalisation so that the 'Oxford of the East' can be proud of you all," he said.

He also stressed the need to set up a second campus of the university somewhere in the capital, saying that the present campus cannot accommodate all necessary infrastructure.

A debate competition was also held at the TSC, organised by the DUDS.

Two friendly soccer matches were also held. DU VC Eleven took on the DUAA President Eleven in the first match while Former Students' Eleven played against the Present Students' Eleven.

A cultural programme and concert were also held at the TSC in the evening.

Bring reforms to local govt to strengthen democracy

Speakers urge caretaker govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The caretaker government can play a significant role in strengthening the local government, which would help improve the quality of democracy in the country, speakers at a view exchange meeting said yesterday.

"In the last 15 years, the democratic rulers have never directly ruled out the importance of the local government, but secretly acted against the betterment of the institution," said Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to the caretaker government.

The Local Government Policy Advocacy Forum organised the meeting titled 'Ideas to reform local government system' at the National Press Club in the city.

This is high time that the caretaker government brought about radical reforms to strengthen democracy, Dr Akbar Ali Khan said.

He also suggested that the government should consider holding the parliamentary elections and the local government elections simultaneously.

"Due to dillydally tactics of the democratic governments, local government elections could not be held on time and eventually they used the body as their tool. It is better to hold the two elections simultaneously," he observed.

He also called for a ban on lawmakers' interference in the activities of the local government bodies.

Stressing the need to form a strong local government commission, Dr Akbar Ali Khan said such a commission can strike a balance whenever there occurs any dispute between the government order and the constitutional rights of the local government bodies.

Prof Dilara Chowdhury of the department of government and politics, Jahangirnagar University, said the paternalistic attitude of the central government has gradually made the local government ineffective. "The local government has forgotten its duty to govern.... the paternalistic attitude has made it crippled," she said.

Advocate Ajmatullah, chairman of Tongi municipality and president of Bangladesh Municipality

Association, said the governments through different ordinances curbed the rights of the local government.

Delivering the keynote speech, Prof Dr Salahuddin Aminuzzaman called for making a provision so that

the local government can take loans from financial institutions.

He also stressed the need to encourage the non-government initiatives for capacity building of the people.

Dr Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, Advocate Rokhsana Khondokar, executive director of Khan foundation, and chairmen and members of Union Parishads and municipalities also took part in the meeting.



Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, gives away prizes to the winners of The Daily Star-Viqrannisa Noon Debating Club 3rd Children's, 6th Inter-School and 6th Inter-Club Debate Championship 2007 at the prize giving ceremony at Viqrannisa Noon School and College auditorium in the city yesterday. The Daily Star and Viqrannisa Noon Debating Club jointly organised the competition.

Milk, Ice-cream, Beverage Festival July 5

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first ever Milk, Ice-cream and Beverage Festival will begin in the city on July 5.

The three-day festival will be held on the seventh level of Bashundhara City Shopping Mall and will remain open from 10:00am to 7:00pm daily as of July 7. The entry fee is Tk 10.

The festival will provide an opportunity for consumers to have proper knowledge about the nutrition value of milk, ice-cream and beverage, and at the same time, it will help create new markets like developed countries, said the organisers at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

They said lack of adequate knowledge undermines the food value of milk, ice-cream and beverage.

The media partners of the festival are ATN Bangla, Radio Today and Bangladesh Today.

Dhaka Samity election July 27

The election of the 50-member executive body of Dhaka Mahanagar Samity (Dhaka Samity) will be held on July 27, says a press release.

Submission deadline of nomination is 9:00pm, July 15. The Samity office will remain open from 5:00pm to 9:00pm due to the election activities.