

Re-evaluate non-merit quota in BCS exams

Experts tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fifty-five percent of non-merit quota in Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) will have to be re-evaluated, said the experts at a roundtable yesterday.

They also said that the non-merit quota will have to be curtailed gradually and the merit quota should be increased so that the competent candidates can enter the civil service.

The roundtable titled 'Rationalising quota in BCS examination: Rights of the people with disabilities' was organised jointly by the Shaptahik 2000 and Action on Disability at the seminar room of The Daily Star in the city.

Speaking as chief guest, Chairman of the Public Service Commission (PSC) Dr Saadat Hussain termed the quota system as a very complicated national issue which needs more discussions with people from all strata of life.

"Quota system was introduced by an executive order in 1972 but the importance of the system was not explained in that order. Quota system should not be perpetuated, time to time it should be revised," he added.

Dr Saadat said a comprehensive study on quota system is now going on and the report will be completed within a week.

"Then we will discuss it with different stakeholders," he added. "The quota system was reviewed three times, but no government interfered with the 30 percent quota for the freedom fighters and their offspring because it was a very sensitive issue," said the PSC chairman.

Moderating the roundtable, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad said every quota should be revised and kept time bound.

"Politicisation of PSC was the



Prof Muzaffer Ahmad addresses a roundtable at the seminar room of The Daily Star in the city yesterday. On his left are Dr Saadat Hussain and Prof Emajuddin Ahmed and on his right is Musharaf Hossain.

main obstacle in last couple of years. It now needs reforms. The government should introduce an acceptable system in the appointment of all constitutional posts like the PSC chairman and members," he added.

Former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed said 30 percent quota for freedom fighters should be revised because many meritorious candidates are deprived of their rights.

General Secretary of Dhaka University Teachers' Association Prof Anwar Hossain said the quota for the freedom fighters should be remained as it is because Bangladesh is the contribution of the freedom fighters.

Former education minister Dr Osman Farruk said quota should be kept for a certain period.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Hafiz Uddin Khan said all kinds of quota should be curtailed gradually while merit quota should be increased.

Awami League (AL) presidium member Motia Chowdhury said quota for the freedom fighters and women cannot be curtailed for the greater interest of the country.

"There is no compromise with the quota for freedom fighters and women. Massive protest will come if these two quotas are abolished or reduced," she added.

Prof Syed Anwar Husain of Dhaka University said PSC quota system should be reformed considering time and circumstances.

ADD Country Director Musharaf Hossain demanded of the government to introduce five percent quota for the people with

disability.

Dr Zaidi Sattar, vice-chancellor of The Millennium University, presented a keynote paper on the quota system in the civil service.

Acting editor of the Shaptahik 2000 Mainul Ahsan Saber, former member of PSC Khandaker Bazlul Haq, Prof Sarwar Zahan of Buet and BCS Fair Movement President Abu Tareque also spoke.

Mentionable, 45 percent of the public servants are selected on merit. Of the remaining 55 percent posts, 30 percent are reserved for freedom fighters or their offspring, 10 percent for women, 10 percent for district quota and five percent for indigenous people.

Prices of essentials soar in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Prices of essentials have started soaring high again in Rajshahi city causing immense suffering to the common people.

Prices of rice marked an increase by Tk 1 per kg while sugar rose by Tk 5 per kg and edible oil by Tk 5 to 7 per kg within a week while prices of other essentials that had earlier seen hikes remained unchanged.

Wholesale rice traders yesterday said they were selling 84-kg sacks at Tk 50-100 higher than last week's prices.

Guti Swarna is being sold at Tk 2350 (84-kg-sack), BR-28 at Tk 2900 and Parijat at Tk 2600.

Retail rice sellers blamed the wholesale traders, saying they hiked the prices following problems over rice import from India.

Sugar was being sold Tk 34 while a week ago the price was Tk 29 per kg.

Traders also complained that the supply has decreased.

Besides, Soybean was selling at Tk 104-108 per litre against Tk 100-102 last week and palm oil at Tk 98-100 against Tk 92.

More donations for cancer hospital

Ahsania Mission Cancer Hospital (AMCH) has received over Tk 72.32 lakh as donations between December 2007 and January 2008, says a press release.

The donors are Maissa Karim Foundation (Tk 20 lakh), Hena Ahmed (Tk 15 lakh), Foreign Office Wives' Association and Intezar Ahmed (Tk 10 lakh each), Dr Saleha Khatun and Md Ali Reza (Tk 5 lakh), Syed Kamaluddin Haider and his wife Rehana Begum (Tk 5 lakh each), Engr Monwar Ahmed and Shahana Begum (Tk 50000 each), Nayeema Yousuf (Tk 45000), Dr Taher Abu Saif (Tk 33850), Farjia Rahman (Tk 20000), MA Mamun, in the name of his late father, (Tk 15000), Sathirath-1974 of Dhaka University (Tk 8000), an anonymous person (Tk 5000), Motiur Rahman (Tk 2500), Saiful Alam (Tk 2000) and Farida Yasmin, Sabina Yasmin, Happy, Jotsna and Sumaiya together donated Tk 900.

The construction work of the 500-bed hospital at Uttara in the city is going on in full swing. So far construction work of the 10th floor has been completed, including two basements.

Romania to recruit more Bangladeshi RMG workers

BSS, Dhaka

Romania will recruit more Bangladeshi workers for its garment and textile industries.

Two executives, Antonello Gamba and Christina Curpanaru, of the Ware Company of Romania said this when they called on Foreign Affairs, and Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury at his office yesterday.

After the meeting Iftekhar told reporters that after China, Bangladesh is the only country in Asia, which is exporting workers to Romania. He said the export of

Bangladesh workers to Romania is very significant.

Adviser said Romania as a manpower importing market will help Bangladesh to find manpower markets in the East European countries. He said over 100 skilled garment workers have already left for Romania. Another 1,000 will get jobs there soon, he said.

Responding to questions after the meeting, Christina Curpanaru said Bangladeshi workers would get salaries as per pay structures of Romania.

Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Secretary Abdul Matin Chowdhury

and Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) Director General Abdul Malek were present during the meeting.

Yakub new envoy to Canada

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to appoint AM Yakub Ali, currently serving as the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Kenya, as the country's next High Commissioner to Canada.



Artists of Kendriya Khelaghar perform at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. Sammlita Sangskritik Jote organised the function on the occasion of Amar Ekushey.



Dr Quazi Kamruzzaman speaks at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity in the city yesterday. On his right is Engineer Inamul Haque and on his left is Abul Hasan Rubel.

Formulate nat'l policy to control avian influenza

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday demanded of the government to formulate a national policy and take emergency steps to control avian influenza (AI).

They also called for strengthening the awareness campaign and a close coordination of government, private and citizen's initiative to check the spread of AI.

They said the owners of AI-affected poultry farms should be provided with compensation at the earliest possible time so that they don't tend to hide the outbreak of the disease in their farms.

The press conference was organised by Citizen's Committee to Check Bird Flu in Bangladesh at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium.

While presenting a keynote paper, Dr Quazi Kamruzzaman, convener of the committee, said there should be strict surveillance to monitor whether or not bio-security measures have been taken up in the farms, markets and other places.

"All fowls and ducks should be vaccinated immediately and steps to be taken to stop selling of sick birds in the markets," he said, adding that regular market monitoring should go on so that the sick birds cannot enter the market by any

means.

The speakers said the bird flu virus is spreading so fast in the country that the steps taken by the government to prevent the AI cannot cope with it.

Bird Flu Specialist and Technical Adviser of Bangladesh Poultry Industries Association MM Khan

said although the risk of human bird flu infection is small, the vulnerable group can be provided with preventive vaccines like Tamiflu.

Central members of the Committee Prof Ahmed Kamal, Engineer Inamul Haque and Abul Hasan Rubel also spoke on the occasion.

Bangladeshis in Saudi Arabia asked to abide by local laws

UNB, Dhaka

A spokesman of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment yesterday urged Bangladeshi workers working in Saudi Arabia to abide by Saudi laws, rules and regulations.

The appeal was made responding to the reported remarks by Saudi officials that their authorities will ensure strict compliance by foreign workers to Saudi law.

The spokesman said Saudi officials have noted that there are nine million foreign workers in a

country of 26 million, hinting that Saudis will be careful as to employments for foreigners in the future.

"We hope the need for Bangladeshi workers will continue, particularly if we can upgrade their capabilities. Meantime, it will be extremely important for all concerned to be seen to be law-abiding," the spokesman added.

Secretary Abdul Matin Chowdhury expressed the hope that all concerned will pay heed to this appeal.

PRIYANKA MURDER Main accused held in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

Police arrested the main accused of sensational Priyanka murder case from Baliadanga village in Fakirhat upazila yesterday morning.

Acting on a tip-off, police raided the village in the morning and arrested Priyanka's maternal uncle Zahidul Huq Rintu, 28, from the house of one Shahjahan.

He was, later, handed over to CID police in Dhaka.

Sabiha Nowrin Priyanka was strangled in her house at Moghbazar in the capital on July 19 last year.

After the killing, Priyanka's father Sultan Farooq filed a case with Ramna police. Rintu was the principal accused in the case.

'Introduce disciplines on fine arts, liberal arts at varsities'

UNB, Dhaka

Education and Commerce Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman has called for introducing disciplines on Fine Arts, Sculpture and Liberal Arts in the newly established universities.

The adviser stressed the need for holding workshop, seminar and symposium on higher education alongside art workshops at the University Grants Commission (UGC) and educational institutions.

Dr Zillur made the remarks at the concluding ceremony of a daylong art workshop at the University Grants Commission (UGC) on Saturday.

The UGC, for the first time since its inception in 1973, organised the workshop in collaboration with the Bengal Foundation marking the International Mother Language Day and Martyred Day.

More than 40 artists including Prof Rafikunnabi, Prof Shishir Kumar Bhattacharya, Dr Abu Taher, Prof Hashem Khan and Shamarjit Ray Chowdhury took part in the workshop. A total of 37 paintings were drawn by prominent artists and handed over to the UGC.

The adviser distributed certificates among the participants.

Prof. Murtoza Bashir inaugurated the workshop while Prof. Abdus Sakur Shah and Prof. Hamiduzzaman jointly coordinated it with UGC Chairman Prof. Nazrul Islam in the chair.

একমাত্র হোলসিম দিয়ে তৈরী জাতির আরো একটি গর্ব মুক্তারপুর সেতু

সুইজারল্যান্ড ভিত্তিক বিশ্ব জুড়ে সমাদৃত সিমেন্ট

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