

Curry house staff protest at new UK work rules

THE GUARDIAN, undated

Thousands of curry restaurant workers gathered in London on Sunday to demand that the government relaxes new immigration rules to avert a financial catastrophe caused by crippling staff shortages in the £3.5bn industry.

Members of the Bangladeshi community, who were joined by groups from Chinese, Indian, Pakistani and Turkish catering businesses at the protest in Trafalgar Square, also complained that a spate of "heavy-handed" raids looking for illegal workers at restaurants was damaging business.

Under the new points-based immigration system for workers outside the EU which came into force at the end of February, chefs need to speak English and have academic qualifications to work and live in the UK.

The Bangladesh Caterers Association says this has left its

members unable to recruit trained Bangladeshi cooks and critically short of staff, threatening the future of the industry.

It estimates there are 27,500 vacancies in Bangladeshi-run restaurants.

As demonstrators carrying placards demanding "Save Currydoms" surrounded the base of Nelson's Column, Muzammil Ali, who has run the Jewel in the Crown curry house in Swindon for 21 years, said he lacked skilled and unskilled workers. "This law will make staff shortages a very big problem for us," he said.

"The children who have been born and brought up here don't want to come into the catering industry where they have to work almost seven days a week and at weekends. They have education and qualifications and they can earn more money elsewhere."

Demonstrators also called for an end to Border and Immigration Agency raids.

Shabul Muhth said his two restaurants in Kent had been raided at around 6.30pm on Friday and Saturday nights, the peak time for his business. Around 18 uniformed officers arrived on each occasion and closed the restaurant, he said.

Customers who were halfway through their meals had to leave without paying their bills. Staff members then had to wait for two to three hours while they searched the premises, checked documentation and fingerprinted some members, he said.

"They didn't find anything but it spoils business for those nights." No action was taken against the restaurant, he added. Muhth said he would not mind if raids were conducted on quiet nights, such as Sundays and Mondays, and officers came in plain clothes and "spoke nicely" to staff. "Come in like a gentleman," he said. "We're not drug dealing, we're selling curry."



Vehicles get stuck in a gridlock on the road in front of Wills Little Flower School at Kakrail in the city everyday due to haphazard car parking by the guardians.

'MARKS ALL-ROUNDER' Contest final round today

CU CORRESPONDENT

The final round of the cultural contest "Marks All-Rounder" will be held today at 6.30pm at the auditorium of Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong.

Drishy Chittagong, an educational and cultural organisation of the port city, organised the competition.

24 Infantry Division GOC Maj Gen Mohammad Abdul Mubin will attend the programme as the chief guest while Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Hossain Jamil will attend as the special guest.

Artist Mustafa Monwar, media personality Dr Abdun Nur Tushar and Lucky Imam would adjudge the contestants while popular singer Samina Chowdhury would perform at the ceremony.

A total of 15,000 students from 454 schools of the port city took part in the competitions. Of them, nine would compete in the final round.

Rally to mark Global Action Week

Bangladesh National Commission for Unesco and Ministry of Education in association with Unesco, Dhaka organised a rally yesterday marking the Global Action Week to achieve education for all, says a press release.

The colorful rally started from Bambais Bhaban at Palashi-Nilkhet and ended at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Officials of different ministries, departments, civil society representatives, journalists, teachers and representatives from different diplomatic missions, and students of schools and Madrasahs took part in the rally.

University Grand Commission Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam and Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Education Mohammad Shafiqullah jointly led the rally.

Climate projects prevented 135m tonnes of Co2

AFP, oslo

Projects to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in developing countries have prevented 135 million tonnes of CO2 emissions from entering Earth's atmosphere so far, the Norwegian classification group Det Norske Veritas (DNV) said yesterday.

The projects, known as Clean Development Mechanisms (CDMs) and defined in the Kyoto Protocol, allow industrialised countries and their companies to finance projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gases in developing countries.

In return the investors are credited with emission rights.

The 1,000th project has just been certified in India, said Det Norske Veritas, one of the world's leading classification agencies. "CDM projects have so far

generated more than 135 million certified emission reductions (CERs, each unit of which is equivalent to one tonne of CO2)," it said.

"The mechanism is currently anticipated to generate more than 2.7 billion CERs in the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period" that runs from 2008 to 2012, it added.

By comparison, Norway emitted 53.7 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent last year.

CDM projects, which have primarily benefitted China and India so far, are not free from controversy.

Critics argue that some dam projects in China have been officially certified as CDMs even though they were partially constructed before being given the certification -- suggesting they would actually be used outside the CDM framework.



Brac officials and executive directors of five national NGOs sign an agreement at Brac Centre on Sunday.

Free ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT CAMP
at LABAID SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL

Labaid Specialized Hospital is going to organize a free Orthopaedic Treatment Camp on 23 and 24 April 2008. Eminent Hip & Knee Replacement specialist & renowned orthopaedic surgeon Dr. Graham Forward from Australia and Professor Dr. Md. Amjad Hossain of Labaid Specialized Hospital shall jointly provide free orthopaedic care to patients suffering from orthopaedic problem.

Venue: Labaid Specialized Hospital
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For registration please contact:

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Brac support to five NGOs

Brac has taken up a special multi-donor funded initiative to tackle the extreme poverty in Bangladesh called 'Challenging the frontiers of poverty reduction-Targeting ultra poor', says a press release.

Brac has made a commitment to fund Tk 17 lakh to five national NGOs for two years to replicate the programme.

An agreement was signed on Sunday between Brac Deputy Executive Director Aminul Alam and the executive directors of Ashroy Foundation, Institute of Development Affairs (IDEA), Institute of Integrated Rural Development (IIRD), Srijan Mahila Sangstha (SMS), and Pally Bikash Kendra (PBK) in this connection at Brac centre in the city.

Brac Executive Director Mahabub Hussain, Director of Micro Finance Shabbir Ahmed Chowdhury, and Director of Public Affairs and Communications Anwarul Haq were present at the signing ceremony.

Girl drowns

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A minor girl was drowned in the river Padma near Baghra under Srinagar upazila in Munshiganj when she went to take bath in the river on Sunday.

She was identified as Elora, 11, daughter of Ibrahim Hawlader of Mugdapara in Dhaka. She is a student of Manga Haidar Ali High School of Mugdapara. She went to her village home in Srinagar upazila on Saturday.

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