

KORAIL SLUM EVICTION HC issues rule on govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) has issued a rule upon the government to explain why its notice asking the dwellers of Korail slum at Gulshan area in the city to shift their possessions from the slum area should not be declared illegal.

Following a writ petition filed as public interest litigation (PIL) by Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), a human rights organisation, on December 17, the HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui also asked the government to maintain status quo regarding eviction of the slum until January 5.

On November 16, the public works department of the government issued a notice asking the dwellers of Korail slum, where more than one lakh people reside, to move their belongings from the slum.

The notice also said if those are not shifted all the establishments of the area would be removed by bulldozing.

The ASK filed the writ petition challenging the legality of the notice.

Advocate Nizamul Huq Nasim appeared for the petitioner.

Freight train derails in B'baria

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Three compartments of a freight train derailed at Akhaura Railway Junction on Dhaka-Chittagong section yesterday afternoon, leaving its guard Fazlul Huq seriously injured.

Railway sources said the bogies of the goods-laden train skidded off the track at the station yard of the junction at about 3:30pm.

Train movement on Dhaka-Chittagong and Sylhet-Chittagong routes remained suspended till 6:30pm due to derailment.

As a result, a number of passenger trains, including inter-city Subarna Express, Mohanagar Godhuli and Upakul Express, remained stranded on different stations.



Children perform a dance at a pre-Christmas festival on the Batamali Homes Girls' High School premises at Tejgaon in the city yesterday. Dhaka Mahanagar Anchalik Palakiya Parishad organised the event.

Change mindset to stop violence against women

Speakers urge all at workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a workshop yesterday underscored the need to change the attitude towards women in order to stop violence against them.

They also called for implementing the existing laws and raising awareness among the people to curb repression on women.

With a view to creating awareness among college and university students, the department of women affairs organised the workshop on 'Gender, reproductive health and violence against women' at its auditorium in the city.

Speaking as the chief guest, Women and Children Affairs Secretary Rokeya Sultana said enacting law is not enough to eliminate discrimination against women. "First of all, we will have to change our mindset for development of women."

She said the government is going to launch a number of programmes, including community-based policing system to tackle violence against women.

The programmes include a separate project for girl children to ensure their safety and security, one-stop crisis centre in six medical colleges in the country.

Director General of Women Affairs Directorate Ikram Ahmed and Director Mokhesur Rahman took part in the programme which was moderated by Additional Director of Women Affairs

Directorate Nurul Kabir Siddiqui.

Prof Sadeka Halim of Dhaka University said government officials, including judicial members, should be educated about the state obligations to secure women's rights in the UN conventions.

She said law enforcement agencies, especially police, should be sensitised and provided with training to change their attitude towards women, and failure to deal with cases of violence properly be considered a misconduct and a negative point in time of promotion.

"The government should introduce as well as enforce sexual harassment laws or code of conduct to protect women from harassment at all workplaces, private sector must have similar code of conduct and expand available services like shelter centre, one-stop crisis centre and rehabilitation centre," she added.

She said the most important thing is the rethinking of the male role. Men must re-evaluate their role in the family as well as in the society. They may be organised to examine cultural and social assumptions on masculinity and develop strategies to help men curb violent behaviour.

Dr Yasmin Jahan, senior scientific officer of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research, said the government should take more initiatives to launch awareness programmes for girls and primary education should be mandatory for them.

Teachers call off hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Government Secondary Assistant Teachers' Association yesterday called off its hunger strike following a request from two eminent academicians, says a press release.

Dhaka University Teacher's Association (Duta) General Secretary Prof Dr Anwar Hossain and Prof Dr Mohammad Zafar Iqbal requested the teachers to postpone the strike for the sake of election-related activities.

Earlier, convenor of the association Md Mofazzel Hossain said they would announce a tougher programme if their demand is not fulfilled.

The association had been observing an indefinite hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar from December 17 demanding first class gazetted official status for assistant teachers.

'Next govt must give priority to edn sector'

DU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday demanded that the next government give utmost priority to the education sector, saying that development of this sector is a must for development of other sectors.

They also called for improving the quality of primary and secondary level education.

The National Front of Teachers and Employees organised the roundtable to evaluate issues such as human resources development, quality

of education and dignity of teachers in the election manifestos of Awami League and BNP.

The speakers hailed the election manifesto of AL, saying that the party has pledged to make education sector free from political interference and establish a permanent commission for high salary scale for the teachers.

They also criticised BNP for not mentioning specific plans for the development of the education sector in its election manifesto.

They also observed that a specific plan is a must for the long-term development in the education sector.

Prof AAMS Arefin Siddiqui, Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Vice-president of Bangladesh Economic Association Dr Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Prof Akhtaruzzaman, Dr Wahiduzzaman, Prof SM Nazrul Islam and Prof Siraj Uddin Ahmed spoke at the roundtable moderated by Principal Kazi Faruq, chief coordinator of the Front.

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Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote takes out a procession in the city yesterday with a call to reject war criminals and anti-liberation forces in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

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Mongla port workers demand payment of arrears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Over 3000 retrenched dock workers of Mongla Port yesterday demanded payment of salary arrears and retirement benefits before the next parliamentary elections.

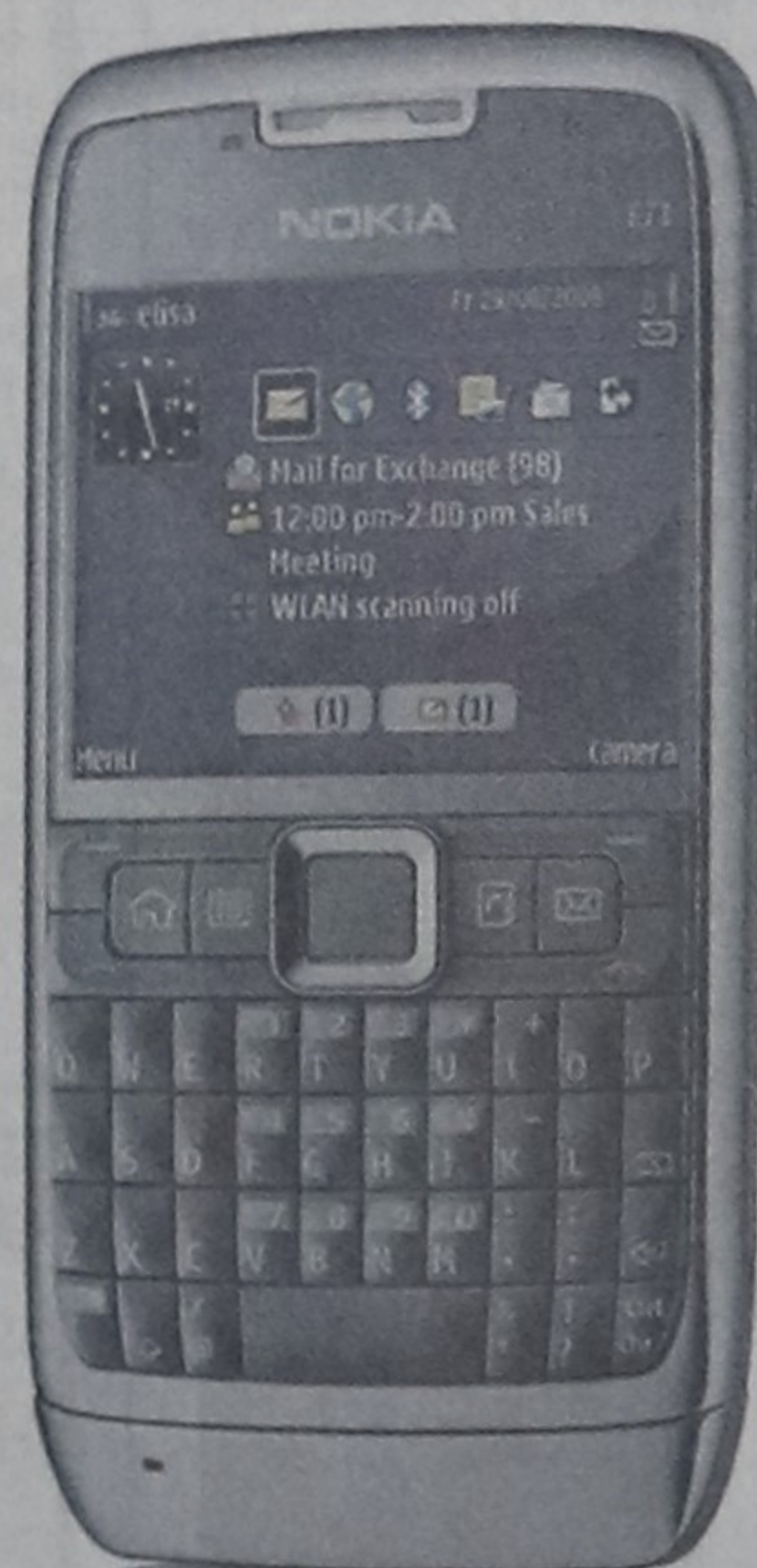
They placed the demand at a rally in the port area under the banner of Mongla Samik Sangha with its Convener Rashid Talukder in the chair.

Labour leaders at the programme threatened to launch a tough agitation to paralyse the port operations, if necessary if the workers' demand is not met.

The workers were retrenched due to the introduction of berth operating system on August 1 this year.

Under the new system, stevedores' association got the authority to appoint dockers for gang booking. Berth operating system was introduced abolishing Mongla dock workers management board which was run under political influence.

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