



Students of Eden College stage a demonstration in front of the college yesterday protesting alleged sexual harassment of a student by a doctor. PHOTO: STAR

40pc budgetary allocation for farm workers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture and rural workers yesterday placed an eight-point demand including allocation of 40 percent of the upcoming budget for creating employment opportunity for the labourers.

The leaders of the Bangladesh Khet Majur Samity (BKMS) raised the demands at a press conference in the city, says a press release.

The other demands included introduction of a health card for the rural workers and modernisation of upazila health complexes and local hospitals; giving loans to them on single digit interest; sending efficient rural workers abroad after proper vocational trainings and reintroduction of Employment Guarantee Scheme for the rural youths.

Khaleda warns against allowing Indian soldiers to guard high commission

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday cautioned that the country's sovereignty would be at stake if the government allows Indian soldiers to guard its High Commission (HC) in Dhaka.

Khaleda was speaking at her Gulshan office while giving financial support to family members of her party men who were either killed or injured in recent attacks allegedly by Awami League activists.

She said since the country's independence, no foreign missions in Dhaka had ever proposed to bring their own security personnel for guarding their missions.

Khaleda also opposed a proposal to bring Sky Marshal Security for Dhaka airport, saying that it would create further disaster for the country.

"Moves are now on to push the country towards the situation like Afghanistan and Iraq," she said.

Referring to the action programmes she

announced at the grand rally in Dhaka on May 19, Khaleda said the government has become perturbed at the agitation programme. She warned that tougher action programme would be announced if her demands are not met.

She said the harassment and torture unleashed on the opposition reflects that the government has lost confidence in the people. Even the police stations do not receive cases from the BNP workers injured by AL activists, she said, adding that BCL activists are resorting to criminal activities everyday throughout the country.

Khaleda said people are anxiously looking at BNP. BNP will certainly win if general elections are held now. She said the AL is enjoying the benefit of the development works done by the BNP government.

Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar MP, Lt Gen (Retd) Mahbubur Rahman, Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, Mizanur Rahman Minu and Harun-or Rashid were present at the function.

HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Tk 75cr grant for research

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam yesterday said up to Tk 75 crore might be allocated for research activities in universities under the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP).

This will mark a big leap from the usual grants allocation of Tk 3 crore, and encourage more innovative and quality research activities, he said at a media orientation organised by the UGC at Cirdap auditorium in the city.

The grants will be allocated through the Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) under the HEQEP -- a Tk 681 crore project supported by the World Bank, said Prof Dr Md Tajul Islam, a member of UGC, in his keynote paper.

As a major component of the project, the AIF would distribute Tk 372 crore to private and public universities for sub-projects to improve their quality of teaching, learning and research, he said.

Islam went on to add that private universities would need to meet a set of criteria to qualify for the grants. They need to have their own campuses, experience of arranging at least one convocation and positive audit reports of past two years.

Public and eligible private universities would send their project proposals to the UGC. The projects to receive the grants would be selected on a competitive basis.

However, private universities would not receive more than 20 percent of the Tk 372 crore fund, as it is public money and is aimed mostly to enhance the higher education system in public institutions, Islam said.

Prof Nazrul Islam said only 3 or 4 private universities presently qualify for the AIF grants

and indicated that more institutes may meet the criteria if the proposed private university ordinance is passed.

The ordinance relaxed the requirements for qualifying as a private university by decreasing the required land area of campus from five acres to one acre. This would legalise many of the present private universities, he said.

Pointing towards the massive grafts in allocating research funds by the science and ICT ministry during the regime of the previous government, the UGC chairman said researchers who received grants but has not conducted any research activities during that time would have to finish their existing work before applying for new grants.

The other components of the project would bring the local universities under high-speed Internet connectivity, digitise their libraries and allow sharing of knowledge through the Bangladesh Research and Education Network (BdREN), he said.

"Such project to enhance the quality of higher education has been undertaken for the first time in the country," he said. "Therefore it has to be ensured that the activities are transparent and effective."

Information on the five-year project as well as updates, announcements and developments would be available at the project website for public viewing, he added.

The first set of grants would be allocated to selected projects in December and the second one in 2011, said Tajul Islam.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid inaugurated the 'Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP)' on May 14, 2009.

Dr Raihan made senior adviser to Orbis Asia

METRO DESK

Dr Abu Raihan, country director of Orbis International in Bangladesh, has recently been appointed as the senior adviser to the Orbis Asia programme, says a press release.

Dr Raihan will now oversee the strategic direction of Orbis programmes in Asia, quality of programmes and development of regional resources and professional linkages in Asia. His position will be based in Hong Kong, the headquarters of Orbis Asia.

Prior to joining his new position, Dr Raihan served Orbis International, the world's leading eye care organisation at various capacities, including country director in Bangladesh for last five years.

He is the only Bangladeshi ophthalmologist to work as staff ophthalmologist in the world's only Flying Eye Hospital of Orbis during 1994-95.

Dr Raihan is an ophthalmologist and public health specialist trained in the Johns Hopkins and Emory University of USA and at the LV Prasad Eye Institute of India.



HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

The British Council invites applications for the post of **Human Resources Manager** within its main office in Dhaka. The Human Resources Manager will:

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Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad gives away certificate as the chief guest to a participant of three courses on 'Television Journalism and news presentation' at a function organised by Bangladesh Institute of Journalism and Electronic Media (BIJEM) at its conference room on Friday. On his right is BIJEM Executive Director Mirza Tarequl Qader. PHOTO: COURTESY

Attack on RMG workers in Savar

UNB, Savar

About 12 workers of a garment factory were injured in an attack by miscreants during a protest and workers of another factory observed work stoppage to press for their demands in Ashulia yesterday.

The police said workers of AJ Garments at Narsinghapur staged a demonstration and observed work stoppage since morning protesting the beating of a worker by an officer on Thursday.

Later, miscreants allegedly hired by management launched an attack injured 10 to 12 workers. The management in the afternoon declared the factory closed for the day.

One of the injured Obaidul was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Later damaged the windows and doors of the factory and left the factory at about 4:00pm.

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