



Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA) and Old Dhaka Poribesh Unnayan Forum jointly form a human chain in front of Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University yesterday demanding eviction of chemical warehouses and factories from residential areas in old Dhaka.

PHOTO: STAR

Remove chemical warehouses from residential areas

Demand environmentalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists and non-government organisation activists yesterday categorically demanded the government to evict chemical warehouses and factories from residential areas in old Dhaka to ensure public safety.

They also demanded to establish a separate industrial zone outside residential areas for the production, marketing and storage of chemical substances.

They placed the demands at a citizens' rally styled "Stop deaths and destruction of assets by chemical fire: Remove chemical depots from residential areas" in front of Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University.

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA) and Old Dhaka Poribesh Unnayan Forum jointly organised the function, says a press release.

Fifteen months past the Nimtoli tragedy, the government is yet to take any effective measure to remove chemical warehouses from residential areas, said speakers at the rally.

Though a government taskforce was formed, its activities remain in the dark due to unknown reasons. It seems that the government wants to protect the interests of some profit-mongering businessmen instead of the masses, they alleged.

Such attitude of indifference by the government is forcing thousands of people to live with the high risk of another tragedy, they said.

Their other demands include -- strong government monitoring on the chemical trade, punishment to those running such trade without necessary licenses, widening streets so that fire fighters can rush to the scene of fire swiftly and setting up of fire hydrants at every locality in the city.

BAPA General Secretary Dr Abdul Matin chaired the function where Citizen Rights Movement Secretary General Tushar Rehman also spoke.

Show cause notice on 5 Dhaka Bar members

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Bar Association (DBA) on Thursday issued a show cause notice upon its five members to explain within seven days why their advocatorship certificates would not be cancelled in connection with ransacking of its general secretary's office room on September 13.

The lawyers are former DBA president Mohammad Sanaullah Miah, former general secretary Khorshed Alam, Advocates Masud Ahmed Talukder, Abu Yusuf Sarkar and Nuruzzaman.

Two factions of Dhaka unit Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum -- one led by Sanaullah Miah and the other by Iqbal Hossain -- engaged in a scuffle over space at a doa mahfil in memory of advocate MU Ahmed in the auditorium of Dhaka Bar Association on September 13.

A group of lawyers including the five, also ransacked Iqbal's office room and threatened him with life, said DBA Senior Assistant General Secretary AKM Amin Uddin Manik.

Manik yesterday told The Daily Star that they held an emergency meeting after the incidents and decided to issue show cause notice upon the lawyers.

When asked Sanaullah, Khorshed and Masud denied the allegation saying that they would formally make comments after receipt of the show cause notices.

Malaysia extends amnesty for irregular Bangladeshis

PORIMOL PALMA

Malaysia gave yet another chance of biometric registration to irregular foreign workers who had not registered with the immigration department by August 31.

This chance of amnesty allows undocumented foreign workers to return home without facing any penalty or become regularised to continue their jobs. However, they have to first

register with the Malaysian immigration.

"We are asking irregular Bangladeshi workers, if they have not registered, to contact our mission in Kuala Lumpur," said Mantu Kumar Biswas, first secretary (labour) of Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, over phone yesterday.

Quoting Malaysia's immigration department, he said they

would keep registering the irregular workers left unregistered before starting the regularisation programme, which could start by early October.

Biswas did not give any estimate on the number of irregular Bangladeshi workers left unregistered but said if they do not get registered, they would face "actions".

He did not elaborate on what the "actions" could be, but

Malaysian media earlier reported that those not registering would later face arrest and punishment.

Under the registration programme of the undocumented foreigners that started on August 1 and ended on August 31, a total of 2,67,803 irregular Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia got registered.

The Bangladesh High Commission earlier estimated

that around 3 lakh Bangladeshi workers could be undocumented from around 5 lakh working there.

An official of the Bangladesh mission said this number could be even more as many documented workers fled from their jobs and became irregular, only to get better jobs by taking the amnesty.

On that basis, an estimated 50,000 Bangladeshis could be

yet out of registration.

Meanwhile, Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, over a statement on Thursday, asked friends and families of the undocumented and unregistered Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia to advise them to contact Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur at phone numbers -- 03-21419528, 03-21417720 and 03-21415875 for assistance.

Stand against polluters of environment

State minister urges all

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Environment and Forests Dr Hasan Mahmud yesterday urged all to stand unitedly against the polluters to protect the country from environmental peril.

"The people who are involved in environment pollution are the enemies of the country as well as the nation. We've to resist them unitedly," he told a seminar at Osmani memorial auditorium in the city.

The Department of Environment (DoE) organised the seminar, marking the 'International Ozone Day 2011'.

Speaking as the chief guest, Hasan said the planet has become vulnerable due to global warming caused by depleting ozone layer.

He said the United Nations adopted the Montreal Protocol in 1987 for preserving the Ozone Layer.

"Bangladesh signed the protocol in 1990 and ratified it in 2010. The government is working to implement the Montreal Protocol though announcing a country programme."

He sought cooperation from all to implement the Montreal Protocol to save the environment.

The state minister said although the global leaders signed the protocol, the developing world has not yet find any result from it.

Referring to the government initiatives to protect environment, Hasan said: "We set up new DoE offices in 21 districts and passed the Environment Court Act 2010 to check pollution."

UNDP Assistant Country Director Tariqul Islam and DoE Director Mohammad Shahjahan also spoke at the seminar with Environment Secretary Misbah ul Alam in the chair.



Bahatturer Sangbidhan Punapratistha Jatiya Committee stages a demonstration in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday demanding repeal of communal and undemocratic provisions in the constitution and constitutional recognition of the indigenous people.

PHOTO: STAR



Jatiya Garments Sramik Federation forms a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday demanding introduction of rationing system.

PHOTO: STAR

3-year-old found dead in well

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of a three-year-old girl from a well in Turag area in the city yesterday.

The deceased Yasmin is daughter of late Samiul Haque of Baunia Purbopara in Turag.

Fariz Uddin, sub-inspector of Turag Police Station, said Yasmin went missing from her house on Wednesday morning while her mother, Aysha Begum, a domestic help, was away at work.

Yasmin was with her two siblings, aged five and two, at that time in the house, he said, adding that the well adjacent to their house had a low boundary.

On information, police recovered the body from the well around 11:30am and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

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