

Arrest owners of Tazreen, Smart

Say labour rights organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several labour rights organisations yesterday besieged the labour ministry demanding prompt arrest of the owners of Tazreen Fashions Ltd and Smart Export Garments Ltd.

They also demanded that the authorities ensure adequate compensation to the families of the victims who died in the fire incidents and that safety and security at the workplace be guaranteed for all workers.

Garments Sramik Trade Union Kendra; Garments Sramik Oikya Forum; Garments Sramik Shonghoti; and Bangladesh Textile Garment Workers Federation organised the siege.

Garments workers from Tazreen and other factories and representatives from different socio-political organisations participated in the demonstration.

They also brought out a protest procession from Jatiya Press Club to the ministry.

Protesters yesterday said they would go for stronger agitations if their demands are not met by February 10.

Mahmudur Rahman Ismail, president of Bangladesh Textile Garment Workers Federation, said there will be countrywide marches till February 10.

WAR FRIEND Bhutanese foreign minister honoured

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh honoured Bhutanese Foreign Minister Ugen Tshering with the "Friends of Bangladesh Liberation War" honour for his invaluable contributions as a social worker to the War of Liberation in 1971.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Bhutan Imtiaz Ahmed handed over the award in Bhutan on January 31, said a release.

He was among the foreign friends who were selected for the 4th phase of the "Friends of Bangladesh Liberation War" award.

He could not attend the state ceremony in Dhaka held on December 15 last year due to physical ailment.



A motorcycle-riding traffic policeman takes a U-turn at a point where road dividers have been placed by the traffic department to specifically stop the practice. Behind him, two traffic policemen look on. The photo was taken from Dewanhat area of Chittagong city around 2:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



Dr Mallick's anniversary of death today

Metro Desk

Today is the 16th death anniversary of Dr AR Mallick, an eminent educationist and the first technocrat finance minister of the country, says a press release.

Dr Mallick was professor of South Asian Regional Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, in the early '60s, and the founding vice-chancellor of Chittagong University where he set up resistance against Pakistani occupation forces during the Liberation War.

He was president of the Liberation Council of Intelligentsia and Representing Bangladesh at the UNO in 1971.

He was the first education secretary, the first High Commissioner to India, concurrently ambassador to Nepal and Bhutan. He was also elected chairman of Asian Development Bank.

Bangla Academy has published "Dr. AR Mallick Sharak Grontho" comprising 32 articles by renowned personalities from home and abroad, along with 50 commemorative photographs, texts of his speeches, etc.

On this occasion, a discussion and milad mahfil will be held at RKB Mallick School/College at his village in Rajapur (Dhamrai), Dhaka today.

TACKLING JAMAAT-SHIBIR VIOLENCE JSD MP wants to know govt policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Moyeen Uddin Khan Badal, a lawmaker from Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), yesterday demanded that the Home Minister give a statement in the House explaining the government's policy to handle Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir's anarchy and violent attack on police in different places.

He lambasted the government for the way in which it is tackling the violence of Jamaat and its student wing.

Speaking on a point of order, the JSD lawmaker also criticized media for publishing photographs of the attacks on police members.

"Law enforcers earlier barred the Jamaat-Shibir men of coming out on roads as they openly threatened to destroy International Crimes Tribunals," he said.

"But through media we could see that the government gave a walk over to Jamaat-Shibir on Saturday as they held rally and processions on the city roads without any obstacles from police," he adding, "Then will we be understood that Jamaat-Shibir's killing and anarchy has changed the government's earlier policy towards them," Badal said.

Jamaat calls 'peaceful' rally today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami last night announced to hold "peaceful protest rallies" across the country today over its demand to scrap the international crimes tribunals and release of its top leaders facing war crimes charges.

Jamaat Acting Secretary General Rafiqul Islam, in a press release, made the announcement, calling upon Jamaat leaders and activists to carry out today's programme.

Top nine Jamaat leaders, including the ameer and secretary general, are now behind bars on charge of committing crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

Since November last year, Jamaat and pro-Jamaat student organisation Islami Chhatra Shibir have been carrying out hit-and-run attacks on police and vehicles, aiming to materialise its demand.

In keeping with the pattern of their assaults on law enforcers over the last few months, Jamaat and Shibir activists on Saturday brutally attacked police, especially in Narayanganj and Bogra.

In the capital, stick-wielding Jamaat-Shibir activists brought out a procession in Bijoy Nagar area. They blasted hand-made bombs before staging a rally at Shapla Chattar.

Affordable healthcare for rural people urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Affordable healthcare facilities should be delivered at rural people's doorsteps by creating skilled healthcare providers through community paramedic courses, said discussants at a roundtable yesterday.

The roundtable, "Need of skilled service providers in health sector and community paramedics: A new initiative", was organised by Prothom Alo, supported by TARSAN project of Swisscontact, in the daily's office in the capital.

Government doctors do not attend their village offices, said the health ministry Senior Secretary Md Humayun Kabir, adding that skilled paramedics could meet the huge demand for primary healthcare facilities in rural areas.

He expressed hope that 13,000 trained paramedics would be made available by 2015.

National Prof Dr MR Khan said providing healthcare was social welfare work, not business and that trainers must be well-equipped to produce skilled paramedics.

The ministry formed a policy on a two-year training course for paramedics in 2009 to meet the crisis at the grassroots, said Anisul Awal, director of training at National Institute of Population Research and Training.

Bangladesh Nursing Council Registrar Suraiya Begum said, "We must ensure that the trained paramedics return to villages after training."

Referring to a Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics data, Prothom Alo Associate Editor Abdul Qayyum said Bangladeshis mainly suffer from fever, diarrhoea, and other less severe diseases.

He opined that paramedics, on receiving proper training, were enough to treat these ailments.

Woman kills herself

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman killed herself by hanging from a ceiling fan in the capital's Bashundhara Residential area on Saturday night allegedly following a quarrel with her husband.

Police yesterday recovered the body of Nur-e-Ara Ashrafi, 24, from Satkhira district and detained her husband Faysal Liakat for interrogation.

The couple lived at a rented flat at G-block in the area. Faysal was a student of a private university while his wife was studying at Jagannath University but both dropped out six months ago, said Zia-uz-Zaman, OC of Bhatara Police Station.

Faysal went out for tuition on Saturday afternoon and found their bedroom locked after returning home at night, the OC said quoting her husband.

After opening the door with a duplicate key, he found Nur hanging and informed the police, the next morning.

Nur was suspecting illicit affair between Faysal and one of his female students. When she came to know of that student's visit to their home two days ago, argument flared up between them. Nur might have killed herself in a fit of passion, police said, quoting Faysal.

BOU at standstill

WASIM BIN HABIB

Academic and administrative activities at Bangladesh Open University (BOU), country's lone public institution for distant learning, came to a virtual standstill as the institution has been running without a vice chancellor (VC) for around 10 days now.

The tenure of its VC Prof Aminur Rashid ended on January 24, yet the government did not appoint anyone to the post as of yesterday.

Teachers and officials of BOU said since the university act entrusts the VC with authority over all academic and administrative activities, BOU's operations have been stalled in the absence of a VC.

If the impasse prolongs, it might plunge BOU into a severe session jam, causing irreparable loss to the academic lives of around 4.5 lakh students of its 19 academic programmes.

They also said a number of examinations under the university may get delayed as necessary arrangements for them require VC's approval.

Printing of question papers for the HSC programme examination, scheduled next month, awaits VC's approval while the SSC programme examination results could not be published on time for similar reason, said campus sources.

BOU Pro-VC Prof Khondoker Mokaddem Hossain said, "From policy work to routine work, everything came to a standstill. We have not received any order from the Chancellor Secretariat to run the university in the absence of a VC."

He urged the government for immediate steps to solve the matter.

Contacted, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said a few other universities lack VC and the ministry is working to solve the issue soon.

Qulkhwani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Qul Khwani of Dr Khandaker Mohammad Abdur Rahman, an educationist, was held in Houston, Texas, USA on January 30. He died there on December 16, 2012.

Born in Brahmanbaria's Rasullabad in 1938, his research and teaching in Texas for over 40 years brought him three awards. He was the chairman of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering at Prairie View A&M University, Texas.

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