

EDU INSTITUTES

DU students demand resumption of classes

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Dhaka University students held a protest at the base of Raju Sculpture on the campus yesterday morning, demanding reopening of educational institutions and dormitories.

They also brought out a procession around 11 am and later announced another demonstration programme for tomorrow over the same demand.

Eighteen teachers of different departments at DU expressed solidarity with students during the rally.

Prof Asif Nazrul, a teacher of law department, criticised Education Minister Dipu Moni for her comment regarding reopening educational institutions.

On Saturday, the minister said there is no pressure from a larger section of students and guardians to reopen.

Meanwhile, students of seven colleges under DU demonstrated with the same demand at the capital's Nilkhet intersection yesterday.

The protesters said they will announce tougher programmes if their campuses do not open by June 1.



Demanding reopening of all educational institutions following health guidelines, students of seven DU-affiliated colleges demonstrated near New Market yesterday.

PHOTO: ASHED SHUMON

Enforce polythene ban, incentivise alternatives

Experts tell discussion on plastic pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a discussion yesterday called for strict enforcement of ban on polythene, and incentivising producers of plastic alternatives.

They also asked the government to make the use of jute bags for everyday shopping popular to decrease use of polythene, while speaking at a roundtable discussion titled "Plastic Pollution: Causes, Effects and Solutions" organised jointly by Association of Academics and Societies of Sciences in Asia (AASSA) and Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Approximately, 3,000 tonnes of plastic waste (about eight percent of all the waste) is generated in Bangladesh every day and it is also a rapidly growing environmental challenge in the country, according to BAS.

Prof Dr AK Azad Chowdhury, former vice chancellor of Dhaka University, said the plastic waste is not only harmful for human but also for sea creatures.

It damages soil fertility, he said, calling upon the government to take a holistic measures to address the problem.

M Shamsheer Ali, former president of BAS, suggested creating an "environment police force" to check enforcement of ban on polythene. He also asked the government to include negative impact of polythene and benefit of jute in textbook curriculum to raise awareness among children.

BAS fellow Prof Dr M Feroze Ahmed said plastic can live up to 400 to 1,000 years in soil whereas each year 480 million of tonnes of plastic

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'Prioritise land rights of women, ethnic minorities'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Participants during a virtual dialogue yesterday urged the government to give priority to landless poor women, including those belonging to ethnic minorities in the plains, during allocation of arable khas land.

They also urged the government to ensure financing and provide soft agricultural loan from state-owned banks to poor rural women considering their landless situation.

Citizen's Platform for SDGs Bangladesh in partnership with Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) organised the event on "Safety and Land Rights of Women and Minorities".

The speakers stressed on formulating a 'uniform family code' to ensure women's equal rights irrespective of their religious identities, demanding institutional recognition of women's contribution in agriculture and ensuring market accessibility for them.

Moderating the event, the platform's convener and Centre for Policy Dialogue's Distinguished Fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya said land-related problem is

a major issue in Bangladesh.

He said, while addressing left-behind people's rights, such problem appears as an obstacle to their development.

The country's women as well as people belonging to religious and ethnic minority communities face the challenge more intensively, he added.

Without recognising women's contribution in agriculture it might not be possible to hold on to the progress made so far in the sector, said Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD, while presenting a keynote paper.

He stressed on implementing recommendations from the expert committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) while addressing women's rights.

Noted lawyer Prabir Neogi said, "Of all civil and criminal litigation filed in the country, about 80 percent are related to land issues."

He said the administration has to show its commitment while implementing land-related court orders.

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Women don't report harassment in fear of victim-blaming

Speakers demand violence-free city at virtual roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a virtual roundtable demanded a violence-free and safer city for women and girls, especially those who work in the informal sector and contribute to the gross domestic product (GDP).

The event, titled "Involving Adolescent Girls in Decision Making to Ensure Safer Cities", was jointly organised by Plan International Bangladesh and The Daily Star, as part of the Girls Get Equal Freedom in Public Spaces: Safer Cities Campaign 2021.

Morium Mesa, manager, Women's Rights & Gender Equity, ActionAid Bangladesh said that according to a 2017 study by the organisation, they asked women why they don't report incidents of harassment and violence they face in public spaces.

"We found they don't report because they will be blamed for why they were that at that specific place or how they were dressed. So the problem is bigger than we think," she said.

"Besides, in plans of infrastructure development of our city, the voice of women regarding how they want the city is completely ignored," she said.

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Increase allocation for hygiene in the budget

Development orgs in the sector demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Allocation for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities must be increased in the national budget 2021-2022 to address the overwhelming challenges posed by Covid-19, said speakers at a press conference yesterday.

They said availability of clean water, soap and hygiene facilities are still lacking in major cities, including markets, bus terminals, public places, and institutions.

Functional facilities are needed at hospitals and clinics in both urban and rural setting with running water, soap to avert widespread virus transmission, they added.

The speakers made the remarks at a pre-budget virtual press conference jointly organised by WaterAid, Unicef, PPRC, FANSA-BD, FSM Network, Sanitation and Water for All, WASH Alliance and MHM Network.

An analysis by the Power and Participation Research Center (PPRC), in collaboration with WaterAid and Unicef,

noted that there are continued disparities in the allocation of WASH budgets in different parts of the country considering the geographical location.

Despite the high need for WASH budget allocations in rural, char, hilly and coastal areas, the cities and metropolitan received relatively high share of the allocations in recent years, it found.

Hasin Jahan, country director of WaterAid Bangladesh, said "We have noticed that Covid-19 has pushed many families to the poverty line. Many families have slashed their budgets on hygiene materials, especially women compromised with their period products. So, utmost attention and actions are required to curtail additional VAT tax burden on sanitary products and reduce their prices to make these affordable."

Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairman of PPRC, said, "Water, sanitation, and hygiene must get the attention it deserves in the budget to defeat Covid-19 as well as to keep up with SDG-6 targets."

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FORCED INTO PROSTITUTION

Two girls rescued in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTC

Police early yesterday rescued two girls, who were lured by the promise of jobs and later forced into prostitution, from CDA residential area of Agrabad in port city.

Law enforcers also arrested a woman in this connection. The arrestee, Tanjila Akter (35), hails from Hathazari upazila of Chattogram.

Police said they conducted a drive, following a phone call at the national emergency helpline 999 where a man said his cousin has been missing for more than two weeks.

The caller also said his cousin, a 16-year-old girl from Cumilla, was kept confined at a house in Agrabad residential area, after being promised a job, said police.

The girl was forced into prostitution there. She somehow managed to communicate with a person who informed the family of her plight, he told police.

Mohammed Mohsin, officer-in-charge of Double Mooring Police Station, said the 999 unit immediately informed them of the call and they rescued the girls and made the arrest around 2:30am yesterday.

A case was filed against five persons under the Human Trafficking Act in this regard, the OC said.

'I believe in three principles: loyalty, devotion, perseverance'

Reminiscing Abdul Monem

AYSHA ZAHEEN

Born on January 5, 1937, Abdul Monem was a veteran civil engineer, industrialist, and entrepreneur.

His contributions to our country in construction, global branding, and technological transformation are paramount. Apart from all this, he is known for his honesty, integrity, and ethics. He passed away on May 31, 2020 from a stroke, leaving behind his wife and his five children.

Abdul Monem began his journey toward changing Bangladesh in 1956, when he founded Abdul Monem Limited (AML).

Its commercial operations started with investments in infrastructural development business through AML Construction Unit. AML Construction Unit was part of some of the most complex projects in the country, such as the Runway Overlays for Shahjalal International Airport and Osmani International Airport, Padma multipurpose bridge project, metro rail project, airport flyover, etc.

For the remarkable contributions it has made over the course of 66 years, AML Construction Unit is regarded a pioneer of the

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Workers load empty fruit crates onto a truck in Chattogram city's CRB area yesterday. Traders bought these for a unit price of Tk 40 after these were leftover from lychee sales. These will be sold at Tk 50 to owners of lychee gardens in Dinajpur, and then the baskets will be used to transport the delectable summer fruit all over the country. Each truck can carry 1,200 such baskets.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN



Two youths wash a car using water from the lake in front of Swadhinata Stambha inside Suhrawardy Udyan. Vehicles aren't allowed inside the park, but they managed to bypass the rules for an easy solution to car-washing. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

DEATH OF GIRL IN GULSHAN

Police fail first probe deadline

STAR REPORT

Investigators yesterday did not submit a probe report before the court in the case filed against Bashundhara Group Managing Director Sayem Sobhan Anvir over death of a college girl at a Gulshan flat in the capital.

Abul Hasan, investigation officer of the case and officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station, did not file any probe report with court till yesterday, court sources said.

Moreover, no further date has been fixed to submit the probe report in the case as the proceedings of regular courts are still suspended due to the countrywide ongoing restrictions to curb the coronavirus infections, the sources added.

A Dhaka court on April 27 directed authorities to submit the probe report by yesterday. It also issued travel ban on Anvir following a petition by police that day.

Police on April 26 recovered the body of the girl hanging from the ceiling fan in her bedroom. Her sister filed a case against Anvir for "abetting suicide" on April 27.

An official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (Gulshan division), seeking anonymity, said they are yet to complete the probe report as they did not get an autopsy report.

2002 ATTACK ON HASINA

SC extends stay on seven convicts' bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday extended till June 20 its chamber judge's order that stayed the High Court bail to seven convicts in a case filed over the attack on the then opposition leader and now Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Kolaroa in Satkhira in 2002.

A full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order following three petitions filed by the state seeking stay on the bail orders.

The apex court also asked the state to file a leave to appeal petition with this court against the HC orders by June 20.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin represented the state while lawyer AM Mahub Uddin Khokon appeared for the convicts during the virtual hearing.

Following four petitions filed the state, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division Justice Hasan Foez Siddique on May 27 stayed the HC bail orders till yesterday.

The HC on May 25 granted the seven bail.

The convicts are lawyers Abdus Sattar and Abdus Samad, Golan Rasul, Rakib, Zahirul, Shahabuddin and Monirul Islam, defence lawyer AM Mahub Uddin Khokon told The Daily Star on May 27.

The convicts including lawyers Abdus Sattar and Abdus samad, who have been sentenced to four years' to four-and-a-half years' imprisonment by the trial court in Satkhira, recently filed nine separate petitions with the HC seeking bail. Additional Attorney General SM Munir said earlier.

On August 30, 2002, Hasina visited the house of a freedom fighter, after his wife was allegedly raped, in Hizaldi village of Kolaroa upazila.

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