

Newspaper employees seek 10th wage board

BSS, Dhaka

The Bangladesh Federal Union of Newspaper Press Workers and Bangladesh Newspaper Workers Federation yesterday strongly demanded formation of the 10th wage board for journalists, employees and workers in the newspaper industry.

The demand was made from a joint meeting of the two federations at the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Employees Union's office in the capital to cope with the increased prices of essentials, said a press release.

Bangladesh Newspaper Workers Federation President Motiur Rahman Talukdar presided over the meeting while Bangladesh Federal Union of Newspaper Press Works President Md Alamgir Hossain Khan, Bangladesh Newspaper Workers Federation Secretary General Md Khairul Islam, Press Workers Federation Secretary General Mushtaq Ahmad, Senior Vice President Maksudul Ahsan, and Vice President Md Farooq Ahmed Bhuiyan, among others, were present.

Atia Afreen passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Atia Afreen, a communication professional and former programme manager of Transparency International Bangladesh, passed away yesterday after battling lung cancer for the last three years. She was 46.



She breathed her last at 9:35am at her residence in the capital's Bashundhara residential area, said her husband Abdullah Al Mamun, former senior reporter of The Daily Star, and general manager of Association of Mobile Telecom Operators of Bangladesh. She is survived by her husband, a son, and a daughter.

A champion (singer) of BTV's defunct Notun Kuri show, Afreen completed bachelor's and master's degrees from Jahangirnagar University. She was buried at Borkotpur graveyard in Badda after the Zohr prayers.



Workers cleaning sewerage lines amid speeding vehicles on avenue-2 in Chondrima Model Town area of the capital's Mohammadpur yesterday afternoon. Their lack of safety gear and absence of demarcation around the open manholes further exacerbates the risks.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

More than just a restaurant

A single mother's story of resilience

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Passing by the River View High School in Thakurgaon town, a lot of hotels will come into sight. However, one that is often seen abuzz with customers is "Amena Hotel".

Visiting the place recently, this correspondent came across an elderly woman, probably in her sixties, tending to her customers with a smile on her face.

"My husband abandoned me and my child and remarried. My son was only seven days old at that time," said Amena from Awliarhat village in Lalmonirhat's Pathgram upazila, who started the business about a decade ago, aiming to provide quality food to day labourers for low prices.

After she was left on the roads by her in-laws, Amena first took up work at a construction site. Unable to continue, she set up a small make-shift tea-stall, investing just Tk 50 in 1998.

With time, this stall became Amena

Hotel, a place where the needy come after daylong work.

"I started business to provide for my child. A neighbour offered to baby-sit my boy for Tk 5 per day," said Amena.



Her restaurant, open from morning till afternoon, now sees a daily sale of around Tk 30,000.

Through her income, she has also been able to buy a small land in the district

town's Tikiapara area, building a tinshed house to shelter herself and her family -- her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.

"Since joining the River View Business Management College in 1996, I saw Amena working hard to support her family. She is a strong woman," said Mazedur Rahman, assistant teacher of the school.

Various types of bhortas and many other items, including duck, mutton, chicken and fish, are available here for a reasonable price, said Ariful Islam, a regular customer at the restaurant.

"The food is good and the price is reasonable. So me and my colleagues often come here for lunch, especially during weekdays," he added.

Nazira Akhter Shopna, councilor in the municipality, said, "Amena is a successful woman who managed to become independent through hard work and diligence. She is an inspiration for other women in the area."

Fishermen allege irregularities in rice distribution

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Allegations of irregularities have emerged against Kuakata Municipality of Patuakhali regarding distribution of rice among fishermen who refrained from catching hilsa fries (jatka).

Many fishermen alleged that while they were supposed to be given 80 kilogrammes of rice for the two months of ban against catching hilsa, they received 40-50 kg instead.

Some complained that they did not even get any rice despite being enlisted as fishermen under the municipality, while people from other professions got rice in their place due to nepotism.

The rice distribution took place on Monday, March 11, on Kuakata Municipality office premises in presence of its mayor Anwar Howladar.

"We make a living by fishing in the sea round the year. During ban on fishing we find it very difficult to remain afloat. I am an enlisted fisherman, and I went to the municipality for rice allocated for us. But I did not get any, instead people from other professions, including van drivers and grocers, got rice as they are relatives of the councilors. We have been wronged," said Abdullah, a fisherman from Ward-1.

"I heard that the government allocated 80kg of rice for each of us. But I have been given 50kg. How will my family survive on 50 kg rice for two months?" said fisherman Abdus Salam of Ward-4.

Fisherman Tofazzal of Ward-3 echoed him. Contacted, Kuakata municipality mayor Anwar Howladar said, "There are 1,300 registered fishermen in my area, but the allocation of rice came for 800 fishermen. That's why some of them didn't get it."

"The matter is being investigated. Legal action will be taken if the allegations of irregularities in distribution of rice are found to be true," said Kalapara UNO Jahangit Hossain.

86pc child workers

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adjust these stipends considering the inflation.

"Additionally, the implementation of the mid-day meal programme, which is already in the planning, should be expedited to provide essential nutrition to students," she added.

Last year, in an interview with this correspondent, Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi also emphasised that social protection programmes and safety measures such as stipends and food need to be

enhanced to encourage the children to return to school, along with encouragement from parents, teachers, and the community.

Golam Mohammad Faruq, research officer at the education ministry's secondary and higher education department, stressed for expanding vocational education for children employed in hazardous sectors, and suggested increasing number of students receiving stipends to incentivise their return to school.

Formulate intestate

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discuss the demands with the prime minister soon. Do not suffer from an inferiority complex. In the struggle for the country's independence, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, everyone had contributed."

Inaugurating the council, Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma said, "India and Bangladesh share a unique and special relationship that is unlike any other bilateral relations. Our ties are linked by shared history, language, culture, values and interests, and

deep mutual empathy, but most importantly, they are rooted in our shared sacrifices during the 1971 Liberation War."

Food Minister Sadhan Chandra Majumder said, "Many types of incidents happen. If these incidents are prosecuted and those responsible are punished, they will never have the courage to commit such incidents again."

Samanta Lal Sen, health minister, and Kujendra Lal Tripura, state minister for Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, attended the event as special guests, while JL Bhowmik chaired the event.

Three local

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China while the students are helping them with a hope of earning some extra bucks, he added.

A Chinese national identified as Ching Chong is the ringleader of the syndicate and they installed a server in China, said Harun. They used 70-80 SIM cards and sent the money through cryptocurrency after collecting from bank, bKash and Nagad accounts, he said.

Some members of the syndicate are working in different garment factories and other sectors in Bangladesh, according to the sources of DB.

AL leader blamed

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Allegedly, Taherul Islam Tota, upazila AL unit general secretary, is running this sand trade. Contacted, Tota, however, denied the allegation.

"I am not involved in sand extraction anymore. Those who are pointing finger at me are the ones lifting sand," he claimed.

Didarul Alam Khan Mahub, chairman of Arjuna union parishad, said, "As the embankment is at risk due to illegal sand lifting, the areas are in risk of erosion during monsoon. I have raised the matter in the upazila

parishad's monthly meeting, but no steps have yet been made."

Sajjad Hossain, executive engineer of BWDB in Tangail, said, "If complaint regarding illegal sand extraction from Jamuna is received, the district and upazila administration as well as the police administration will take action."

Jahidur Rahman, UNO of Bhuanpur, said, "Mobile courts are conducted regularly to stop illegal sand extraction. However, nothing was found during the drives, as the culprits operate at night."

Exploited and trapped

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Hosne Ara, Shofiqul's wife, said, "The company who took him to Malaysia told us that he could earn Tk 80,000-90,000 per month. That is why we took a loan of Tk 5 lakh with high interest to send him to Malaysia. However, they did not provide him with any job for the last five months."

She mentioned that they had to send approximately Tk 20,000 to Malaysia for him every month for food expenses since the company didn't even provide him with meals. "My husband never

mentioned any health issues while in Bangladesh. His passing must have been a result of the stress from being unemployed for the last five months there. He couldn't bear the possibility of coming back home empty-handed," she said.

"My father-in-law is bedridden due to old-age complications. My brother-in-law is a day-labourer. Now there is no hope left for us. How will I run my family, and raise my two children?" Hosne Ara asked.

Shofiqul's sister Bristy Khatun, who is also a former expatriate worker

in Saudi Arabia, said, "After waiting for four long months, he was supposed to be provided with a job on February 12. However, he was not employed even as the date passed by. He got increasingly restless as each day passed by."


This newspaper could not reach representatives of Petrazehra Berhad for comments.

ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রয়
প্রায় রেডি ২৭৬০ বর্গফুটের
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এ্যাপার্টমেন্ট বিক্রয় হবে।
ঠিকানাঃ বিসুদ্রা, ব্রক-বি।
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As summer winds sweeps over the country, Gafur Khalifa gets busy making hand fans from palm leaves in Chandshi union of Barishal's Gournadi upazila. The 75-year-old wholesales a hundred pieces of the product for Tk 1,600 to local traders. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS



North-West Power Generation Company Ltd
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Office of the Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-2)
Soydabad, Sirajganj.


Ref: 27.28.8878.201.07.001.21.052 Date: 16/03/2024

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd):

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Brief Description of Tender	Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date
1	940694	Supply of spare for WTP, CCCW & Water Intake System.	12-Mar-2024	02-Apr-2024 14:00 PM	03-Apr-2024

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Engr. Md. Asad Halim
 Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
 Sirajganj 225 MW CCPP (Unit-2)
 NWPGL, Soydabad, Sirajganj.

GD- 438