

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

River erosion along the Padma has swallowed hundreds of homes in Balupur village of Shibganj upazila, Chapainawabganj, leaving stretches of the riverbank near No 12 Pakha Union Parishad vulnerable despite the presence of geobags. Erosion has continued for nearly a month as water levels recede. New geobags have been ferried to the riverbank to prevent further erosion. The photo was taken yesterday.

Sajek road blockade halted for Durga Puja

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangamati*

The road blockade on the route to Rangamati's Sajek Valley tourist centre, called by the Sajek Karbari Association and the Sajek Gano Odhikar Rokkha Committee, has been suspended from today until October 21 for Durga Puja.

Sajek Karbari Association President Natun Joy Chakma and Sajek Gano Odhikar Rokkha Committee Convener Babudhan Chakma made the announcement in a press release yesterday.

Tourists will be able to visit Sajek from today.

In a joint statement, the two organisations said the blockade on the Sajek tourist road was suspended from tomorrow to October 21 at the request of the Sajek



FILE PHOTO

Machalong Bazar Durga Puja Celebration Committee and out of respect for Sharadiya Durga Utsab, the main religious festival of the Hindu community across the country.

Natun and Babudhan said the blockade programme was called to ensure the security, lives, and property of Sajek residents. Therefore, if the administration fails to meet the demands of Sajek residents, the programme will be resumed after Durga Puja. The schedule will be announced in due course.

They urged the administration to promptly implement the three-point demand of the two organisations and the people of Sajek without delay to restore a peaceful environment.

4 sent to jail over rape of Jhenaidah girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jhenaidah*

A Jhenaidah court sent four people to jail in a case filed over the rape of a three-year-old girl.

The four also allegedly tried to cover up the incident, police and locals said.

The accused are Shukur Ali Mondal, 68; his two sons, Md Rezaul Mondal, 42, and Md Tizarat Mondal, 39; and Shukur's brother, Abdur Rahman, 65. All are residents of a village in Jhenaidah Sadar upazila.

According to the case statement, Shukur Ali raped the child at his house on October 13. When an attempt was made to detain him, his sons and brother helped him escape. Later, Abdur Rahman tried to cover up the incident by offering money to the victim's family.

On Wednesday, the child's mother filed a case with Jhenaidah Sadar Police Station, said Sheikh Billal Hossain, additional superintendent of Jhenaidah district police (finance and administration).

45th BCS gazette

FROM PAGE 3

They threatened to take their own lives at Shahbagh if no decision was made by the deadline.

Ekram Gazi Hridoy, recommended for the administration cadre, said the protesters had no criminal cases against them or links to militancy.

At least 10 excluded candidates spoke to The Daily Star, with several suspecting their past political affiliations had led to their exclusion despite having no criminal cases.

Their concerns came despite Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed's assurance that political identity would not lead to discrimination in BCS recruitment.

He made the remarks on October 1 after protests over the exclusion of 46 candidates from the 49th special BCS, most of whom were later included in the gazette.

Fazle Iffat Anik of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology said he had been compelled to join Chhatra League to secure dormitory accommodation.

"Why am I being excluded while I took part in the July uprising, and the home minister assured that none would be excluded for political reasons?" he said.

Two other excluded candidates, Sazzad Hossain of Sir Salimullah Medical College and Shams Uddin Sajjad of Bangladesh Agricultural University, also acknowledged past involvement with the now-banned Chhatra League and said they had participated in the July uprising.

"During the July movement, I put my political identity aside and took to the streets. Why have I been excluded now because of that political identity? No one else in my family is involved with politics either," said Sazzad.

However, not all excluded candidates had political affiliations.

Sri Krishna Chaitanya Nandi of Sylhet Agricultural University said he had no criminal cases or political affiliations. "I cannot even guess why I was excluded," he said.

Nur-e Alam Miazi, a Rajshahi University student who participated in the 2018 quota reform movement and the July uprising, said he had learned that a government agency reported him as an active Chhatra League activist.

The Daily Star also spoke to two other excluded candidates who had already joined government service through different BCS batches.

Iftekharul Islam, recommended for the administration cadre through the 45th BCS, said he was already working as an assistant surgeon after joining through the 48th special BCS.

"My name is not associated with any criminal case, and my family has no direct involvement in politics," he said.

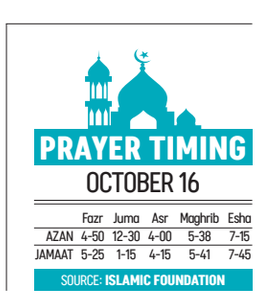
Another candidate, Nur-e Alam, said he was serving as an assistant director in the Ansar cadre after joining through the 44th BCS.

"If I was recruited through the 44th BCS, how could I be excluded from the gazette for the 45th BCS?" he asked at the rally.

Contacted last night, Public Administration Secretary Quamruzzaman Chowdhury said the gazette had been issued following established procedures.

"No one was excluded. You have seen earlier as well that we followed the meritocracy declared by the prime minister, and this time was no exception," he said.

Asked whether another gazette would be issued, he said he could not say for certain, adding that the process was ongoing.



34 cases of idol vandalism

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The Parishad said it had issued 22 security guidelines to its district- and upazila-level units, including round-the-clock volunteer deployment, CCTV installation where possible, adequate lighting and firefighting equipment, and immediate reporting of incidents to authorities.

It welcomed a Tk 1 crore increase in the allocation for the Hindu Welfare Trust but reiterated its demand to transform the trust into a foundation. The organisation also called for year-round security for religious minorities and exemplary punishment for those responsible for attacks.

The Parishad reiterated its eight-point demands, including a minority protection law, a National Minority Commission and a three-day public holiday for Durga Puja.

The festival began with Bodhon yesterday, while Bijoya Dashami will be observed on October 21, with idol immersion scheduled for the same day.

Old worries stay as KL reopens labour market

FROM PAGE 1

situation right now, they will have to pay at least Tk 5 lakhs."

During the 2022–2024 recruitment period, workers spent an average of Tk 5.44 lakh to secure jobs in Malaysia against the government-fixed cost of Tk 78,990, according to a survey by the US-based non-profit Verité.

Malaysia suspended new recruitment from Bangladesh on May 31, 2024, following allegations of irregularities and excessive costs. At least 16,970 Bangladeshis were unable to enter Malaysia before the deadline despite obtaining government clearance and completing other formalities.

Under the new arrangement, Malaysia has approved 25 private agencies and the state-run Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) as the main processing agencies, leaving 312 other recruiting agencies dependent on them for key procedures.

The 25 agencies and BOESL will process e-visas and issue no-objection certificates required for clearance from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

The ministry said the arrangement would encourage wider participation, competition and accountability while preserving recruiting agencies' independence.

It said Malaysian authorities had selected the agencies according to their own eligibility criteria under the existing bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU). Bangladesh had earlier submitted a list of 423 recruiting agencies for consideration and sought broader participation.

However, Mohammed Fakhrul Islam, former joint secretary general of the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, alleged that the government had effectively revived the previous system dominated by a limited number of agencies.

He said the 312 agencies would still depend on the 25 selected agencies for essential visa processing, effectively reducing them to sub-agents.

"The only difference is that the 312 agencies will now be able to obtain BMET clearance under their own licences. Otherwise, the system remains largely unchanged," he told The Daily Star.

Fakhrul criticised the selection process, questioning why all legitimate and qualified recruiting agencies had not been allowed to participate.

He also questioned the government's failure to establish a mechanism to regulate migration costs.

"Who will decide how much workers have to pay? Will the recruiting agencies themselves determine the amount?" he asked.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS STILL UNCLEAR

Despite yesterday's announcement, agency owners said it remained unclear when medical examinations, visa processing and other formalities could begin.

KM Mobarak Ullah Shimul, owner of Abed Air Travels and Tours, said Malaysian employers had secured worker allocations, but Bangladeshi agencies still lacked clear guidelines on medical examinations, calling visas and government clearance, creating a gap between employers' expectations and recruitment arrangements.

He warned that prolonged uncertainty could jeopardise Malaysia's demand for at least two lakh Bangladeshi workers.

Shimul said the government had also yet to fix migration costs, taking into account airfare, processing charges and exchange rate fluctuations.

Agency owners earlier said around 350 Malaysian employers had applied for worker quotas, with more than 6,000 positions already allocated. Some demand letters had also been sent to the Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur for attestation.

On September 29, the mission attested a demand for 28 workers from Malaysian supermarket chain NSK Trade City.

Another agency owner warned that some job allocations had already expired due to delays, and further setbacks could prompt employers to recruit from other countries.

The owners urged the government to allow zero-cost and regular private-sector recruitment to proceed simultaneously. One suggested offering financial incentives for zero-cost recruitment instead of imposing additional charges on Malaysian employers already covering workers' travel and other recruitment expenses.

Meanwhile, the ministry said medical examinations would initially be conducted at centres on Malaysia's existing approved list, excluding those identified as controversial or linked to past irregularities.

Representatives from Malaysia's health, human resources and home ministries would later visit Bangladesh to inspect medical facilities before finalising a new list.

The government also pledged to prevent any single centre from monopolising medical examinations and take action against facilities violating regulations.

QUESTIONS OVER ZERO-COST RECRUITMENT

Asif Munier welcomed the resumption of recruitment but said key questions concerning worker protection remained unanswered.

He urged the government to clarify whether the 10,000 zero-cost jobs were intended for new applicants or workers who had previously paid but failed to travel.

"Without clear eligibility criteria, the announcement could encourage unrealistic expectations among jobseekers," he added.

Munier also questioned whether the arrangement involving 25 processing agencies and 312 recruiting agencies differed substantially from the previous system.

Simply increasing the number of participating agencies would neither guarantee transparency nor prevent exploitation without effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms, he said.

He called for greater scrutiny of the agency selection process to address potential conflicts of interest and avoid repeating past controversies.

Munier also stressed that Bangladesh should ensure Malaysia respected its concerns and the interests of Bangladeshi workers rather than merely accepting recruitment terms set by Kuala Lumpur.

An official announcement from Malaysia confirming the arrangements would also help resolve uncertainty over their implementation, he said.

With the existing bilateral MoU, signed in December 2021, set to expire this December, Munier called for a legally binding agreement clearly defining both countries' responsibilities and accountability.

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ID	Title of Works
1349993	Construction of Open Yard Store at Bakerganj 132/33 kV Sub-station Under GMD, Power Grid, Barishal.
1351050	Repair & Maintenance Work of Boundary Wall, Open Store, Car Garage of Barishal (N) 230/132 kV Grid Sub-station Under GMD, Power Grid, Barishal.
1350056	Construction of Water Reservoir at Patuakhali and Barguna 132/33 kV Grid Sub-station Under GMD, Power Grid, Barishal.
1350064	Construction of Store Fencing at The South Side of The Switchyard at Patuakhali 132/33 kV Grid Sub-station Under GMD, Power Grid, Barishal.
1350073	Supply of Re-filled LPG Gas Cylinder in Different Grid Sub-Station Under GMD, Power Grid, Barishal.

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বিজ্ঞপ্তি

মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনা অধিদপ্তরের ১৩তম হতে ২০তম গ্রেডের নিয়োগ পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী ও প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোড বিষয়ে অবহিতকরণ

মুদ্রণ ও প্রকাশনা অধিদপ্তরের শূন্যপদে জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে গত ২৩ অক্টোবর ২০২৩ তারিখে ০৫.০৪.০০০০.০০৯.১১.০০১.২৩/২২৩২ সংখ্যক বিজ্ঞপ্তি এবং ১৬ জুন ২০২৬ তারিখের ০৫.০৪.০০০০.০০৯.১১.০০২.২২ (অংশ)/১০১৪ সংখ্যক বিজ্ঞপ্তি মোতাবেক নিম্নবর্ণিত ২১ ক্যাটাগরির পদে জনবল নিয়োগ পরীক্ষা ছকে বর্ণিত সময়সূচী অনুযায়ী একযোগে ঢাকা মহানগরীর বিভিন্ন কেন্দ্রে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে:

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GD-2527