

Thai teachers go on indefinite strike

AFP, Bangkok

More than half of all schools in one of southern Thailand's most strife-torn provinces have been closed after teachers went on indefinite strike following the murder of two teachers by suspected Islamic militants, education officials said Thursday.

About 60 percent of Pattani province's 400 state schools have been closed indefinitely, said Paitat Vihakarat, president of a teacher's federation covering three provinces near the Malaysian border which have been the centre of a separatist insurgency this year.

"Teachers fear for their safety and agreed (Wednesday) that they want to temporarily stop teaching," Paitat told AFP.

Two teachers were gunned down by suspected separatists Tuesday while travelling home from different schools in the province.

Their deaths, along with those of a village official on the same day and a policeman on Wednesday, mark the latest violence in an Islamic separatist insurgency which has claimed more than 560 lives this year.

Paitat said more schools in Pattani were likely to close and teachers from nearby Narathiwat and Yala provinces were considering similar action, which could see thousands of schools close.



A Palestinian woman casts her vote in the first Palestinian municipal elections since 1976 at a polling station in the West Bank town of Abu Dis, just outside Jerusalem yesterday.

Rumsfeld 'saddened' by criticism

AP, Washington

Defence Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, stung by criticism that he's insensitive to the needs of the troops and their families, offered his most impassioned defence Wednesday.

The normally stoic Rumsfeld said when he meets wounded soldiers or relatives of those killed in battle, "their grief is something I feel to my core."

"I am truly saddened by the thought that anyone could have the impression that I, or others here, are doing anything other than working urgently to see that the lives of the fighting men and women are protected and are cared for in every way humanly possible," he said.

"And I hope and pray that every family member of those who have died so bravely knows how deeply I feel their loss."

Rumsfeld has been a lightning rod since the war began in March 2003, but criticism recently intensified after a Tennessee National Guardsman in Kuwait asked him during a question-and-answer session with soldiers on Dec. 8 why he and his comrades had to scrounge for armor to protect their vehicles.

Rumsfeld gave an extended answer that included the statement, "You go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you might want or wish to have."

Falluja residents return home

REUTERS, Baghdad

Some 2,000 Iraqis who fled a US-led offensive on Falluja more than a month ago will return to the Sunni Muslim city yesterday although sporadic fighting persists in some areas, Iraqi ministers said Wednesday.

More than 200,000 people who sought shelter in nearby villages ahead of the Nov. 8 attack have yet to go home and some are in need of aid as night-time temperatures drop to freezing.

The timetable for returns has not been publicized and US Marines continue to fight insurgents in the city, which they have bombed frequently in recent weeks.

"Starting tomorrow, we will begin returning our people to their city of Falluja," Kassim Daoud, minister of state for national security affairs, told reporters.

"We have told them that there are areas where the debris has not been removed so far, there are homes that are destroyed, there are mines in some streets, but our people insisted that they want to return to their city."

There is no power and water in Falluja, 32 miles west of Baghdad, where many buildings have been destroyed and telephone lines are down.

The refugees have grown angry about the delay to their return, with demonstrating and demanding to go back immediately.

Industry Minister Hajem al-Hassani said each resident would receive \$100, a heater and fuel rations on return.

He said the interim government had given food, blankets, clothes and fuel to thousands of families stranded in Baghdad and nearby villages, but efforts to restore power and other services had been set back by continued fighting.

Most returning Thursday would be family heads, who would decide if they were ready to bring women and children back.

Insurgents have distributed leaflets in villages and towns around Falluja warning people to stay away because the fighting will intensify. But Hassani said he believed most people were eager to return home despite the dangers.

The November offensive was designed to expel foreign Islamist fighters and Saddam Hussein loyalists US troops said were holed up in the city ahead of elections in January.

But plans for the vote are behind schedule in Falluja, which had 250,000 to 300,000 residents before the US assault.

Yushchenko urges Ukrainians to vote

REUTERS, Kiev

Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko told voters on Wednesday the re-run of Ukraine's rigged presidential election would be no "easy stroll" and urged them to cast ballots to make certain of his victory.

Yushchenko, this time the favorite in Sunday's new contest against Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, told tens of thousands of chanting supporters in Kiev's Independence Square that adversaries of change were prepared to disrupt the ballot.

Yanukovich, backed by Russia and Ukraine's outgoing president, was declared the winner in the Nov. 21 ballot but the result, denounced

by vast numbers of protesters in central Kiev, was overturned by the Supreme Court on grounds of mass fraud.

"Each vote will help maintain Ukraine's unity, each citizen must come out so that the result is totally convincing, so that there is no temptation to cheat or disrupt the ballot," said Yushchenko, sporting a scarf in his trademark orange colors.

"This vote will be no easy stroll. There are still forces prepared to disrupt it. It will be a special day in Ukraine's history, a test for truth and for honest elections. We must again show courage in defending our choice."

US soldier killed in Baghdad blast

AFP, Baghdad

A US soldier was killed and two others wounded in a roadside bombing in western Baghdad Thursday, the military said.

"A Task Force Baghdad soldier was killed and two others were wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated in western Baghdad at approximately 8 am on December 23," the military said in a statement.

It was the first death of a US soldier since a suspected suicide bomb blast killed 22 people, 14 of them US soldiers, in a packed mess hall on a military base in the northern city of Mosul on Tuesday.

US trying to 'isolate' Russia, says Putin

AFP, Moscow

President Vladimir Putin on Thursday raised the possibility that the United States is trying to "isolate" Russia from its neighbours among the former Soviet republics amid ongoing tension over elections in Ukraine.

Putin said he had paid heed to Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski's reported comments that the United States preferred a "Russia without Ukraine" and said he was studying the possibility.

He said he would "raise this question" with US President George W. Bush when the two men meet

early next year.

Ties between the former Cold War foes have become strained after strong US criticism of the flawed electoral process in the former Soviet republic of Ukraine, where a pro-Kremlin candidate "won" a run-off vote last month which was annulled due to massive fraud.

A new run-off is being held this weekend and West-leaning opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko is expected to win easily.

Putin criticised US-led plans to push ahead with an election next month in Iraq, saying: "We do not understand how there can be an election in a country under condi-

tions of total occupation."

But the Russian leader also described Moscow's relationship with Washington as an "alliance" rather than a partnership and stressed their common cause in the fight against terrorism.

"I'm satisfied with the development of our relations with the United States in general," he said.

"The United States is one of our high priority partners. We happen to be natural partners in resolving several acute problems these days, especially combating terrorism."

"I would describe our relations not as a partnership but as an alliance."



A Russian soldier looks at Russian President Vladimir Putin appearing on TV screens as he delivers his annual press conference, at a shop in Moscow yesterday.

IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT

A well-reputed group of 100% export oriented garments industries is looking for the following personnel for immediate appointment.

1. General Manager (Factory):

The Candidate should be a graduate in any discipline. He should have at least 10 years experience in a large 100% export oriented garments industry. The candidate must have sound knowledge about labour law, time study, compliance issues & cost management. Retired army personnel with the rank of Colonel / Lt. Colonel / Major with experience of large garments industries may also apply.

2. Production Manager:

Incumbent should be a bachelor degree holder. He should have at least 5-7 years experience in a large export oriented garments industry in a same position. Preference will be given to the candidate who is willing to work in Narayanganj based garment factories.

3. Quality Manager:

The ideal candidate should be a post graduate in any discipline and or diploma in garments quality control from a recognized institute. Should have at least 10 years experience in related field and be capable of leading a group of central quality controllers of a large group of garments industry.

4. Pattern Master:

The ideal candidate should be at least graduate and should have at least 7/8 years experience as in charge / head of sample section of a reputed group of garments industries. Preference will be given to those who have experience in handling CAD/CAM system.

5. Civil Engineer:

The ideal candidate should be a B.Sc Engineer (civil)/Diploma from BUET or other reputed technical institute. He should have at least 2-3 years experience in a reputed construction firm. Preference will be given to the candidate who have enough experience in civil construction in a large garments industry.

6. Compliance Officer:

Incumbent should have at least Masters Degree in any discipline from a reputed university and also possess 2-3 years experience in compliance in a reputed garments industry. Job location for this position will be factory based. The incumbent's responsibility includes implementation and monitoring different buyers code of conduct and various compliance issues. Should also have enough knowledge on labour law & factory rules and regulations.

Those who have applied before need not to apply again.

Please write the position applied for in the top of the envelope.

A very attractive remuneration package (negotiable) will be offered for the deserving candidate. Interested candidates are requested to send their CV with contact telephone number (if any) 2 (two) copies recent passport size photographs and copies of all educational and experience certificates to the following address on or before 06 January 2005.

Palmal Group, House # 2/B, Road # 29, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212.

বিজিএমইএ নির্বাচন ২০০৫-২০০৬

জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা বিজিএমইএ'র সকল সম্মানিত সদস্যদেরকে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, নির্বাচনী তফসিল অনুযায়ী নির্ধারিত ফরমে Voter Nomination, Specimen Signature, TIN, Photographs ইত্যাদি প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র জমা দেয়ার সময়সীমা আগামী ২৬ ডিসেম্বর ২০০৪ বিকাল ৫ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হলো।

বিশ্রুতঃ Voter Nomination Paper জমা দেয়ার সুবিধার্থে আজ ২৪ ডিসেম্বর এবং আগামীকাল ২৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০০৪ বিজিএমইএ ঢাকা ও চট্টগ্রাম অফিস খোলা থাকবে।

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- is not looking for a desk-job.
- and is interested to travel anywhere and work anywhere in Bangladesh

If the above describe you, then you are the right person we are looking for.

A number of available posts are outside Dhaka.

Submit your detailed CV by **12 January 2005** to the address given below. Please mention on top of the envelope your area of specialization (Engineering, BBA/MBA, Agriculture or other).

If you are pre-selected we will have a preliminary assessment. Date for assessment will be communicated to the short-listed candidates.

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ADMISSION FOR SESSION 2005-2006

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

UNFPA Bangladesh invites applications from the eligible candidates for the following positions to work in a special project titling: "Demand-based Reproductive Health Commodity Project (DRHCP)."

Position : Project Manager
Vacancy No : FPA/BGD/VA026/04

The incumbent will perform the following tasks:

Duties:

Initiate, coordinate and oversee all aspects of managing program implementation, develop monitoring methodologies and assist in monitoring, coordinate between UNFPA, MOHFW and DHP and DGHS and will provide UNFPA and Line Directors with monthly activity report.

Qualification and Experience:

Medical graduate with Masters in Public Health or Masters in Social Sciences. Should have working knowledge in Reproductive Health and experience in institutional development. Sound knowledge in UNFPA and GOB's RH Program will be an added advantage. At least 10 years of professional experience with proven managerial and leadership abilities in program design, planning and implementation. Must have computer proficiency and good spoken and excellent communication skills both in written and spoken English.

Remuneration: Tk. 80,000-100,000 (Depending on the educational qualifications and experiences of the suitable candidate)

Position : Logistics Management Officer
Vacancy No : FPA/BGD/VA027/04

Duties:

Provide technical assistance to strengthen family planning logistics subsystems at the national level, oversee all aspects of logistical issues for overall RH service delivery program, maintain track record of contraceptive items' availability/inventory, procurement-shipment-pipeline status, storage, and distribution system up to end users through out the country for GO/NGO-SMC services. In country field visit extensively to monitor supply of contraceptives at the end users, participate in field missions, meeting, and workshops related to procurement of contraceptives, contraceptive requirements, review of stock and supplies.

Qualification and Experience:

The candidate should be Masters in Economics/ Population Sciences/Public Health or in other relevant field. The incumbent should have at least 8 years working experience of program management in RH/FP field with 3-5 years experience of logistics management both at implementation and policy level and must have specialized training on logistics management. Sound knowledge in UNFPA's and GOB's procurement process will be necessary. Must have computer proficiency and excellent communication skills both in written and spoken English.

Remuneration: Tk. 80,000-100,000 (Depending on the educational qualifications and experiences of the suitable candidate)

Position : BCC Officer
Vacancy No : FPA/BGD/VA028/04

The incumbent will perform the following tasks:

Duties:

Provide technical assistance in designing and implementing, and monitoring of innovative BCC campaign of the project, oversee all aspects of BCC approach for synergistic effect on overall RH service delivery program, maintain liaison and coordinate with MOHFW, DFP, DGHS, NGOs and Development partners in respect to BCC issues, in country field visit extensively to monitor and provide feedback of the innovative BCC intervention at the end users, provide UNFPA and Line Directors with monthly activity report and periodic situation analysis.

Qualification and Experience:

The candidate should preferably have a Masters degree in Mass Communication & Journalism, Public Health or other related areas. At least 8 years of professional experience preferably in the field of advocacy and development communication in the public or private sector. Sound knowledge in reproductive health issues is essential. Specialized training on creative BCC would be an added advantage. Must have computer proficiency and excellent communication skills both in written and spoken English and Bangla.

Remuneration: Tk. 80,000-100,000 (Depending on the educational qualifications and experiences of the suitable candidate)

Position : Logistics Monitoring And BCC Assistants (3 positions)
Vacancy No : FPA/BGD/VA029/04

The incumbent will perform the following tasks:

Duties:

Working under the overall supervision of Project Manager and under direct supervision of Procurement/ Logistics Management Officer, monitor and coordinates contraceptives supply and management for Family Planning program, Stationing at the field sites, coordinate all field level activities of the project, Assist in maintaining a database for keeping track record of contraceptive items for Family Planning Services, Assist in maintaining records and preparation of reports on logistic monitoring Coordinate BCC activities of the project in their respective target areas.

Qualification and Experience:

Must be a Graduate in any discipline and must have minimum 5 years of experience in office management particularly with logistics management preferably in Family Planning Logistics management. Should be able to read, write and speak in English. Proficiency in Computer literacy is essential.

Remuneration: Tk. 35,000-48,000 (Depending on the educational qualifications and experiences of the suitable candidate)

Interested candidates are requested to apply with one page justification for the suitability along with a detailed CV/P11 form and a passport size photograph on or before 6 January 2005 to Human Resource Section, UNFPA Bangladesh, IDB Bhaban (15th Floor), E/3-A Rokeya Sharani, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207. Details TOR and P11 Form can be obtained from the UNFPA Website <http://www.unfpa-bangladesh.org/VA/>. Please mention the vacancy announcement number on the top of the envelope. Equally qualified women candidates will be given preference. UNFPA has the right to appoint a person at lower level.

"Only short-listed candidates will be Contacted"