



# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

TODAY'S ISSUE 20 PAGES



COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XV NO. 117

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 17, 2005

JAISTHA 3, 1412 BS

RABIUS SANI 7, 1426 HIJRI

20 PAGES PLUS STAR LIFESTYLE PRICE: Tk 10.00

www.thedailystar.net

## Lowest basic Tk 2,400; highest Tk 23,000

### Cabinet okays new pay scale; implementation in three phases; govt expenses to go up by Tk 3,975cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved a new pay scale with a 53.33 percent salary hike for the civil servants and defence officials in the highest grade and 60 percent in the lowest.

Government employees will get salaries and arrears under the new pay scale starting from June 1 when they draw their salaries for May, sources said.

The latest pay scale takes retroactive effect from January this year and the arrears will be disbursed accordingly.

A similar increase has been made for teachers of private sector educational institutions who get 90 percent of their salaries under the government's Monthly Payment (MPO) scheme.

The cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, approved the highest basic (fixed) at Tk 23,000 for government staff as compared to Tk 15,000 in the current pay scale. Employees bracketed in the lowest grade will get a basic pay of Tk 2,400, currently Tk 1,500 in the existing pay scale.

The salaries of the cabinet secretary and the principal secretary to the prime minister, who enjoy a special grade, will, however, be Tk 24,500. Their current salary comes

to around Tk 15,750.

The sixth Pay Commission had recommended an 83 percent hike for the highest scale and 86 percent for the lowest from the existing pay scale for the government employees.

The approved scale puts the highest salary 9.5 times higher than the lowest.

"I am very happy about this pay scale increase," Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told journalists later on the Planning Commission premises. "After the last pay scale was declared eight years ago, we have given a very handsome rise of 53 percent, which is a lot," he noted.

"[The hike] is unlikely to fuel inflation," Saifur said, "because the country has a total resource of Tk 3.5 lakh crore. In this context, we have increased expenses by about Tk 4,000 crore for this purpose. Again, this increase will be implemented in phases. So, this should not affect prices. Now, if traders and businesspeople start pushing prices up on this pretext, that would not be fair."

The government will implement the new pay scale in three phases. In the first phase, the employees will get 75 percent of their enhanced basic salary in June and the remaining

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6TH PAY SCALE (in Tk)			
GRADE	PRESENT PAY STRUCTURE	RECOMMENDED	APPROVED
Grade-I	15000	27500	23000
Grade-II	12900	23000	19300
Grade-III	11700	20230	16800
Grade-IV	10700	18200	15000
Grade-V	9500	16150	13750
Grade-VI	7200	12500	11000
Grade-VII	6150	10770	9000
Grade-VIII	4800	8975	7400
Grade-IX	4300	8180	6800
Grade-X	3400	5970	5100
Grade-XI	2550	4865	4100
Grade-XII	2375	4510	3700
Grade-XIII	2250	4260	3500
Grade-XIV	2100	4020	3300
Grade-XV	1975	3785	3100
Grade-XVI	1875	3560	3000
Grade-XVII	1750	3340	2850
Grade-XVIII	1625	3150	2600
Grade-XIX	1560	2970	2500
Grade-XX	1500	2800	2400

\* Basic pay of cabinet secretary/principal secretary is Tk 24,500

## TRI-NATION GAS PIPELINE: Ministries asked to set stance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A high level inter-ministerial meeting yesterday asked the ministries concerned to sort out their respective positions on the proposed tri-nation gas pipeline through Myanmar, Bangladesh and India.

A meeting insider said the discussion mainly concentrated on the hypothetical impact of the pipeline and how the country can gain from the negotiations.

The insider said, preferring anonymity, that the country will emphasize reducing the trade imbalance between Bangladesh and

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## Toll rises to 46 as launch salvaged

### 20 hurt as cops go tough on crowd protesting rescue delay; same vessel sank thrice before

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The sunken launch was salvaged from the Bura Gourango river in Patuakhali yesterday evening, more than 32 hours after the accident.

Thirty three more bodies were recovered yesterday, raising the

death toll to 46. Of them, seven were found floating in the river and 26 trapped inside the vessel.

The district administration made a list of 74 passengers, who are still missing, with their grieving relatives waiting anxiously on the riverbank.

The launch, Prince of Patuakhali, had earlier sunk three times -- in the Lolcalia river in 1985, in the Muradia river in 1990, and in the Payra river in 1994, BIWTA sources said.

Some 20 people, including three policemen, were injured yesterday

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## Tax gain, austerity needed to avoid fallout

### Says Wahiduddin on pay rise

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud said implementation of the new pay scale in phases will be tolerable for the country's economy but the tax collection has to be strengthened to avoid any possible negative impact.

"The government should be careful not to spend ambitiously for its development programmes," the leading economist said, adding, "They should also strictly maintain discipline in other types of expenditures in the revenue budget and adjust the number of excess employees as a mid-term reform."

"The past experience shows that a new pay scale is followed by increase of prices. It is also followed by salary increase in the private sector."

"The government chose a time for this new pay scale that may not be entirely favourable. The election is drawing closer and this puts pressure on the government for a

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## Judges, Bar agitation brew storm at JS

### Speaker says judges should face action if inefficiency leads to case logjam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday in parliament slammed

leaders of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and Bangladesh Bar Council for staging demonstrations on the Supreme Court premises.

Moudud criticised the Supreme Court for not taking any actions against the demonstrators and questioned, "Doesn't it fall into a

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## EC to ask govt for more power

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) plans to ask the government for more legal powers that include the authority to deploy army personnel and form electoral enquiry committee in conducting local government

elections. It is also pondering over seeking power to frame rules, if necessary, for local government elections and introduction of electronic voting machines, sources said.

The EC yesterday at a meeting

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## Kenya arrestees have no links to terrorism, drugs

Says foreign ministry

BDNEWS, Dhaka  
Most of the 69 people arrested in the Kenyan port city of Mombassa are Bangladeshi nationals and do not have any link with terrorists or drug peddlers, Bangladesh foreign ministry

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### Every Second Counts...



## 1 Second Please

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## PM goes to Vietnam today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will leave for Vietnam today on a three-day official visit at the invitation of her counterpart, Pan Van Khai.

The PM's visit, the first-ever by a Bangladeshi head of government to Vietnam, aims to further develop cooperation between the two countries, especially in the fields of economy, trade and investment.

Vietnam President Trun Duc Luong visited Dhaka in March last year.

Khaleda will be accompanied by

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## Newsweek now says its Quran desecration report wrong

REUTERS, Washington

Newsweek magazine said on Sunday it erred in a May 9 report that US interrogators desecrated the Quran at Guantanamo Bay, and apologised to the victims of deadly Muslim protests sparked by the article.

Editor Mark Whitaker said the magazine inaccurately reported that US military investigators had confirmed that personnel at the detention facility in Cuba had flushed the Muslim holy book down the toilet.

The report sparked angry and violent protests across the Muslim world from Afghanistan,

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Advertisement



## FELICITATIONS

Nawab Sir Salimullah Gold Medal-2002 has been awarded to Mr. Mostafa Kamal (From right side standing position-4th) Chairman & Managing Director of Meghna Group of Industries for his outstanding performance in the industrialisation of the country. Hon'ble President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh presented him the award at a simple ceremony held on 16.05.2005.

We offer our heartfelt felicitations and best wishes for Mr. Mostafa Kamal and wish him a long life.

- All Executive, Officers and Staff of Meghna Group of Industries

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