

BCC to recruit 130 people on 'political consideration'

Appointments approved without advertisement, interview

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Barisal City Corporation (BCC) authorities have approved appointments in 130 posts of officials and staff, allegedly on political considerations and ignoring rules.

The appointments were approved at a general meeting of ward commissioners on Sunday with BCC Mayor Majibur Rahman Sarwar in the chair. Thirty out of 40 ward commissioners attended the meeting held at BCC auditorium, sources said.

Three ward commissioners are in jail and seven are absconding to avoid arrest for alleged corruption and other charges, the sources said.

Of the people already selected for the jobs, one is the son of a local Jamaat-e-Islami leader, three are relatives of the Mayor and the rest are activists of BNP and its front organizations, sources said.

At the meeting, the issue of appointments was discussed and approved though it not on the agenda. The decision was taken amid protests by some of the ward commissioners, the sources said.

The posts include sub-assistant engineer, tax officer, license supervisor, market supervisor, store keeper, work assistant, law assistant, conservancy inspector, computer operator, tax collection assistant, work assistant, toll collector

assistant, office assistant and water pump operator.

The sources said that the organogram of BCC is yet to be approved by the government and that the appointments would not be treated as regular and having legal cover before the approval. Some of the posts are yet to be sanctioned.

Besides, these appointments are being made without any advertisement or interview, the sources claimed.

Mayor Mojibor Rahman Sarwar, when contacted, said papers for a new organogram of BCC were submitted to the local government ministry four years ago but it is yet to be approved.

He refuted the allegation of

political consideration in the appointments. They are being recruited on the basis of qualification.

When asked how their fitness was judged without interview, he said all of them are being taken in as trainees or on master roll. Their services will be regularised after approval of the organogram.

The appointments are being made due to acute shortage of manpower which is affecting functioning of the city corporation, he said.

The appointments are being made on emergency basis to run offices, departments and public utility services.

BNP leader among 3 sued for keeping deer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

The forest department yesterday has lodged cases against three persons including Rangpur BNP president Rahim Uddin Bharsa for keeping 37 deer.

The rest two accused are businessmen Tarique Islam, owner of Harin Bidi Factory and Ershehal Hoque, owner of Hoque Bidi Factory in Haragach.

Range Officer Golam Mortuza of forest department lodged the cases with a magistrate court against them under Wildlife (preservation and rectification) Act.

Joint forces rescued 37 deer from their houses Thursday night.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

The Chittagong City Corporation demolished illegal establishments built on encroached lands along the road in Muradpur yesterday.

TEAM PROBES CORRUPTION IN BARISAL T&T

Tk 4.62cr arrear bills with 255 subscribers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A three-member high-power investigation team of Bangladesh Telephone and Telegraph Board has started investigation into alleged corruption and irregularities in its Barisal divisional office.

It was gathered that a list of 255 telephone subscribers with Tk 4.62 crore arrear dues has been prepared for probe. Misappropriation of another Tk 2.25 crore by tampering calls and meters and through VOIP have been identified for investigation, sources claimed.

Seeking anonymity, sources at the divisional T & T office said the 3-member investigation team led by Md Moasser Ali, director (investigation), started the probe on Saturday.

Two other officials are of the rank of divisional engineer, they said.

The team seized files of the listed high profile bill defaulters. They have already interrogated several officials and staff of switch room, microwave station, line men, revenue officials and local CBA leaders, the sources said.

They claimed that some people enjoying political clout and backed by relatives of Barisal City Corporation mayor took dozens of telephone connections in false names and addresses and misappropriated at least Tk 2.25 crore of the revenues.

They often forced officials to meet their whimsical demands, the sources said.

One line man was abducted from

the exchange on gunpoint by them and torture to set illegal connections, they claimed.

Ruling party supporter who were T&T staff and some CBA leaders even forced divisional engineers to do what they wanted by submitting false verification and clearance reports, the sources said.

Senior officials, when asked declined to make any comment, saying the probe team will detect the irregularities.

Col. (rtd.) Ziauddin, general manager of T and T, will visit Barisal at any moment in connection with the probe, they said.

Some sources however said corruption is not possible without collaboration of local officials.

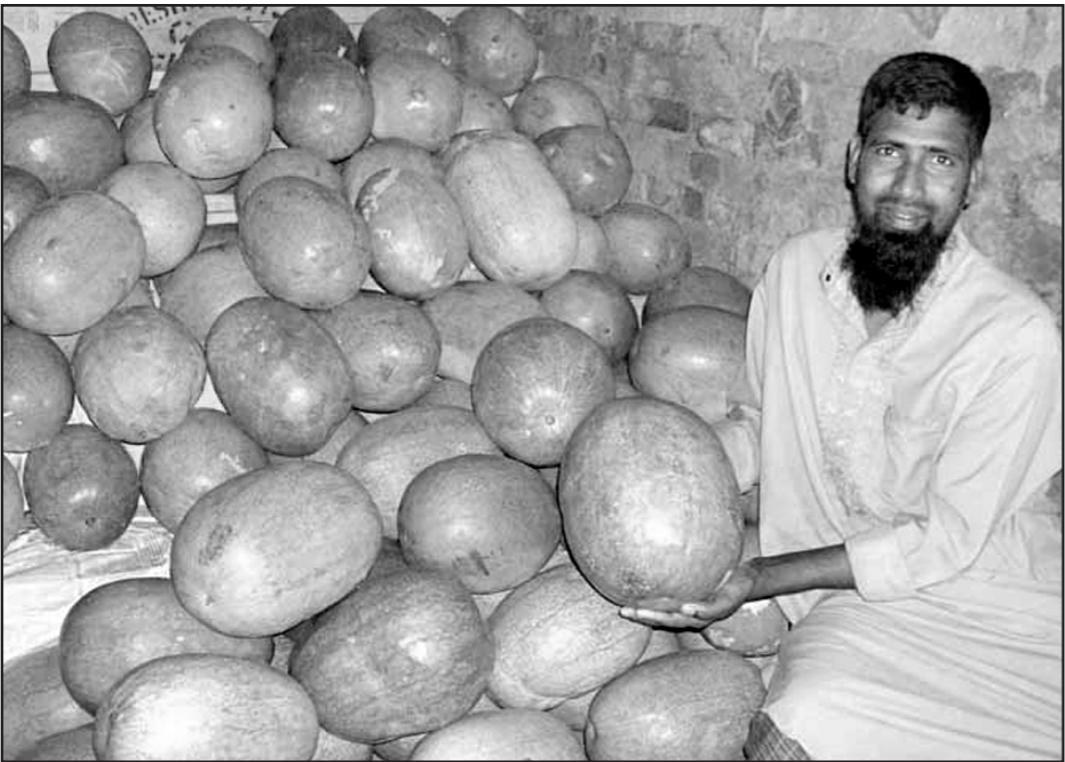


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

As summer is approaching, mouthwatering watermelons are arriving in markets but their prices keep away buyers. In Jessor, sellers demanded Tk 180 to Tk 200 apiece yesterday.

MODHUPUR ECO PARK Boundary wall plan suspended

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Construction of the controversial boundary wall under the Eco Park project in Madhupur forest will remain suspended till an elected government is installed.

An order to this effect was given by Forest and Environment Adviser to the caretaker government Dr Chowdhury Sazzadul Karim at a meeting attended by officials of Tangail district and Madhupur upazila administrations and leaders of local indigenous communities. It was held on Friday (March 9) at Madhupur Upazila Parishad auditorium.

The meeting also decided that forest department will launch drives soon to recover grabbed forestlands in Madhupur reserve forest, recover 'shal' and 'gajari' forests and take steps against illegal saw mills adjacent to the forest, sources in forest department told this correspondent

yesterday.

Dr. Karim also advised the district administration and forest officials to implement the Eco Park project after ensuring interests of local indigenous people.

The view exchange meeting was attended by, among others, Chief Forest Conservator Mohammad Osman Gani, Assistant Chief Forest Conservator Ali Kabir Haidar, Tangail Deputy Commissioner Akhtar Ali Sarkar, Tangail Police Superintendent SK Mohammad Maruf Hassan, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Abdullah-al Mamun, Madhupur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Dr MA Parvez Rahim and Major Toufique from joint forces.

Local indigenous leaders Ajoy-e-Mre, president of the Joinsahi Adibashi Unnayon Parishad, its general secretary Gint Cent Chichin, coordinator Ugin Nokrake and religious leader Father Subrato Torent Chinu spoke at the meeting.

Along with the officials, the adviser later visited activities under the project and site of the controversial boundary wall at Dokhala. He ordered suspension of the wall work.

When contacted yesterday over cell phone, Modhupur UNO DR MA Parvez Rahim said, the wall construction work is suspended.

"We will work jointly with local indigenous leaders to protect their interests," he said.

Indigenous leader Ajoy-e-Mre said the adviser assured them that interests of indigenous people in Madhupur region will be protected.

"We do not want any boundary wall at Madhupur forests as over 20,000 indigenous people in the region consider the forest as their mother. We can not accept any boundary wall or gates in the forest".

Tangail DC Akhtar Ali Sarkar said about 20,000 acres out of total 45,000 acres of forestlands in Madhupur Reserve Forest were grabbed by outsiders who raised banana and pineapple orchards by encroaching forestlands.

"The lost tradition of the local indigenous people will be revived and 'shal' and 'gajari' forests will be re-created by evicting the outsider grabbers from Madhupur Reserve Forest, the second biggest such forest in the country," the DC said.

The forest department took up the Eco Park project involving Tk 9.73 crore in 2000. It covers 3,000 acres of forests in Madhupur.

Indigenous people opposed the plan and launched agitation against it when the forest department began construction of a 12-feet height boundary wall cordonning the forest under the project in 2004.

Seminar on right to info held in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The Mass Line Media Centre, an NGO, held a seminar on 'Right to Information to Develop Standard of Living' at a restaurant in Moulvibazar town yesterday.

Civil Surgeon Afaz Uddin Ahmed was the chief guest at the seminar, attended by journalists, public representatives, professionals and the elite of the town.

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7x3

10x3