

DELAY IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW PAY SCALE

Govt employees unhappy

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Delay in the announcement of new proposed pay scale has led to widespread dissatisfaction among the government employees in the secretariat as well as other government offices across the country, according to a confidential report of Special Branch of Police.

Also, the huge gap between different tiers in the proposed salary structure is fuelling resentment among the employees, the report said and called for the government's intervention in addressing the issue.

The report was submitted to the home ministry

recently.

The report has put forward two-point recommendation, saying that the only way to remove the negative attitude of the employees towards the government is to announce the pay scale without further delay.

It also suggested introducing a single pay scale for all employees of the republic. Special allowance might be introduced for the special category of employees, said the report, adding that otherwise discrimination in pension and gratuity would be increased for different pay scales.

Finance Minister AMA Muhih has said the new pay

scale would be announced in November. Earlier, he told the media that the pay scale would be announced after Eid-ul-Fitr. He, however, said it would be effective from July 1, 2009 whenever the pay scale is announced.

The police report said some employees' unions in the secretariat have been taking preparation to stage demonstrations to press home their demand for quick implementation of the new pay scale.

The unions have already submitted memorandum to the finance minister with a call for immediate implementation of the pay scale with narrow gaps between

various levels in the salary structure.

A group of employees has also met the prime minister and urged her to reduce the gap in the salary structure.

Recently, a section of employees even tried to lay a siege to the finance ministry to press home their demands. After their attempt, security measures have been beefed up at the secretariat.

The finance ministry, however, has now been reviewing the proposed pay scale and would finalise it soon at the cabinet meeting after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returns home from abroad, sources said.

SHIP-BREAKING YARDS
HC rule on govt to monitor activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the authorities concerned to explain why they should not be directed to regularly monitor the activities in the ship breaking yards as per relevant laws and its (HC) earlier directives.

The HC in March this year directed the government to ensure that ships are broken after ensuring safe working condition for the workers and making arrangements for disposal for hazardous waste and protection of environment.

The ship-breaking yards have to take or apply for environmental clearance from the government, it directed.

Government officials concerned and the authorities of Pakja Shipyard, Kabin Steel Yard and Crystal Shipyard have been asked to apply the rule within two weeks.

The HC bench comprising of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui came up with the rule upon a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela).

The petition sought directions from the HC upon the respondents to ensure implementation of labour and environment-related laws in the operation of the ship breaking yards and to take appropriate actions against the non-compliant ship breakers/ yard-owners.

It was stated in the petition that in view of the repeated failure by the respondents to enforce legal sanctions, the non-compliant and defiant activities of the ship breaking yards in the name of ship breaking continued resulting to the deaths and injuries of 16 labourers within a span of just seven months (from last March to October 2009). Advocate Al Mohammad Ali moved the petition.

"There is no scope to drive out an elected government without a no-confidence motion by majority in the parliament before its tenure ends," he said after attending a bilateral meeting with the representatives of United Kingdom's Labour Party, Conservative Party, Liberal Democratic Party, Westminster Foundation, among others, at the meeting.

But, he said, Oman wants to check any forms of human trafficking and fraudulent practices and improve the recruitment process.

Employers pay the salary to the workers through banks.

The Oman delegation, on the other hand, said Bangladesh should make sure that the workers going to Oman have skills appropriate for the job.

"Despite economic recession, Oman needs more skilled and semi-skilled workers in construction and agriculture sectors. In 2008-09, recruitment of foreign workers' increased by 18 percent," a member of the Oman delegation told The Daily Star after the meeting.

The delegation members said they would discuss the issue with the authorities concerned.

Bangladesh also requested them to ensure that the



Bangladesh Civil Students Rights Movement forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding removal of discrepancy between division and grade point system in examinations and protesting police attack on students.

PHOTO: STAR

Khaleda's remark on govt tenure anti-constitutional
Says AL general secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam yesterday termed BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's remark on the government tenure "anti-constitutional and anti-state" since only a no-confidence motion by majority in the parliament can oust the government.

"We established the country's map at the cost of 30 lakh freedom fighters. So, we know its dignity and how to protect the map," he added saying AL changed the map of her beloved.

ASHRAF said anti-liberation war forces along with those who do not believe in the independence of Bangladesh could change the country's map, not the AL. Those who believe in democracy and constitutional rule cannot make such statements, he added terming Khaleda's statements an attack

on the AL president's political office at Dhanmondi.

Ashraf, also LGRD and cooperatives minister, criticised Khaleda's comment that the government wants to change the country's map.

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