

Bill placed seeking code of conduct for MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 A private members' bill was placed in parliament yesterday seeking to formulate a code of conduct for lawmakers to ensure high moral standard of the House members.
 Ruling Awami League lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury placed the bill, which was sent to the parliamentary committee on private members' bill and resolutions for scrutiny.
 The bill proposed to form a nine-member ethics committee led by the speaker to investigate allegations against lawmakers. The committee will have representatives from lawmakers of all political parties.

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DEALS WITH INDIA BNP turns to like-minded parties to stage protests

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN
 BNP, the main opposition in parliament, has taken an initiative to build a greater unity among political parties and personalities traditionally known as having doubts about India's good will towards Bangladesh.
 The unity is sought to protest the treaties and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina signed with India during her recent visit there, according to party insiders.
 BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, also leader of the opposition, is likely to make a formal appeal to prospective allies on Saturday to that effect.
 She is scheduled to address a media briefing on the day to

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Headmaster recruitment test results published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The Directorate of Primary Education yesterday published the results of written examinations for recruitment of primary school headmasters.
 A total of 6,566 candidates have qualified in the written test, says a press release.
 The examination was held on September 11 last year.

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Land grabbers own certain newspapers State minister tells House

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Advocate Quamrul Islam yesterday in parliament said everybody knows the names of the land grabbers and black money holders who are also owners of certain newspapers.
 "I don't want to be a subject of their ire by specifying their names," said the state minister, who was replying to lawmakers' queries on behalf of the information minister.
 During a question answer session, Jatiya Party lawmaker Hafizuddin Ahmed said he came to know from newspapers that land grabbers and black money holders have become owners of newspapers as well. He wanted to know the names of the newspapers owned by land grabbers and black money holders.

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Arsenic in crop



REAZ AHMAD
 Unabated mining of groundwater for irrigation is causing heavy deposits of arsenic in vast tracts of the country's cultivable lands, posing a threat to crop production in future.
 Noting that non-flooded lands are particularly at risk of arsenic accumulation due to heavy dependency on groundwater irrigation for paddy production, two Bangladeshi researchers have cautioned against further expansion of dry-season rice -- Boro-- at the cost of depositing more arsenic in soil.
 They also found penetration of arsenic into the grains, though at a low level. And they found presence of up to 0.3 milligram of

Heavy arsenic deposits in cropland due to unabated extraction of groundwater; non-flooded land at risk

arsenic in per kilogram of paddy grown in their research site in Munshiganj district.
 Prof M Ashraf Ali, one of the researchers, said, "We cannot say for sure the degree of health hazard it poses for human body right at the moment as there is no set standard of permissible arsenic level in food as yet."
 He went on, "If the croplands continue to accumulate larger amount of arsenic, the level of its penetration into the food chain will be higher too posing greater risks."
 Arsenic is a notoriously poisonous metalloid classified as a Class-1 carcinogen, meaning it is too harmful to humans. Other Class-1 carcinogens include asbestos, formaldehyde

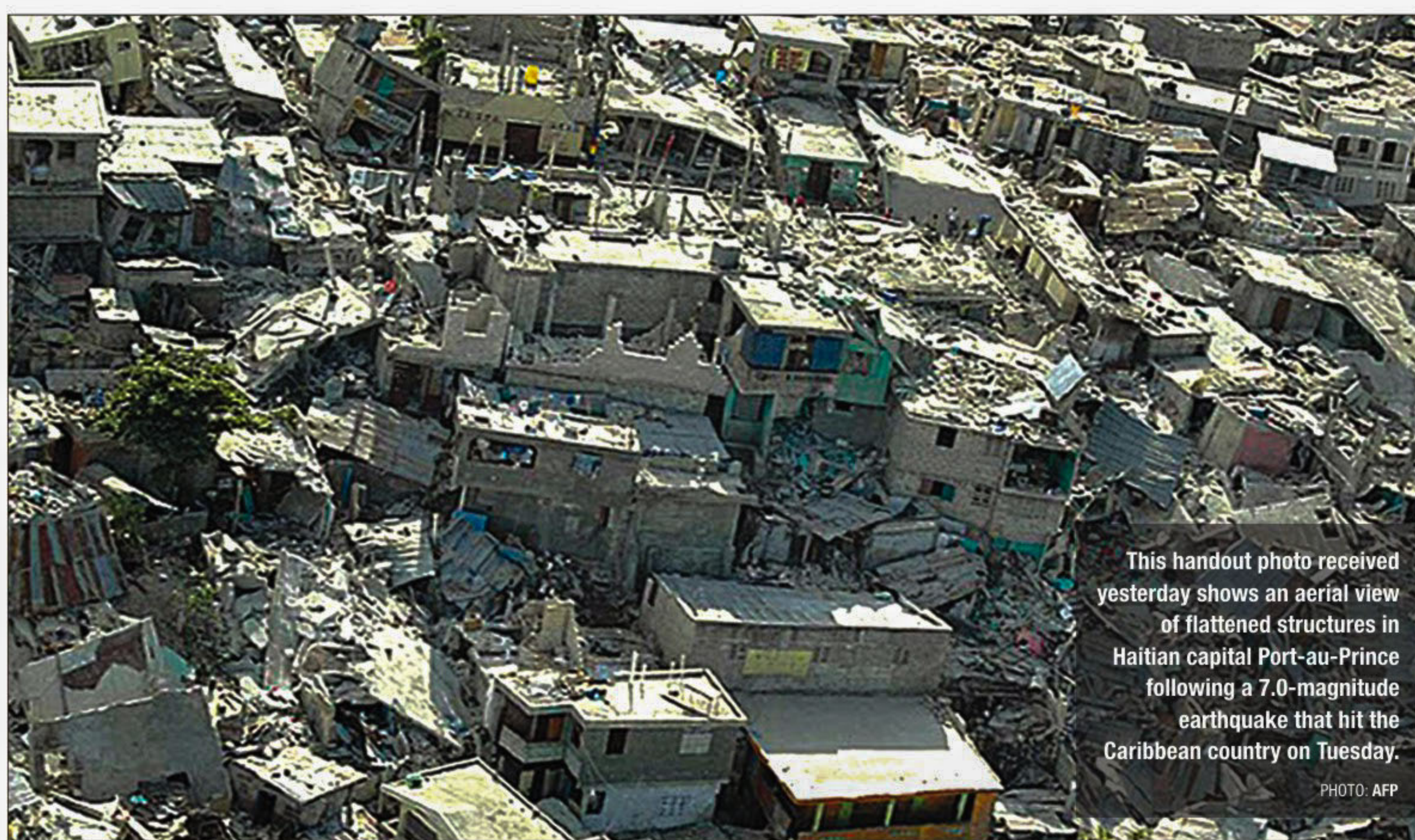
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PM okays five rental bids

New power projects to miss next irrigation season

STAR REPORT
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday approved bids for five rental power projects with a total production capacity of 330 megawatt.
 These were okayed by the cabinet purchase committee on December 23 last year.
 Contracts with the bidders are expected to be signed in the next few days, sources said.
 But since the approval has been delayed by two months, the government objective of installing costly rental power plants to minimise power crisis during the upcoming irrigation season will be severely compromised. Power from these plants will not be available for irrigation.
 Besides, the government's original plan to have 530 MW rental power within this year has also fallen flat due to lack of competent bidders. This will affect the government envisaged "zero load shedding" by the end of this year, sources said.
 The Power Development Board that floated tender for eight rental power projects with the aim of signing contracts by November 30 last year failed to complete its evaluation before mid-December due to various factors. As it finally recommended five bidders, many officials questioned the selection on

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This handout photo received yesterday shows an aerial view of flattened structures in Haitian capital Port-au-Prince following a 7.0-magnitude earthquake that hit the Caribbean country on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Malaysian firm gets MRP job

Purchase body okays bid; project to be delayed by 2 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The cabinet committee on government purchase yesterday gave final approval to awarding the machine-readable passport and visa project to Malaysia-based IRIS Corporation Berhad with just two and a half months' time to meet an international deadline for introduction of those.
 "As there has been delay in the process of tender document evaluation and choosing a firm, introduction of MRP and MRV will be delayed by at least two months," said an expert, who is also a member of the evaluation committee.
 As per a provision of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Bangladesh will have to introduce MRP

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6 Bangladeshi police officers in Haiti safe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Six Bangladesh Police officials working for the UN peace-keeping mission in Haiti were reported safe yesterday following the massive quake that rocked the Caribbean country on Tuesday.
 Additional Inspector General of Police (AIGP-Media) Nazrul Islam told The Daily Star that the officials sent e-mails to the police headquarters in Dhaka yesterday confirming they were unhurt.
 The six policemen, including two traffic officials, were

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Frantic search for quake survivors

Growing desperation for food, medicines in Haiti

AFP, Port-au-Prince
 Rescuers raced against the clock yesterday to find earthquake survivors among thousands of corpses in Haiti as plane loads of international aid began arriving in the ruined nation.
 Amid mounting desperation over shortages of medicines and food, and with officials warning the overall death toll may top 100,000, many people who escaped with their lives spent a second night on the streets.
 Schools, hospitals, hotels, ministries and the presidential palace lay in ruins and people caked in blood and dust pleaded for help as

they lay trapped beneath mountains of concrete in Port-au-Prince.
 Reflecting the grim mood in the impoverished city of two millions, totally unprepared to cope with a tragedy of this magnitude, a preacher warned in Creole about the end of the world.
 Jeanwell Antoine held a trapped baby's arm and sought to comfort it as he clawed through the rubble and debris left behind by Tuesday's quake.
 "It is not me who is pushing back this earth. It is the hand of God, who loves life and is guiding me so I can save this baby," he said.

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Stop illegal VoIP

PM directs telecoms minister at cabinet meeting; proposals to raise remunerations of president, PM, ministers sent back to ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the authorities concerned to immediately stop illegal use of voice over Internet protocol (VoIP).
 "I sometimes got mobile phone calls from the country's different cell numbers but after receiving I see them overseas calls. All these are happening due to illegal VoIP which should be stopped," said Hasina at a regular cabinet meeting as quoted by a meeting source.
 The source said Hasina became unhappy with the continuing illegal VoIP business and asked Post and Telecommunications Minister Raziuddin Ahmed Raju to stop it immediately.
 The ministers at the meeting congratulated the prime minister for her 'successful' India tour saying people would be benefited greatly from the agreements signed between Bangladesh and India.
 They told Hasina that Bangladesh should always maintain good relations with India for its own interests and she has played a vital role in this regard.
 In response, the premier said she is happy

with the outcome of her India tour. Hasina also briefed the cabinet members on her India visit.
 The cabinet sent back to the authorities concerned three proposals for raising remuneration and benefits for the president, the prime minister, ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers.
 It also changed the Bangla name of the fisheries and livestock ministry to "Matsya and Pranisampad Montronalay" from "Matsya and Pashusampad Montronalay".
 The cabinet decided to send medical teams to earthquake-ravaged Haiti and adopted a condolence motion mourning the loss of life in the devastating earthquake.
 Meanwhile, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leader Mainuddin Khan Badal on a point of order in parliament said Bangladesh should stand by the Haitians at this crucial moment.
 In response, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said the prime minister at the cabinet meeting condoled the loss of life in the earthquake and asked the foreign ministry to take necessary steps to send aid to Haiti.
 Both the premier and Foreign Minister Dipu

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Contempt rule against 5 officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The High Court yesterday issued a contempt of court rule against four government officials and a former officer for violating an HC order.
 The court asked the officials to explain within four weeks why contempt proceedings should not be brought against them.
 The officials are Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Sharful Alam, Joint Secretary Shamsul Kibria, Senior Assistant Secretary Sabbir Hossain and Director General of the Fisheries Department Abdul Khalek and its former DG Rafiqul Islam.
 The HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Quamrul Islam Siddiqui issued the rule following a contempt of court petition filed by Abdus Sattar, a senior upazila fisheries officer.
 Earlier on January 5, this bench upon a writ petition

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JOB OPPORTUNITY

Our Client is a Distribution Company in Singapore dealing in Polymer, Organic Chemicals products. They are well established business unit and have proven successful business history for many years. They are expanding and for operations in Bangladesh they are looking for Human Resource.

Country Manager -
 Applicant should have at least 10 years of experience in distribution / marketing business with business management skill, leadership quality, communication skill, excellent personality and be healthy. Applicant may have knowledge of taxation and company registration. Preferred age group 35 ~ 40 Years.

Marketing Manager -
 Applicant should preferably have 5 years of experience in marketing business with excellent communication skills; be self-initiator, dedicated & target achiever with excellent personality and health. Experience in business of Polymer, Organic Chemical will be added advantage

Marketing Executive -
 Applicant can be a fresher, but must be fast learner, excellent communication skill, dedicated and willing to learn with excellent personality and health.

Logistics Executive -
 Applicant must have good persuasive communication and computer skills. Knowledge on Sea Shipment and Letter of Credit is must and if experience it will be added advantage

Personal Assistant to Management Cum Receptionist:-
 A pleasing personality with excellent communication skills and good computer knowledge. Should have secretarial skills with pleasant voice.
 - Remuneration package will be best in industry. - Application is open for all genders.
 - Our client assures long term growth of the candidate. - Serious applicant may only apply.
 - Target date of joining 15th Feb'10.
 - Apply at bangladesh2010@jobpmc.com with recent passport size photograph, resume and current remuneration package, by 22nd Jan'2010.