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Over 1,000 insttts to be on MPO list

Govt to make list public in a week

WASIM BIN HABIB

At least 1,000 non-government educational institutions will get monthly pay order (MPO) facilities as the government will publish a list of the institutions within a week giving the lower secondary and secondary schools priority over colleges.

The ministry will publish the list within a week from over 7,500 applications submitted for MPO, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday.

A high-level committee is making a final scrutiny for giving the institutions monthly pay order facilities, he told reporters at his secretariat in the city.

"We will put the list on the website as well," the minister added.

He, however, did not mention the possible numbers of schools, madrasas, colleges and technical institutions to be entitled to MPO. But the highly placed sources at the ministry hinted that the number of institutions could be between 1,000 and 1,100.

The government has allocated Tk 112 crore for the MPO.

Under the MPO, teachers and employees will get cent percent basic salaries and other benefits from the government.

The MPO has been withheld since 2004 following allegations of corruption and nepotism in the process. After assuming office, the government formed a committee to devise a policy for the MPO.

The ministry sources said the institutions from Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet will be enrolled mostly this time as fewer institutions in these areas were included in MPO system last time.

The institutions having government's approval after January 2008 will not be included in the list this time, they added.

The finance ministry had recommended listing 1,000 institutions last year when it gave the allocation for MPO.

The number of institutions recommended by the finance ministry may change, Nahid said adding many institutions may not fulfil the criteria for MPO inclusion.

He also said they had prepared MPO guidelines after reviewing proposals of different ministries and the prime minister's office.

The list will be made based on the guidelines, he said.

Asked about pressure from the lawmakers, he said they will not recommend any institution going beyond the guidelines.

The ministry sources said lower secondary and secondary schools will get priority as their staff number is small.

The ministry will send a proposal to the finance ministry requesting them to allocate more money in the coming budget for MPO inclusion, they added.

Sources said a huge number of teachers are lobbying for enrolment under the MPO for the last few days that prompted the MPO listing

Leaders address summit

Manmohan for free movement of people, goods

UNB, Thimpu

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh yesterday observed that regional cooperation should enable free movement of people, goods, services and ideas, saying, "it should help us re-discover our shared heritage and build our common future."

"In looking back at the two and a half decades, we can claim the glass is half-full, and compliment ourselves, or, we can admit the glass is half-empty and challenge ourselves," he said in a statement at the opening session of the 16th summit of the Saarc that also marks the Silver Jubilee.

Expressing disappointment over low flow of intra-regional trade, he said, "The share of intra-regional trade and investment flows in total trade and investment flows in South Asia is far below compared with East and South-east Asia."

On climate change, the Indian PM said there is perhaps no region more vulnerable to the effects of climate



SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Gilani seeks stability, harmony

UNB, Thimpu

Pakistan Prime Minister Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has called for harmony and stability in South Asia to realise socio-economic development and ensure well-being of the people in the region.



SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Rajapakse for unified voice on climate

UNB, Thimpu

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse has called for raising unified South Asian voice on climate change, saying the developed world who have historically contributed to the



SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Fight climate change jointly, urges Madhav

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal has underscored the need for collective efforts of Saarc member countries to face the increasing challenges of climate change.



SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

End discords for prosperity, urges Thinley

UNB, Thimpu

Bhutanese Prime Minister Jigmi Y Thinley, who assumed the chairmanship of eight-nation Saarc yesterday has called for all existing differences among the neighbours in the region



SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Nasheed rakes up Indo-Pak differences

PTI, Thimpu

Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed yesterday spoke about strained relations between India and Pakistan, saying that he hopes today's meeting between the prime



SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

Biggest threat is terrorism, says Karzai

UNB, Thimpu

Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai has said the most challenging threats facing the South Asia are terrorism, extremism, narcotics and organised crime and Saarc could be a platform to combat



SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Rajuk decides to protect Dumni canal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Rajuk has decided to protect Dumni Khal, a natural canal that serves as storm water drainage in the capital's Khilkhet area, by constructing bridges and culverts over it, a top official of Rajuk said yesterday.

On Monday, The Daily Star reported destruction of most Boro paddy on hundreds of acres of land and waterlogging in four villages due to filling up of the canal for building a 300-foot wide road to connect Rajuk's Purbachal New Town

300MW RENTAL POWER 2 more unsolicited deals under process

STAR REPORT

The power ministry today seeks the cabinet purchase committee's approval for two unsolicited rental power deals involving 300 megawatt -- one with an experienced British company and the other with a local company having negligible experience.

The ministry had earlier initialled contracts with British Aggreko for installing 200 MW power units in Khulna and Ashuganj, and with local Desh Energy for a 100 MW unit in Siddhirganj by July-August for three years. The plants would operate on diesel.

Besides, the power ministry has agreed to a proposal from local firm Summit Power to increase production capacity of its 110 MW Khulna barge mounted power plant by 100 MW for five years.

The ministry sealed these deals following the prime minister's nod for allowing unsolicited power contracts to reduce the persisting load shedding in the shortest possible time. The premier also formed a high-powered inter-ministerial committee to expedite the process.

Initially, the ministry invited power companies that have a minimum experience of

PM seeks US help to fight terrorism

UNB, Thimpu

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday sought cooperation from all, including the United States, to combat terrorism saying that it is not possible to fight against terrorism alone.

She sought the cooperation when US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake called on her at Bangladesh Villa in Saarc Village.

The PM mentioned that terrorism has become a threat to peace and prosperity of the world, including the Saarc region.

STRANDED OFFSHORE BENIN Four seamen on way back home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four of the 31 Bangladeshi seamen stranded offshore Benin flew for their long-missed home yesterday.

Ashraful Alam, Zulfiqar, Hossain and Fazlul Haque are the lucky four to escape the ordeal the rest sailors are still facing in the faraway West African country.

"Their flight took off at Benin local time 11:30pm [yesterday 4:30pm BST]," said Ikramul Haque, a crewmember at the ship, MT Paloma, told The Daily Star last night. "They may arrive in Dhaka Thursday morning," he said.

Ikramul said the Greece-based shipping company's agent in Benin, however, did not pay salaries to the sailors though it earlier promised to do so.

Remain above political bias

CJ urges young lawyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim yesterday urged young lawyers to discharge their professional duties remaining above any political bias, for upholding the constitution and establishing the rule of law.

He said the lawyers could protect the people's rights by placing appropriate legal interpretation before the court.

The chief justice made the remarks while addressing as

CANCER HOSPITAL Anomalies in recruitment alleged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital employees' association yesterday demonstrated on the hospital premises alleging anomalies in recruitment process of class III and class IV employees.

The association leaders claimed that the recruitment committee did not follow the freedom fighters' and employees' quota in recruiting some



Teargas fogs up a road at Mirpur-13 in the capital as garment workers clash with police yesterday morning. Workers of multiple garment factories blockaded the road demanding pay hike, prompting the law enforcers to fire teargas shells to disperse them. (Story on page 1)

They were wanted

Police disclose identity of 3 bodies found buried on Turag bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The three bodies, recovered on the bank of the Turag River on Tuesday, are of a Juba Dal leader and his two bodyguards, police said yesterday.

They were identified as Mizanur Rahman, Juba Dal president of Sakoria union in Jhalakathi, and his bodyguards Forkan Ahmed of Rajapur upazila in Jhalakathi, and Nazmul Huq Murad of Kaukhali in Pirojpur.

Police said the three were on the run for the last few months as they had been accused in several murder and extortion cases filed with different police stations in Dhaka, Jhalakathi, Pirojpur and Khulna.

Navy personnel arrested Mizan with firearms in 1995 after a gunfight with a pirate gang in the Sundarbans. He was a member of the gang at that time.

Mizan was later released from Khulna jail on a High Court bail. Shamsul Huq, officer-in-charge of Rajapur Police Station, said Mizan was a listed criminal and accused in six cases on various charges including murder, extortion and assault on police.

"He was involved in arms smuggling and drug peddling in Jhalakathi. Forkan was his associate and an accused in several cases," Shamsul said.

Sources said Mizan, Murad and Forkan came to Dhaka after the last caretaker government assumed power and got involved in criminal activities.

OnlinePoll

Do you think restricting ACC's freedom contradicts the government's pledge to root out corruption?

Yes (86.2%)
No (10.6%)
No Comments (3.2%)

Total votes: 406

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think PM Sheikh Hasina's vision to create a green South Asia reflects in the current state of forestry in Bangladesh?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

ACC sues Eskandar for illegal wealth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-corruption Commission yesterday filed a case against Major (ret'd) Sayeed Eskandar, brother of BNP chief Khaleda Zia, with the city's Ramna Police Station on charges of amassing illegal wealth and concealing information about it, police said.

Ramna Police Station Officer-in-charge (OC) Shibli Noman said ACC Deputy Director Benajir Ahmed filed the case against Eskandar, a member of BNP standing committee, under section-1 of Anti-corruption Commission Act-2004.

The case was filed yesterday afternoon as ACC investigation found dissimilarities between the wealth Eskandar has and the

One killed in Benapole bomb blast

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A bomb blast in a Baishakhi Mela (fair) killed a young man and injured 10 others last night on a football ground in Benapole.

The deceased was identified as Zia, 32, son of Yunus Ali of Sadirpur village.

He died on spot while the

Suicide car bomb kills 4 Pak cops

AFP, Peshawar

A suicide car bomb attack hit a Pakistani police checkpoint on the outskirts of Peshawar before dawn yesterday, killing four police and wounding 11 people, including a woman and a cleric.

Northwest Pakistan is on the front line of the country's battle against Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked militants holed up in the tribal belt on the Afghan border which is subject to Pakistani military operations and US drone attacks.

More than 50 bomb attacks have struck the nuclear-armed country so far this year, killing around 500 people, and a string of deadly attacks this month have been largely concentrated in the northwest.

Wednesday's attacker struck the checkpoint in Pir Bala village, on the main road from Peshawar, Pakistan's north-western capital, to Mohmand, one of seven districts in the al-Qaeda and Taliban-infested tribal belt.

Accused hurls sandal over trial delay

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An accused yesterday hurled his sandal at a judge in a Sylhet courtroom blaming the judge for unusual delay in the trial process.

Soon after the incident, law enforcers got hold of Mohammad Sumon, accused in a robbery case, and took