

India, China to bid for Nepal's MRP

ANI, Kathmandu

India and China are likely to bid for the Machine Readable Passport (MRP) contract for which the government had recently called tenders.

According to Kantipur, both countries have recently picked up tender copies for MRP bids at a cost of Rs 10,000 each.

Sources said that the Government of India undertaking, Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India (SPMCI), picked the tender copy.

This company was awarded the contract by the incumbent government on March 19, but it was later scrapped on April 11 following directives from Public Accounts Committee and pressure from political parties.

Besides the cost factor, the deal landed in controversy after a confidential letter written on December 4, 2009 by Indian envoy Rakesh Sood to Foreign Affairs Minister Sujata Koirala was leaked.

The Foreign Ministry came up with a new tender on May 18, open to all interested firms with a more relaxed format. The new tender paper has not barred any country from taking part in the process.



The flooded river Danube can be seen in Passau, southern Germany yesterday. After heavy rainfalls, many streets are flooded near the banks of the rivers Danube and Inn, which confluence in Passau.

PHOTO: AFP

BNP yet to return

FROM PAGE 16
"The government must withdraw the cancellation order and release him. Then we'll consider our return to parliament."

He said they would continue their protest against "misdeeds" of the government.

Contacted by The Daily Star over phone, BNP lawmaker Nazrul Islam Manju said the office of the opposition chief whip yesterday called the party lawmakers and asked them to refrain from joining yesterday's sitting.

The incident centring Amar Desh prompted the main opposition, which was in a quandary over joining the inaugural sitting of the fifth session, also the budget session, to overcome the dilemma.

They joined the inaugural sitting and staged walkout twice protesting against the newspaper incident.

The opposition lawmakers did not take part in other scheduled businesses of that day.

A few lawmakers however said the budget session will

be a lengthy one and party policymakers will decide about the next course of action in view of the prevailing situation.

"The BNP Parliamentary Party will sit to review the overall situation and decide whether the party will join the current session or not," the opposition chief whip said.

The BNP-led opposition lawmakers joined the inaugural session of the ninth parliament that began on January 25 last year and continued their participation until the first session was prorogued, although they remained absent in some sittings.

They started boycotting the House from the second session, which was also the budget session.

After being off for 64 consecutive sittings since June last year, the BNP-led opposition lawmakers returned to the House on February 11.

But the party lawmakers walked out of parliament on April 4, a day before prorogation of the fourth session.

US senator cancels Myanmar trip

AFP, Bangkok

A prominent US Senator abruptly cancelled a trip to military-ruled Myanmar yesterday after new allegations that the junta is working with North Korea to develop a nuclear programme.

Democratic lawmaker Jim Webb, who had been due to arrive in the capital Naypyidaw late Thursday, released a statement saying it would be "unwise and potentially counterproductive" to visit in light of the latest suspicions.

He had been due to hold talks with detained democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and the country's reclusive military junta.

Communists suffer setback in West Bengal polls

BBC ONLINE, INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

The ruling Communists in the Indian state of West Bengal have suffered a major setback in the municipal polls.

The opposition Trinamul Congress swept the polls in the capital, Calcutta, winning 95 of the 141 seats. The Communists managed to win 33 seats.

Of the remaining 80 municipalities, Trinamul won 25, while the Communists trailed with 17. In many towns there was no outright winner.

West Bengal's Communist-led coalition has been in power for 33 years.

But it now looks as if their hold on the state is increasingly being whittled away.

They suffered a setback at the general elections last year when the left coalition could only manage to win 15 of the state's 42 parliament

seats. The fiercely anti-Left Trinamul won 19, the Congress won five and a smaller socialist ally won one seat.

The Congress party also did poorly in Sunday's municipal polls, picking up just 10 seats in Calcutta and seven seats in the other municipalities.

'A SERIOUS MATTER'
The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) yesterday said the Left defeat in West Bengal's municipal elections was 'a serious matter' but added the result only reflected urban sentiment.

"It will be fallacious to conclude that the results of these municipal elections are a reflection of the state's electorate as a whole," CPI-M's organ People's Democracy said in an editorial.

'Nevertheless, it is a reflection of urban Bengal,' it added. 'To that extent, the Left Front is committed to undertake a serious introspection of these results.'

UN official criticises US drone attacks

BBC ONLINE

The use of targeted killings with weapons like drone aircraft poses a growing challenge to the international rule of law, a UN official says.

Philip Alston said that the US in particular was doing damage to rules designed to protect the right of life.

Alston, UN special reporter on extra judicial killings, feared a "Playstation" mentality could develop.

His report to the UN Human Rights Council also brings renewed scrutiny of Israel and Russia. President Barack Obama has increased the use of Predator drones to attack militants in Pakistan.

Father dies after stalking

FROM PAGE 1

to police stalker Shamim Ahmed. He had apprehended Shamim with the help of relatives when Shamim was stalking his daughter Shila, a class-VIII student of Bogra Government Girls' High School.

Hearing the news, journalists rushed to the police camp and began taking pictures of Shamim and collecting information for their report.

"Please do not take photographs. If you publish the news, it would bring me dishonour. I would not be able to marry off my daughter," Sub-Inspector Khairul

Bashar verbatim quoted Munna.

Journalists, however, assured him that they would only publish the photograph of the stalker and Munna's honour will not be harmed.

The journalists then continued to do their work.

Unnoticed by many Munna left and collapsed on the motorbike parking lot of the police camp.

Police and his relatives took him to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

Requesting anonymity a policeman said, "It is apparent that apprehension of shame and dishonour was

unbearable for the man."

Around 2:15pm, Munna, his brother Basirul Islam and his brother-in-law caught Shamim, a trainee clerk at Bogra Judge Court, as Shamim was pulling Shila by her hand near her school.

Shila was on her way home.

She had stopped going to school because of Shamim but Munna asked her to go yesterday in order to catch Shamim red handed.

Sub-Inspector Khairul Bashir said a case has been filed against Shamim in connection with stalking and the police would produce him before a court today.

Death toll rises to 25

FROM PAGE 1

Defense (FSCD) Director General Brig Gen Abu Nayeem Mohammad Shahidullah said after removing entire debris from the spot the rescue operation has been closed, as there was no more claim of missing person.

FSCD officials said they rescued the body of 22-year old housewife Anwara Begum and 33-year old shopkeeper Babul Mollah yesterday morning.

Anwara's three children--two sons and a daughter--were also killed in the disaster.

Of the 25 deceased, 11 were female and seven children. 24 bodies were received by their relatives and the rest one is

still to be identified.

Rajuk official Shafiqul Islam filed a case with Tejgaon Police Station against Zafar Iqbal Dalim, son of the owner of the building, for constructing the structure without approval.

PROBE COMMITTEES
Chairman of Rajuk Md Nurul Huda said the government has formed a committee headed by the chief engineer of Rajuk to find out the risky buildings of Dhaka city.

The committee will start its work from Sunday and will identify risky buildings at Begunbari area, he said.

"We will take action as per the report of the committee," he said.

Other members of the committee are representative of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Buet, Department of Public Works and Dhaka City Corporation, he said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Housing and Public Works formed a five-member committee headed by its Joint Secretary Zillur Rahman to probe the collapse of the five-storey building in Begunbari.

The committee will submit its report within seven days, said an official of housing ministry.

Sheikh Mizanur Rahman is member secretary of the committee.

CYCLONE PHET LOOMS

Pakistan evacuates 60,000

AFP, Karachi

A major cyclone was closing in on Pakistan's coastline, where the president ordered immediate precautionary measures and around 60,000 residents were being evacuated from Sindh province, officials said yesterday.

Another half a million could be affected in Baluchistan province if Cyclone Phet smashes into Pakistan.

Facebook to remove offensive

FROM PAGE 1

enforcement relations on Facebook and promoting a safe experience on the site for our users."

He added, "I can be your main point of contact as we work through and establish detailed processes for removing troubling content in the future."

The BTRC chairman said Facebook authorities have already removed some of the offensive links. He added, "As we now have a channel to communicate with the

Facebook team, I believe the issue will be resolved within a short time."

He said the user, who posted the offensive items, was detected in the UK. "We are trying to contact the user to remove the contents."

Meanwhile, Dr Kamal Hossain and Associates have sent a notice yesterday to the information secretary, law secretary, BTRC chairman and science and ICT ministry, demanding they restore access to Facebook within 24 hours of

receipt of the notice.

The notice, signed by advocate Moin Ghani, said the action of blocking access to the website is violation of fundamental right as guaranteed by the constitution.

The notice has been served on behalf of three Facebook users, Arafat Hosen Khan, Kazi Ataul-Usman and Rokeya Chowdhury.

Around nine lakh Facebook users in Bangladesh remain offline

since the government on Saturday 'temporarily' blocked access to the popular website.

The decision came after the arrest of a youth for uploading satirical images of some leading politicians including the prime minister and the leader of the opposition.

BTRC said the largest social networking website was blocked also for hosting of some anti-religious and pornographic links by users across the globe.

Star, HSBC announce

FROM PAGE 1

The awards aim to create public awareness through recognition of work relating to adaptation, mitigation and research for climate change. The prize will be given after a vigorous selection process.

The announcement came at a press conference moderated by The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam. Sanjay Prakash, CEO of HSBC bank, delivered the opening speech, while Dr Hasan Mahmud, state minister of environment and forest, was present as the chief guest.

"Climate change is not a threat to Bangladesh anymore. It has already affected the country," said State Minister Hasan Mahmud.

"Bangladesh is not one of the most vulnerable countries. Bangladesh is the most vulnerable country which is already facing the challenges of climate change," Mahmud said in his speech at the press conference held at National Press Club.

Citing examples of coastal land fallen barren due to salinity, frequent tidal surge, cyclones and other natural calamities, the state minister said by 2050 around three crore people would be displaced due to climate change even if the country's population

does not increase and remains the same.

Emphasising corporate social responsibility to help face challenges of a country, Mahmud said, "Facing climate change challenges and preserving environment are not the work for a single party. It's the work for the country and the nation. Those who are willing to work in this field are welcome to work together with us."

Mahmud said the government is making every policy keeping the issue of climate change in a focal point and climate change wings have been set up under different ministries.

Replying to questions of journalists, the minister said the government would soon initiate a drive to recover forest occupied by bigwigs and bring an end to river encroachment.

CEO of HSBC Bangladesh Sanjay Prakash announced the categories during the briefing.

Prakash also described HSBC's initiatives to face the climate change challenges globally. He explained that HSBC wants to work maintaining a policy that ensures reduction in consumption, reuse of resources and recycling.

He also mentioned allocation of \$100 million by HSBC to combat climate

change globally.

"Our effort is to honour, inspire and reward those who will play a significant role to face the impacts of climate change," said Mahfuz Anam.

"Our wish is to create public awareness and unite everyone to work together towards facing the challenges of climate change," he added.

Waste concern is the knowledge partner for the award.

Details about the programme and nominations are available at www.hsbc.com.bd and www.thedailystar.net.

Sarkozy pressured on Pak arms deal allegations

AFP, Paris

French opposition lawmakers yesterday called on President Nicolas Sarkozy to give all details of any links to suspected kickbacks on arms deals allegedly used to fund political campaigns.

Three Socialist deputies spoke out after extracts from a Luxembourg police report published Wednesday alleged that a company set up with Sarkozy's approval channelled money from arms deal commissions to fund political activities in France.

JOIN THE PERSONA FAMILY, EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

Persona Hair and Beauty Ltd., country's only and rapidly growing beauty care industry is going to extend its branch in Uttara shortly. For this new venture Persona is looking for committed, confident and self-motivated young individuals for the following positions.

Requirements

<p>01. Manager: 04 Masters/MBA with major in HRM/ Management Age not more than 35 yrs Able to plan, handle all the administrative & operational (day to day work) activities including security, store & logistic management. 8 yrs experience which at least 3 yrs in managerial position in any service oriented organization. Male/Female Strong leadership ability.</p>	<p>05. Store Executive: 10 M.Com/ B.Com Age not more than 25 yrs Male/Female At least 3 yrs experience in store/inventory management Basic computer skill & knowledge on inventory software Have to have knowledge on stock maintain and can work under pressure.</p>
<p>02. Asstt. Manager: 04 Masters/MBA in any discipline Age not more than 30yrs 5 yrs experience in any service oriented organization. Male/Female Excellent communication, planning & interpersonal skill. Computer literacy with good report writing skill</p>	<p>06. Accounts Executive: 05 M.Com/ B.Com Age not more than 30 yrs Female/ Male Experience & Knowledge in software accounting system will preferable.</p>
<p>03. Executive Customer care: 50 Graduation/ Masters in any discipline Male/Female Age not more than 28 yrs Should be smart, energetic with high proficiency in verbal & written communication in English. Computer literacy with good report writing skill Excellent communication, presentation & interpersonal skills and well mannered with a positive attitude. Proactive, independent and can work under pressure</p>	<p>07. IT Executive: 05 CSE/ Diploma in Network & PC trouble shooting Age not more than 30 yrs. Female/ Male Have to have knowledge on PC trouble shooting & IT support network administration.</p>

Competent candidates are requested to send their CV/Resume with a forwarding letter attaching two recent passport size colour photographs to the following address on or before June 18, 2010. Females are specially encouraged.

Please mark top left side of the envelope with the position you are applying for.

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