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PAY SCALE 'DISPARITY' Teachers meet PM today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will sit today with a delegation of public university teachers agitating over "disparities" in the eighth national pay scale to discuss the ongoing stalemate at the universities.

A 30-member delegation will represent the teachers in the meeting at Gono Bhaban at 4:30pm, said the teachers.

"The Prime Minister's Office has invited us to discuss the matter with the premier tomorrow [today]. We hope an announcement may come from the meeting," Prof ASM Maksud Kamal, secretary general of Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA), told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

The call from the prime minister came at a time when academic activities at all 37 public universities came to a near halt due to an indefinite work stoppage, enforced by the teachers since January 11, for removing "disparities" in the pay scale and also for retaining the selection grade and time scale.

Contacted, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Ehsanul Karim said he has "heard a teacher's delegation has been invited to Gono Bhaban today".

He, however, said that a rice cake festival would be held at Gono Bhaban around 4:30pm today where people from all professions would be present.

FBUTA, a platform of all public university teachers' associations in the country, has repeatedly called for a talk with the prime minister, saying a five-minute talk with her



Different vegetables are on display at the three-day National Vegetables Fair and Exhibition 2016, organised by the agriculture ministry and the Department of Agricultural Extension, at Khamarbari in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

First national vegetables fair begins

PORIMOL PALMA

The day is not far when farmers would not need soil to grow vegetables, fruits and flowers in Bangladesh.

Instead, they would use only water, solution of nutrients, sponge blocks and cork sheets to yield produce two to three times higher than the usual farming, said AKM Salim Reza Mollik, of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), while explaining Hydroponics yesterday at National Vegetables Fair and Exhibition 2016, first of its kind in the country.

Hydroponics is a method of growing plants in a water-based, nutrient rich solution.

Agriculturists at BARI have produced 16 types of vegetables, fruits and flowers, including tomato, capsicum, lettuce, bottle guard, strawberry and marigold, using this method.

TORTURE OF BB OFFICIAL Writ filed for judicial probe

Police submit probe report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday, seeking court directives to form a judicial committee to probe the alleged police torture on Bangladesh Bank official Golam Rabbi.

The petition also sought arrest of Sub-inspector

CREATING 'BRIBE FUND' IN BARISAL 10 cops disciplined

Won't be allowed promotion, pay hike for 2/3 years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Salary increments and promotions of 10 members of Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP), accused of creating a joint bribe fund to quicken their promotions, have been halted.

However, investigation into the involvement of another top police official has not been completed yet.

The decision to stop their increments and promotions were made by the Police Headquarters last month, BMP Deputy

Commissioner Habibur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday.

"The punishments were handed down to them on the basis of a probe report," he added.

Increments and promotions of assistant sub-inspectors Anisuzzaman, Monir Hossain, and Md Hanif, and Nayek Kobir Hossain have been suspended for three years, said BMP sources.

Increment and promotion of drivers Shohidul Islam, Bablu Jamaddar, and Dolon Baral; ration storekeepers

GM Quader JP's co-chair Declares Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday declared that his younger brother GM Quader is the party's co-chairman, a post that does not exist in the JP.

The JP boss came up with the sudden declaration in



SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

N'GANJ 5-MURDER MOTIVE

Feud over money? Cops clueless; doctors say murder was act of nonprofessional killers

STAR REPORT

Saturday's five-murder in Narayanganj was an act of "non-professional killers" and the victims died of head injuries caused by hitting with heavy objects, police and doctors said.

All the five are from one family. They are Taslima, 35, her son Shanto, 10, daughter Sumaiya, 5, brother Morshedul, 22, and sister-in-law Lamia, 25.

It is not yet clear who committed the murder and why. Meanwhile, Taslima's husband Shafiqul filed a murder case with Narayanganj Sadar Police Station yesterday,



Journo among 2 held with firearms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Detectives arrested two persons with firearms and sharp weapons in Mymensingh town early yesterday.

The arrestees are Sheikh Mehdi Hasan Nadim, 35, managing editor of local newspaper Dainik Jahan, and his accomplice Rassel, 30, police said.

Sayedee files review plea, seeks acquittal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Convicted war criminal Delawar Hossain Sayedee yesterday filed a petition seeking review of the Supreme Court verdict that commuted his death sentence to imprisonment until death.

Sayedee's advocate-on-record Zainal Abedin Tuhin submitted the petition to the appeal section of the SC seeking acquittal in all the five charges in which he was found guilty by this court.

In the 90-page petition, Sayedee mentioned 16 grounds and appealed to the SC to consider his prayer for acquittal, Masud Bin Sayedee, son of the convict, told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



BNP and Chhatra Dal activists torch banners, microphones and a pickup van of "Asol BNP", literary meaning real BNP, near the BNP central office at Nayapaltn in the capital yesterday. The "Asol BNP" men had gone there to occupy the office but had to leave without success due to resistance.

PHOTO: SK ANAMUL HAQ

'Asol BNP' bid to occupy office foiled again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some people under the banner of "Asol BNP" (literally real BNP) yesterday made an abortive attempt to enter the Naya Paltn central office of the BNP, the second such incident this month.

The group of around 10 men was chased away by BNP activists as it closed in on the office after starting from Bijoyagar Nightingale intersection around 3:40pm.

The 'Asol BNP' activists were carrying a banner with "Showdown of Revolution" written on it. They also had a mini pick-up carrying loudspeakers that were playing recitation of poems written by Kamrul Hasan Nasim, convener of the so-called Asol BNP, witnesses said.

But they took to their heels the moment activists of the BNP and their student wing, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, chased them with sticks in hand.

The BNP men later vandalised the loudspeakers and torched the pick-up. They also staged demonstrations there, chanting anti-government slogans.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

IS militants abduct 400 civilians in Syria

AFP, Beirut

Jihadists from the Islamic State group have abducted more than 400 Syrian civilians after capturing new ground in a major assault on the city of Deir Ezzor that left dozens dead.

The shock attack comes despite a Russian air campaign targeting the group that began in September, and more than a year of strikes by a US-led coalition against the jihadists in Syria.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said IS had killed at least 135 people in the multi-front attack that began on Saturday.

The dead included 85 civilians and 50 regime fighters, according to the monitor, which said yesterday that IS had also kidnapped more than 400 civilians from captured territory.

"Those abducted, all of whom are

Sunnis, include women, children and family members of pro-regime fighters," Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said.

He said they had been taken to areas under IS control in the west of Deir Ezzor province and to the border with Raqa province -- the main IS stronghold in Syria -- to the northwest.

The monitor said at least 42 IS fighters had been killed in the attack, adding that fighting was ongoing yesterday, with regime forces backed by Russian air strikes trying to recapture lost ground.

It added that regime forces were bringing additional troops and military equipment from elsewhere in the city to the battlefield.

Syria's state news agency SANA said at least 300 civilians, "most of them women, children and elderly people," had been killed in the assault.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

The miracle village



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The residents of Hiware Bazar, a remote village in Ahmednagar of the Indian state of Maharashtra, have managed to turn their fortune around in the span of just a few years.

They've gone from being a drought-stricken populace in the mid-1990s to the richest village in the nation today. Their story is a truly inspiring one.

Hiware Bazar currently boasts of having the highest GDP among all the villages in India. Its 1,250-strong population enjoys an average income of \$450



Late-Mohammed Hanif Bhuiyan

14th Death Anniversary of Late-Mohammed Hanif Bhuiyan

Founder Chairman of Abedin Group of Industries and an important social welfare worker, who died on 18th January 2002. He built many industries, social institutes such as Mosque, Madrasa, School & College which made him alive among us forever.

We remember him with deepest sorrow, love & respect on the occasion of his 14th death anniversary and pray to the Almighty Allah for peace & happiness of his departed soul.

Wife, Sons, Daughters of Late-Mohammed Hanif Bhuiyan and All Officer & Staffs of Abedin Group of Industries.