



An Iraqi demonstrator jumps over a burning tire during anti-government protests in Basra, Iraq yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Holding on to surge is key

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All stakeholders have to come under one umbrella to fight the pandemic effectively, said the minister.

Chairing the event, Secretary Ahmed Munir Saleheen of the ministry said they have taken various initiatives to fight the challenges in the sector those emerged amid the pandemic.

Welcoming the audience, BMET Director General Shamsul Alam said this year about 2.07 lakh migrant workers have employment abroad so far, whereas last year the number was a little over seven lakh.

Benjir Ahmed, president of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, said they were constructing an

international standard training centre in Gazipur which was at the final stage.

"Once the country will have skilled workforce, foreign recruiters will come by themselves and bargain. We want reach to that stage," he said.

Bac Executive Director Asif Saleh said the country needs to create an effective database of skilled workforce.

Besides, steps have to be taken so that skilled workers can have employment in new labour markets, he added.

Nathalie Chuard, ambassador of Switzerland in Bangladesh, said her country will keep continuing its support to Bangladesh's migration sector.

Deadly Fiji super cyclone sparks disease fears

AFP, Suva

Disease threatens to worsen an already desperate situation in Fiji, an official warned yesterday, where thousands of lives have been devastated in the wake of the deadly super cyclone Yasa.

Agencies rushed food and clean water to areas where the storm smashed into the northern islands of the South Pacific nation on Thursday night, forcing more than 23,000 people to flee their homes.

Four people died and entire villages were wiped out, with crops and livestock destroyed.

Agriculture officials are being sent to hard-hit areas to help farmers dispose of dead livestock to reduce the risk of disease, National Disaster Management Office director Vasiti Soko said.

Fiji is prone to violent storms at this time of year, with Cyclone Winston killing 44 people when it slammed into the islands in 2016.

"We're going to be doing a lot of work around shelter and the provision of clean water because we have seen the diseases that follow these cyclones... leptospirosis, diarrhoea, dengue, and especially if access to hospitals is limited," Ilisapeki Rokotunidau, the Fiji Red Cross director general, told AFP.

"From our experience from Winston, three months after Winston one of the biggest things was malnutrition."

Authorities on Saturday put the damage from the storm in the hundreds of millions of dollars, with one senior aid worker comparing the destruction to a war zone.

The Red Cross is now focused on providing relief to Bua and other areas

in the north of Fiji hit hard by the storm.

One local man who had lost his job in the major city of Nadi due to the Covid-19 pandemic and returned to Bua to rebuild his life was reported to have lost everything after the super cyclone hit.

"Now, everything is gone and he is saying 'there is no more use in living'," Rokotunidau said. "We suspect that it is the beginning of stories we will be hearing."

"The sad thing for a lot of people is 'what now'. Christmas is supposed to be a happy time of year and this is going to be a very dismal one."

Biden and Mexico leader discuss migration

AFP, Washington

US President-elect Joe Biden told Mexico's president Saturday he was committed to addressing the root causes of poor Latino migrants crossing the border into America.

Outgoing President Donald Trump made tightening the southern frontier against what he called the free and dangerous flow of people entering the US from Mexico and Central America a key pillar of his US-centric policy on immigration, including his fitful plan to build a border wall.

Biden spoke Saturday with President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and emphasized "the need to reinvigorate US-Mexico cooperation to ensure safe and orderly migration," the Biden transition team said in a statement.

Friendship

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minister of culture. Among the French celebrities who have agreed to join the honorary committee of the association are writer Herve Bazin, Nobel Prize winner and jurist Rene Cassin and philosopher Vladimir Jankelevitch.

ABORTION WILL BE LEGALISED

Health and Family Planning Minister Abdul Malek said the government has principally accepted the legislation of abortion and minimum marriage age limit of 18 years for proper family planning of the country. The government can't allow the explosion of the population unchecked in this war-ravaged country, adds the minister.

Source: December 22, 1972 issues of Dainik Bangla, The Bangladesh Observer and Ittefaq.

2 hundi traders

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in hundi trade and gold smuggling for long.

The two were handed over to Sharsha Police Station and a case was filed, he added.

Post-Brexit talks

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(European) Commission will be leaving on WTO terms on 31 December," a British government source said.

But an EU diplomat told AFP that Brussels had made Britain its last offer on fishing and it was down now to UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson to decide whether he wants a deal.

"If Britain doesn't accept the latest EU offer it will be a 'no deal' over fish," he warned. A European official said: "It's very blocked."

The tough talk came as both sides are engaged in intense -- and tense -- negotiations to secure a pact before the end of the month. No deal would risk chaos at EU and UK borders, where a pre-deadline rush has already caused long tailbacks of lorries.

"Unfortunately the EU has put in some unreasonable demands," British health minister Matt Hancock told Sky News yesterday. "I'm sure that a deal can be done, but obviously it needs movement on the EU side."

Ex-Ducusu VP

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made the statements on December 16.

The magistrate will hear the case later, said the plaintiff lawyer Advocate Ekram Hossain.

Invisible they cannot remain

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under the shadow of unscrupulous recruiting agencies, these middlemen often take large amounts of money from unaware migrant workers with false job promises and even get involved in human trafficking.

Against this backdrop, the parliamentary standing committee on expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry on October 8 discussed the issue of registering "sub-agents working under Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira)".

Later, the government in this regard formed a committee headed by Shamsul Alam, director general at Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

"In broader sense, the objective is to ensure no one is deceived by middlemen," said Shamsul Alam, adding they have taken an initiative to "recognise" the middlemen and the committee held a meeting with Baira representatives to find a way.

At present, the issue is at the discussion stage to find a suitable process, the BMET boss told this newspaper by phone on December 7.

"We are kind of thinking recruiting agencies will employ [the middlemen] after getting BMET's approval," he also said, adding they will have to ensure the process is in line with the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act-2013.

Informal intermediaries and migrants' social networks now procure more than 50 percent of visas and other migration services, including passport and smart card collection, online registration and medical checkups, said the 2018 IOM-ILO report.

A World Bank report published in March this year says Bangladeshi labour workers spent on average Tk

2.78 lakh, or more than \$3,000, for migration.

The highest government-fixed migration cost is Tk 1.66 lakh for jobs in Russia, followed by Tk 1.65 lakh for Saudi Arabia.

A survey of 5,407 households in the high migration-prone district Tangail in 2017 found 19 percent people could not make it for overseas jobs despite paying Tk 1.95 lakh each on an average, or around Tk 2,706.2 crore in total.

Another 32 percent who made it overseas faced harassment in the destination countries, found a survey of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU).

Some 90 percent respondents said they paid money as migration cost to middlemen, the survey revealed.

MAKE THEM ACCOUNTABLE
Sector insiders and migrant rights groups said the government should find a viable option to hold middlemen accountable.

RMMRU Founding Chair Prof Tasneem Siddiqui thinks reducing migration costs through regularising middlemen is possible.

Since middlemen are not recognised by law, they largely remain "invisible" in the labour migration cycle, she said.

"When you will deploy the licensed ones at the root level and the aspirant migrants are seeking services from only them, then the unscrupulous ones will be identified and ejected automatically."

During an online discussion of RMMRU held on November 29, Secretary at Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare Ahmed Munir Saleheen said the government has agreed in principle to bring "middlemen" under a framework.

Anisul Islam Mahmud, chairman

of the parliamentary committee on the expatriates' welfare ministry, told the discussion BMET should be the main focal point for the registration.

Prof Tasneem said there should be a centralised system for the registration so that a recruiting agency will be able to deploy any of the registered middlemen if it wants.

Baira Secretary General Shameem Ahmed Chowdhury Noman stressed the need for developing a centralised database for direct recruitment of workers from the grassroots level.

"Reduction of migration cost is a concern of all. So, adding a layer of stakeholders may affect that policy," he said.

Agencies are more or less dependent on the existing process of recruitment through middlemen due to the absence of such a database, he added.

Prof Tasneem said middlemen have been providing services in the sector for more than three decades.

And migrant rights groups had been campaigning for either abolition or regulation of middlemen since 2001. A new campaign for their regulation was launched in 2016 which gained pace the following year.

When RMMRU talked with grassroots-level people, despite being aware of fraudulence, they intended to handle the situation with middlemen locally instead of making a complaint to BMET or the courts, she added.

Asked for a reason, they cited that middlemen were well known to them, she further said.

Around 7.5 million Bangladeshi migrants are living abroad, sixth among labour-sending countries, according to an IOM report published this year.

Government officials say more than one crore Bangladeshis live in over 160 countries.

'Ice man' sets new world record

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"a state of daydreaming."

The feat was performed before some 50 people and Vandendorpe's mantra for success was simple.

"If we train, if we give our all, we can advance (and) obtain results that can improve things."

His training techniques including

sitting in an ice-cold jacuzzi, training in a 500-litre freezer and then remaining buried in snow in the French ski resort of Chamonix.

He aims to donate the money raised through his feat to the Wonder Augustine association founded in Watrelos following the death of a four-year-old girl called Augustine two

years ago from brain cancer.

"Everyone can donate one euro for every minute Romain remained immersed in ice," said Steve de Matos, the head of the association.

Vandendorpe had met Augustine a few days before her passing.

His message to children battling cancer was simple: "Always be hopeful."

New Covid strain 'out of control'

FROM PAGE 12
Susan Hopkins of Public Health England told Sky News that the agency notified the government on Friday when modelling revealed the full seriousness of the new strain.

She confirmed a figure given by Johnson that the new virus strain could be 70 percent more transmissible.

The World Health Organization is calling on its members in Europe to strengthen measures against coronavirus due to the new variant circulating in the UK, its European branch told AFP yesterday.

Outside Britain, nine cases of the new strain have been reported in Denmark, as well as one case in the Netherlands and another in Australia, according to the WHO.

"Across Europe, where transmission is intense and widespread, countries need to redouble their control and prevention approaches," a spokeswoman for WHO Europe said.

Last week, Europe has become the first region in the world to pass 500,000 deaths from Covid-19 since the pandemic broke out a year ago, killing more than 1.6 million

worldwide and pitching the global economy into turmoil. Countries are shutting down their economies again in a bid to rein in the virus.

The Netherlands is under a five-week lockdown until mid-January with schools and all non-essential shops closed to slow a surge in the virus.

Italy also announced a new regime of restrictions until January 6 that included limits on people leaving their homes more than once a day, closing non-essential shops, bars and restaurants and curbs on regional travel.

Manzoor

FROM PAGE 12
Mawla also served as secretary in various government ministries. He was director general of Bangla Academy from December 31, 1982 to March 3, 1986.

He was among those who had a significant contribution in giving the monthlong "Amar Ekushey Boi Mela" an official shape and the vibrant attributes that have persisted till today.

His role in renovating the historic Burdwan building, organising the first national folklore workshop and giving fellowships to folklorists like Aroj Ali Matubbar and Khoda Baksh Sai were some other notable achievements of Mawla.

He was also keen on publishing books on the history of Bangla literature and the Language Movement.

Mawla was born in Dhaka on October 1, 1940.


His notable poetry titles include Nimagna, Ki Kore Pabo, Mati Here Jai, Shawla o Dinghi, Pure Pure, Ai din Mitthey, Bandana Bristir and Peyecho Ki.

He also wrote plays in verse like Ami Noi, The Jallianwala Bagh and translated "Brand", a play by Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen.

Mawla also edited a two-part collection of poems written by Rabindranath Tagore and wrote children's literature like Parte Chai Goyenda Boi.

For his contribution to literature he received the Bangla Academy Literary Award and Bangla Academy Rabindra Award, Ahsan Habib Smriti Puroshkar and other accolades.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	
Bangladesh Police	
Police Headquarters, Dhaka	
www.police.gov.bd	
Memo No. 44.01.0000.984.07.002.20-654	Date: 20/12/2020
Request for Expression of Interest (Firm)	
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Agency	Bangladesh Police.
3. Procuring entity	AIG (Sports and Culture), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
4. Expression of Interest	For Selection of Coaching Firm.
5. EOI reference No.	44.01.0000.984.07.002.20-04 (2020-2021)
6. Date	20-12-2020.
KEY INFORMATION	
7. Procurement method	Quality & Cost Based Selection (QCBS).
FUNDING INFORMATION	
8. Budget & source of fund	GOB (Revenue Budget).
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
9. Project/program code/budget code	1220201-105954-Headquarters, Bangladesh Police, 3231301-Training.
10. Project/program name	Training for Handball Players.
11. EOI publication date	21/12/2020.
12. EOI closing date & time	03/01/2021, 14:00pm.
13. EOI opening date and time	03/01/2021, 14:30pm.
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT	
14. Brief description of the assignment	Practical Training: Game analysis through video, physical fitness, skill development, increase mental strength, swimming for endurance, increase physical strength, increase speed, increase stamina, match reading, temperament control training, injury recovery.
15. Qualification experience	Firm must have: (i) Experience in providing in-depth training to the players. (ii) Statement of skilled & professionally competent work force of the organization. (iii) Sound financial standing supported by appropriate bank solvency certificate. (iv) Valid trade licence, VAT, TIN certificate, income tax certificate.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
16. Name of official inviting EOI	Shorif Mostafizur Rahman.
17. Designation of official inviting EOI	AIG (Sports and Culture), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
18. Address of official inviting EOI	Main Building (4th Floor), Room No. 403/1, Sports & Culture, Police Headquarters, 6, Phoenix Road, Fulbaria, Dhaka.
19. Contact details of official inviting EOI	Phone: 55101621 Fax: 55101621 aigsports_culture@police.gov.bd
Special instructions	
20. a) No EOI will be received after the deadline for submission. b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any EOI and to annul the EOI proceeding. c) If not possible to receive/open the EOI on the scheduled date in any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time and same venue. d) The procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Rules-2008.	
 Shorif Mostafizur Rahman BP 7605104564 AIG (Sports and Culture) On behalf of Inspector General, Bangladesh Police Police Headquarters, Dhaka Tel & Fax: 55101621 E-mail: aigsports_culture@police.gov.bd	
GD-2018	

"শেখ হাসিনার নির্দেশ জলবায়ু সচিব, বাংলাদেশ"		Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh		Office of the Divisional Forest Officer		Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division, Sylhet		HQ-Moulavibazar.	
Memo No. 22.01.0000.135.05.2020.1596		Date: 20.12.2020		e-Tender (Re-Tender) Notice					
This to notify to all concern that the following e-Tender (Re-Tender) (OTM) has been invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following goods:									
Sl.	e-Tender ID No	Package No	Name of Goods	Publication Date & Time	Last Date & Time for Selling/Downloading	Tender Closing Date & Time			
01	528869	SylWLMNCFD/SUFAL/2020-2021/GD-1-1	Supply of Poly-Propylene Nursery Bags	20-Dec-2020 at 15:00	31-Dec-2020 upto 16:00	03-Jan-2021 at 15:00			
This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.									
The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) (+8809609112233,+880176225528,+8801762625529).									
 Md. Rezaul Karim Chowdhury Divisional Forest Officer Wildlife Management & Nature Conservation Division Sylhet, HQ-Moulavibazar.									
GD-2025									