

DV-1 rules clarified

By Staff Correspondent

Over 6,800 Bangladeshi citizens were registered for the DV-1 programme undertaken by the US government, but all of them may not get the visas, says a press release issued by the USIS yesterday.

Counting spouses and children, about 14,500 Bangladeshis are registered for the visa programme at this second stage of the application process, the press release said.

Under the provision of the programme no more than 3,850 persons can receive a visa from any one country. The total number of the visa recipients from Asian countries excluding China, India, South Korea, Vietnam and the Philippines, will be only 6,837.

Therefore, the majority of the people who have already received letters from the National Visa Center will not reach the next stage of the programme, which is the visa interview, it added.

The recipients of the letters, however, have been advised to return all the paperwork to the National Visa Center as soon as possible.

The USIS press release also said having a visa interview does not guarantee visa issuance. The applicants must have to meet all requirements of the US Immigration and Nationality Act as well as special requirements of the DV-1 programme concerning education or work experience.

According to the Press re-

lease, the competent applicants will have to have a high school education or its equivalent, or within the past five years, have two years of experience in any occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience. Evidences of the education, work experience or training have to be sent to the National Visa Center along with the prescribed forms.

The applicants will have to send all the four forms sent to them by the National Visa Center by including the case numbers on all the pages.

The applicants do not, however, need to send their passports or photocopies of the passports with the forms.

The applicants must present a birth certificate for all unmarried children under the age of 21, even if they will not accompany the visa recipient at this time. Evidences of education or work experience of the children or wife/husband do not, however, need to be sent, the USIS press release says.

The applicants must show, to the satisfaction of the Consular Office, that they will not become a public charge in the United States.

If sponsorship documents would help prove this, the applicants may wish to obtain an Affidavit of Support from a friend or relative in the USA with supporting documents.

Export performance

From Page 1 Col 3
cent in Malaysia, and 27 per cent in Indonesia.

Bangladesh's exports of labour-intensive manufactured goods, with the exception of readymade garments, is rather limited for a country with relatively large manpower, 51 million in 1990," he noted.

Lundell-Mills, who succeeded Christopher Willoughby, pointed out that the country does have the potential to compete because of the relatively low cost of labour and favourable macro-economic indicators.

However, he said, the success of the export drive would critically depend on a number of factors, including access to raw materials at competitive prices, export financing and credit schemes, reduction of the high transaction costs for exports by streamlining customs and duty drawback procedures, removal of infrastructural constraints and improving technological and marketing skills.

In order to help the government carry out its export development programme and to address the non-labour factors, Lundell-Mills said, the World Bank is currently preparing a second export development project of 50 million US dollars aimed at promoting exports.

He also underscored the need for labour cost competitiveness, particularly in the post-GATT era.

He cited a recent World Bank assessment study of Bangladesh's labour cost competitiveness in comparison to other competing countries, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, in three sectors — garments, textiles and leather.

"We have found that while Bangladesh generally has competitive labour costs in garments vis-a-vis its rivals, Vietnam is a close competitor and has lower costs for some categories of garments. Bangladesh's labour costs in both spinning and weaving are much higher than those of the efficient producers, notably Pakistan. In leather, Bangladesh has the lowest labour costs, but West Bengal and the rest of

24 US warplanes arrive in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY, Nov 2: Twenty-four A-10 Thunderbolt warplanes arrived in Kuwait today to join forces which were rushed to the emirate last month to counter an Iraqi military build-up near the border, military officials said here, reports AFP.

The A-10 tankbusters flew into Ahmed Al-Jaber airbase north of Kuwait City.

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Computer Workshop and Education Fair '94 and general meeting of BCA on the 11th November, at Royal Flavour Restaurant in Agrabad.

All members are invited Subject to Pay of their Annual Subscription

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the country-wide voluntary blood and posthumous eye donation campaign '94 organised by 'Sandhani' in the city yesterday.

— PID photo

PM

From Page 1 Col 8
can save an invaluable life by donating blood," she said.

The Prime Minister asked the members of the Sandhani to contact those interested in voluntary blood and posthumous eye donation.

If sponsorship documents would help prove this, the applicants may wish to obtain an Affidavit of Support from a friend or relative in the USA with supporting documents.

US for 'constructive ties' with Myanmar junta

BANGKOK, Nov 2: The United States has offered the Myanmar junta "constructive relations" but will impose further restrictions unless Yangon improves its record on human rights, political reform and anti-narcotic enforcement, a senior US diplomat said today.

Talking about transplantation of posthumously donated eyes, she said restoration of eyesight can bring new spectrum in the lives to visually impaired people who are usually dependent on others.

While calling for a concerted campaign to encourage voluntary blood and posthumous eye donation, Begum Zia said all service-oriented and voluntary organisations should take part in the campaign.

Presided over by Sandhani President Tatini Das Chowdhury, the function was also addressed by Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, Major-General (retd) Abdul Mannan Siddique and Sandhani General Secretary Samiul Islam Babu.

The public sector needs to become more supportive of the private sector initiative. Structural and institutional reforms haven't gone far enough. If Bangladesh is going to move ahead it has to expedite the reform process, he said.

He also pointed out that investment level, currently at a ratio of 13 per cent of the GDP, is "extraordinary" low and it should be improved to around 20 per cent to achieve a higher growth rate of around eight per cent from the current rate of 4.5 to five per cent. "I don't yet feel that foreign private investors are sufficiently convinced that Bangladesh is the place to invest in comparison to other countries," he said.

Responding to a question, he said that the current rate of interest, at around eight to nine per cent, is not a constraint, but access to credit is a constraint on investment.

Relying to another question, the World Bank representative noted that a total of 990 million dollars of the opening project aid pipeline was disbursed in 1993-94, of which, the Bank's share was 204.5 million dollars. It also disbursed another 155.7 million dollars in non-project aid during the year.

During the first quarter of the current fiscal year, the disbursement level stood at 79.4 million dollars compared to 49.9 million dollars during the corresponding period of 1993-94.

Asked if the Bank would resume loan operations in the power sector, suspended in 1989 for the high level of system loss in the sector, he replied in the affirmative.

"We have already indicated to the government that we are willing to resume disbursing loans in the power sector in the light of the new reform measures initiated recently," he said. "We expect to be involved primarily in rehabilitation projects, that's where the greatest need is."

Jail Killing Day

From Page 1 Col 4

tural bodies have taken programmes to observe the day.

AL programmes include hoisting black flags at the Bangabandhu Bhaban and party offices, garlanding the portrait of Bangabandhu, offering fatafa at the mazars of the late leaders at the Banani graveyard and a discussion meeting at the central office. Sheikh Hasina will preside the meeting.

Meanwhile, speakers at a meeting yesterday said the spirit of the Liberation War

cannot be established without trial of the killers of Bangabandhu and four national leaders slain in jail.

The anti-liberation forces killed them to destroy the values of the Liberation War and the independence of the country, they told the commemorative meeting held at the Engineers' Institute to mark the 'Jail killing day'.

Awami League presidium member Syeda Johra Tajuddin, Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya, poet Shamsul Huq, Prof Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir took part in the discussion.

The CEC said the introduction of ID cards for the first time in the history of the country through registration of eligible voters would help institutional democracy. "Our plan is to ensure that the voters can exercise their right of franchise and protect it," he said, expressing the hope that it would help curb muscle and money power.

Justice Rouf said the voters' list, inherited required to be improved and the proposed data-based registration of voters would eliminate the possibilities of getting entry of fictitious voters or more than one time of any single voter.

The discussion was punctuated by recitation from poems dedicated to the national leaders.

This was not a killing of some people, it was the destruction of national values, ideals and spirit, said the widow of the former Prime Minister.

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— Star photo

ID cards to ensure fair polls, says CEC

When asked if it was possible to introduce nation-wide

identity cards to all voters before the next general elections, possibly scheduled in one year's time, he said it was "more than possible".

Explaining the programme to modernise the electoral process, the CEC said, "At any cost we want to create" consciousness among voters about their right of franchise by issuing data based ID cards for individual voters through registration. Besides developed countries, some neighbouring countries like Thailand and Pakistan have introduced identity cards, he said, adding that India is also going ahead to introduce the system.

Each computer designed identity card (laminated) with 'geo-code' number and photograph will cost Taka fifty only per voter, totalling Taka 300 crore, he said.

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