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Ads for recruiting workers in Kuwait spark off confusion among job seekers

Advertisements by two different agencies to recruit over a thousand workers against same posts for a trading house in Kuwait sparked off serious confusion among the foreign wage earning seekers recently.

Both Al-Amin International and Irving Enterprise, two local manpower recruiting agencies, published advertisements seeking applications for recruitment in Chahem Hamad Al-Dabbous General Trading and Contracting Est of Kuwait.

The advertisements of both the agencies published in two separate vernacular dailies in March and in second week of current month claimed to have

enjoyed the necessary authorization from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

HBM Lutfar Rahman, Managing Director of Irving Enterprise, said for some reasons the Kuwaiti company was not satisfied with the recruiting agency which got the contract first. It cancelled the contract later and awarded the work, said Rahman.

Authorities of Al-Dabbous had also informed the relevant offices of the Bangladesh government about its cancellation of the deal with Al-Amin, he added.

However, Managing Director of Al-Amin International

Mohammed Serajus Salekin alleged that neither the Kuwaiti company nor the BMET informed it about taking away of the recruitment contract from it to Irving.

Producing various documents including demand letter, visa applications, BMET's authorization and Power Of Attorney attested by First Secretary (Labour) of Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait, Salekin alleged that the BMET did not even bother to respond to Al-Amin's written allegation against Irving filed on April 8.

According to the written allegation, Irving presented false information against Al-Amin

before the recruiting authority in getting the contract bypassing the earlier contract of Al-Dabbous with Al-Amin.

When this correspondent approached Director General of BMET, Alhaj Dr Joardar Abul Kashem said, "whatever we did, we did on the basis of papers."

But on further query he denied to answer the specific allegations.

After repeated attempts to get a little more clarification on the issue from him, the BMET DG said, "yes, the contract of Al-Amin was canceled. But, it does not come under our jurisdiction to probe why it was cancelled."

Replying to another query that unlike other cases how the authorities could give permission to a second recruiting agency for the work within two days upon receiving Irving's prayer for the same, Kashem claimed, "I can make my jobs done very promptly."

When contacted Mosharrar Hussain, President of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), said he was informed about the happenings from an aggrieved party and asked it to submit a written statement at his office for taking up the issue with concerned government authorities.

Dhaka to take part in course on water in Netherlands

A 20-Member Bangladesh delegation will leave Dhaka for the Netherlands on April 29 (Monday) to take part in a 19-day training programme on 'Integrated Water Management Planning course' beginning April 29, says a press release.

The delegation comprises representatives from Bangladesh Water Development Board BUET, WARPO, RRI, Environment Directorate, Agriculture Extension Directorate, LGED, JRC and Fisheries Directorate.

The acquired knowledge of the training will be used in planning, implementation and maintenance of the water resources development projects of the country.

The Netherlands government would bear all expenses of the programme.

India's trade deficit swells to \$4.5 b

NEW DELHI, Apr 27: India's trade deficit soared to 4.5 billion dollar in the latest financial year, more than double the previous year as the growing economy's appetite for imports swamped a 21 per cent jump in exports, the government said yesterday, reports Reuter.

Analysts said 6.2 per cent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in the 1995/96 financial year which ended on March 31, and an estimated 10 per cent rise in industrial growth boosted imports by 29 per cent to 36.4 billion dollars.

Stoking the increase in imports were purchases of capital goods, fertiliser, petroleum, edible oil and newsprint, they said.

Exports in 1995/96 stood at 31.83 billion dollar against 26.22 billion dollars last year. As exports in India are import intensive, the trade deficit was bound to increase, analysts said.

"A trade deficit of 4.5 billion dollar was along expected lines," VS Bharucha, economic adviser at the Commerce Ministry, told Reuters.

Capital goods account for 30 per cent of total imports and crude oil and petroleum products account for another 20 per cent, according to government data.

"With industry growing and investment by foreign firms increasing, imports of capital goods are bound to grow," said DH Pal Panandikar, adviser to RPG Group of Industries.

Shrimp fry catchers will get banking facilities in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Apr 27: Bright prospect of bank investment prevails as thousands of shrimp fry catchers in the coastal belt of the district lack working capital of their own, reports UNB.

Most of the people engaged in the newly emerged profession borrow money from local money lenders or shrimp traders at almost cent per cent interest rate.

According to a report, thousands of fishermen are catching shrimp fry from the Bay of Bengal which have a better market in Khulna, Bagerhat and Satkhira districts.

About four lakh acres of land have been brought under tiger-prawn and lobster cultivation in the southern zone.

Lobster, an emerging sector in the fisheries area of the zone, has been cultivating in recent times with much enthusiasm.

The lobster cultivation is making also headway in Khulna, Bagerhat, Gopalganj, Madaripur, Faridpur, Projoipur, Bhoja, Barguna and Patuakhali districts. Experts said this newly growing sector may exceed the expected target.

Meanwhile, a large number of shrimp farmers are involved in lobster cultivation in Fakirhat, Mollarhat, Kochua and Terokheda in Khulna zone.

Normally people use their ponds and small farming land to cultivate lobsters. The farmers said it is easier to cultivate lobsters than that of tiger-prawn.

Local experts said there is a scope of disbursing at least Tk 50, lakh as short term loan among the shrimp fry catchers of the zone which can usher in

a new era of economic self-sufficiency of the concerned people.

People urged the authorities concerned to take initiative to provide the poor cultivators with such loan to carry out their new occupation smoothly.

Food sellers to attend lectures on hygiene in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 27: The Malaysian government, worried that tourists might be hit by food poisoning during the Commonwealth games, a week ago ordered all food sellers to attend lectures on hygiene, reports AFP.

But economists are more concerned over the effect of the 1998 games on something more vulnerable than tourist tummies - the country's current account deficit.

Capital imports needed to feed infrastructural preparations for the games could further widen the deficit, which at a record 17.6 billion ringgit (7.12 billion dollars) last year has made foreign investors jittery, they said.

"A lot of investment is going into projects that are not going to produce exports," said Neil Saker, Senior Regional Economist with Crosby Securities.

"The current account deficit is not self-financing."

Projects being rushed for the games include a nine-billion-ring new international airport and the first phase of a light rail transit system costing 1.2 billion ringgit.

British Treasury Chief Secy says Measures to deal with 'mad cow' crisis will cost \$ 3.75b

LONDON, Apr 27: British Treasury Chief Secretary William Waldegrave said yesterday that measures decided so far to deal with the "mad cow" crisis would cost nearly 2.5 billion pounds (3.75 billion dollars) over the next three years, reports AFP.

These funds will pay for a programme that has been agreed upon with the European Union to prevent cattle entering the food chain at the end of their productive lives.

It will also cover compensation for the slaughter of very young calves which would have been exported alive, and help pay for an aid scheme for Britain's slaughter-house industry.

Not included in the package of measures is a plan for the selective slaughter of cattle from "mad cow" - tainted herds, a condition laid down by Britain's EU partners before they will consider lifting their ban on British beef.

The EU ban was imposed on March 27, one week after British ministers conceded a possible link between Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow" disease, and a fatal brain disorder in humans, Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (CJD).

Agriculture Minister Douglas Hogg is due to present details before his EU counterparts on Monday of the plan to slaughter some 40,000 cattle from herds with cases of BSE.

The plan will be carefully scrutinised by European farm ministers at their meeting in Luxembourg. They will decide whether Britain has given enough assurances to convince consumers that British beef will once again be safe to eat.

Waldegrave told the House of Commons that Britain would pay for just under 80 per cent of the 2.5 billion pound bill, or around 1.9 billion pounds, with the rest borne by the European Union.

He added that Britain's contribution included funds it would have been due to receive under the EU budget rebate scheme.

The expenditure will amount to around one billion pounds in the first year, 740 million pounds in 1997-98 and 680 million pounds in the final year.

Over the next three years, some 15,000 dairy cows aged from four to six years that have reached the end of their milk-producing lives will be destroyed every week.

In addition, beef cattle aged over 30 months, and thus unsaleable as meat, will also be destroyed over time.

The measures have been designed to lift the global ban on British beef products and breathe life back into Britain's cattle farms.

Major to offer Kohl beef for lunch

AP says: Beef will be on the menu in more ways than one when German Chancellor Helmut Kohl meets Prime Minister John Major in London next week.

Major, who has had harsh words for his European Union

partners' ban on British beef, will offer his guest beef for lunch on Monday, a spokesman for the prime minister told reporters Friday on condition of anonymity.

Beef will figure prominently at the Anglo-German summit at 10 Downing St, where the leaders are expected also to discuss enlargement of the EU, European armaments, trans-Atlantic relations and Economic and Monetary Union.

The same day, Britain's Agriculture Minister Douglas Hogg meets European counterparts in Luxembourg to discuss the beef export ban, imposed March 27 over fears of Mad Cow disease.

Major has called the ban "totally unjustified," and accused its EU partners of imposing it in an effort to increase their own sales.

The crisis in Britain's beef industry began March 20 when British Health Minister Stephen Dorrell said the cattle disease bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was the "most likely" cause of a strain of the fatal human disease Creutzfeldt-Jacob, which has killed at least 10 people.

In the days immediately after Dorrell's announcement, beef sales hit bottom. Since then, two leading supermarket chains said sales had returned to around 70 per cent of normal levels, helped by aggressive discounting.

But the European Union has refused to lift the ban on British beef.

Anti-drought measures cost China huge money

BEIJING, Apr 27: China is spending record amounts of money to try to salvage crops from a drought that has hit one-fifth of the country's farmland, the Xinhua news agency said today, reports Reuter.

The Ministry of Finance has allocated a record 78 billion yuan (9.4 billion) and local governments a further 72.5 billion yuan (8.7 billion dollar) to implement anti-drought measures, Xinhua quoted the state drought prevention headquarters as saying.

The measures include providing farmers with fertiliser, electricity and diesel to pump water.

The state-run Agricultural Bank of China has provided loans totalling 3.9 billion yuan (470 million dollar), Xinhua said.

More than 16.7 million farmers in 17 provinces in North and northeast China have been fighting the drought which has hit at least 20 million hectares (49 million acres) of farmland one-fifth of China's total, since last summer, the China Daily quoted the drought prevention headquarters as saying.

The drought has been particularly severe in western parts of northeastern Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning provinces - some of China's main grain producing regions - and in inner Mongolia, the newspaper said.

The harvest is further threatened by problems with seed quality, Xinhua said.

Air France Europe heading towards bankruptcy

PARIS, Apr 27: Air France's European arm of France's state-run airline, warned employees Friday it will be bankrupt within two years unless it improves productivity, reports AP.

The airline, formerly called Air Inter, is crippled by mounting competition on domestic routes from carriers within France and - starting next year - from foreign operators.

It said it plans to announce a sweeping package of urgent reforms May 15.

A statement from Air France Chairman Christian Blanc told employees that "the financial outlook for the company is leading to disaster" despite efforts to boost ticket sales.

Blanc warned that Air France Europe will disappear if nothing is done to correct the airline's chief problem - low productivity.

But he noted that Air France, which had experienced even greater difficulties two years ago and had been virtually bankrupt, is on the road back to profitability and will start growing again in 1997.

Blanc said the package of measures to be announced next month will include the closure of loss-making routes and increased services on profitable ones. But he said some pain for Air France Europe employees was inevitable.

The company, which operates under the Air Inter Europe banner, expects to post a loss of 1.3 billion francs (254 million dollars) this year if no new measures are taken.

UN asks for \$9.1m to repatriate Togolese refugees in Ghana

GENEVA, Apr 27: The United Nations appealed on yesterday for 9.1 million dollar to cover the cost of sending home 100,000 Togolese refugees still in Ghana and Benin, reports Reuter.

The appeal was launched on the same day as the year-long voluntary repatriation programme began with 1,000 Togolese leaving Ghana.

Most of the 75,000 Togolese refugees remaining in Ghana and the 26,000 in Benin are returning to Lome, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Funds will be used to provide each family with a three-month food supply and a cash grant of 50 dollar towards transportation.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
 কন্ট্রোলিং জেনারেল ডিফেন্স ফাইন্যান্স - এর কার্যালয়
 ১ম ১২ তলা সরকারী অফিস ভবন, ৪র্থ ফেজ
 সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা-১০০০

বিষয় : স্টাফ বাস ক্রয়ের দরপত্র
বিজ্ঞপ্তির সংশোধনী

প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক বিক্রয়ের জন্য একটি স্টাফ বাস জয় সংক্রান্ত ০৩-০৪-১৯৯৬ইং তারিখে প্রকাশিত "বাংলাদেশ বাস", "দৈনিক বাস" ও "The Daily Star" এবং ০৮-০৪-১৯৯৬ইং তারিখে "দৈনিক ইত্তেফাক" পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ২০-০৪-১৯৯৬ইং-এর পরিবর্তে ১১-০৫-১৯৯৬ইং পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হইল।

বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকিবে।

মোঃ আবদুল মজিদ
 সহকারী কন্ট্রোলিং জেনারেল ডিফেন্স ফাইন্যান্স
 বাংলাদেশ, ঢাকা।
 ফোন : ৪০৪২৮৬

ডিক্রিট-১০০৬-২৪/৪
 G-541



South African President Nelson Mandela and UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who arrived in South Africa Thursday to attend this weekend's United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), shake hands while facing the press at Mandela's official residence in Pretoria on Friday. Mandela referred to Ghali as an old friend and gave him a cheque for 1.78 million rand (400,000 dollars) to aid UN peacekeeping and development projects.

বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষা তথ্য ও পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো (ব্যানবেইস)
 শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়
 গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
 ১নং সোনারগাঁও রোড (পলাশী-নীলক্ষেত), ঢাকা-১১০৫।
 নং-ব্যানবেইস/পাব-৩/৪৬/৮৯৪ তারিখঃ ২৭/০৪/৯৬

"দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়বান বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষা তথ্য ও পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো (ব্যানবেইস) এর "Bangladesh Educational Statistics" 1994 ও 1995 হুইট প্রকাশনা ছাপাবার নিমিত্ত ছাপার কাজে পারদর্শী প্রকৃত ছাপাখানা/প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিকট হুইটে সীলমোহরযুক্ত বামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। বিস্তারিত বিবরণ ও শর্তাবলী সহজিল প্রতিটি দরপত্র সিডিউল ৪০০/১- (চরশত) টাকা (অফিসব্যয়) নম্বর প্রদানকর্তার নিজস্ব প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাডে আবদান করে অত্র অফিস অথবা শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের সরকারী সচিব (শাখা-১২), কক্ষ নং ১৮২৫ (১৮ তলা) হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ৭/৫/৯৬ইং তারিখ থেকে ১১/৫/৯৬ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। দরপত্রের সঙ্গে জামানত হিসাবে ২.৫% (সেইকর্তব্যে) পে-অর্ডারের মাধ্যমে যে কোন অনুমোদিত ব্যাণ্জিক ব্যাংক হতে আদৌ মাদি হিসেবে নিম্নাঙ্ককারীর বরাবরে দাখিল করতে হবে। দরপত্রসমূহ আপামী ১৫/৫/৯৬ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে বাংলাদেশ শিক্ষা তথ্য ও পরিসংখ্যান ব্যুরো (ব্যানবেইস) অথবা শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের সরকারী সচিব (শাখা-১২), ভবন নং ৬, কক্ষ নং ১৮২৫, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়ে রক্ষিত টেজার ব্যাংক জমা দিতে হবে এবং ঐ দিনই বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার সময় নিম্নাঙ্ককারীর অফিসে উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সামনে দরপত্রসমূহ (বিডি কেট উপস্থিত থাকেন) খোলা হবে।

কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ প্রদর্শন ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মীর মোজাম্মেল আত্মী
 প্রশাসনিক অফিসার
 এবং
 সদস্য-সচিব, টেজার কমিটি
 ব্যানবেইস, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়।

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New ROK investment package for DPRK

SEOUL, Apr 27: In an apparent incentive to persuade North Korea to embrace a new peace proposal, South Korea on Saturday authorized its three largest-ever investments for the impoverished communist state, reports UNB.

The investment package reflected South Korean efforts to persuade the North to abandon its long-held position that it will discuss peace on the divided peninsula only with Washington.

South Korea revealed the plan as a trade official is discussing economic aid with North Koreans in Beijing in the first South-North contact since President Clinton and South Korean President Kim Young-sam made the peace proposal April 16.

Seoul has said it will help four-way peace talks in which the two Koreas would discuss reducing tensions, with the United States and China sitting in as mediators.

In the investment package Samsung Electronics Co. will invest 7 million dollars in a joint venture telecommunications company in the free trade zone near the North's border with Russia and China. Daewoo will invest 6.4 million dollars to produce TV sets, washing machines and other electronics goods. Another South Korean firm, Teaching, will spend 5.8 million dollars to produce mineral water in the North, said South's Unification Ministry.

All three projects exceeded the 5 million dollars limit that Seoul has imposed on any investments in the North. Pyongyang badly needs outside investments to revive its economy, which has shrunk annually following the collapse of communism in other parts of the world.

South Korea eased its half-century-old economic embargo on the North after it promised to freeze and eventually dismantle its suspected nuclear weapons programme under a deal with Washington in 1994.

But the South has since suspended major investments, accusing the North of failing to reciprocate its good will and raising tensions instead.

Korean Red Cross said it will resume a relief shipment of 320,000 worth of cooking oil for flood victims in the North.

In a related development, Hong Ji-son, a trade negotiator of the government-run Korea Trade Promotion Corp, is meeting North Korean trade officials in Beijing, officials said.

Hong led working-level talks with North Korea last year in Beijing. As a result of the talks, South Korea provided the North with 150,000 tons of free rice in emergency food aid.

Before the peace proposal, North Korean trade officials had asked the South to reopen food talks in Beijing, but the South has refused.

UNCTAD aims at liberalising world trade, says Secy General

MIDRAND, South Africa, Apr 27: The ninth session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) here marks the body's "renaissance" as a powerful force in the liberalisation of world trade, its Secretary General, Rubens Ricupero said here, reports AFP.

Ricupero, addressing a media briefing before the official opening on Saturday, said that UNCTAD planned to emerge from the two-week meeting with a concrete programme to integrate the economies of developing and less-developed countries.

He dismissed growing doubts about the relevance of the body, created at the height of east-west tensions 32 years ago, in a free-market world now dominated by the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

"This will be the renaissance of UNCTAD following the formation of the WTO and the completion of the Uruguay Round of talks on trade in 1993," Ricupero said.

The concerns that UNCTAD aimed to address in 1964 are as valid today as they were then... we still have the same

problem of underdevelopment and disparities between rich and poor. What has changed is the structure of the world economy.

"What will come out of this conference is an action-oriented programme so that people no longer say that UNCTAD is a talk show as they do now, quite unfairly I think," he said.

Ahead of UNCTAD IX, the body announced a sweeping restructuring of its 420-member secretariat, cutting the number of its divisions from nine to four, Ricupero said, to make UNCTAD a more dynamic organisation.

More than 3,000 delegates from UNCTAD's 188-member countries are expected to attend the meeting at the Gallagher estate complex in Midrand, halfway between Johannesburg and the administrative capital, Pretoria.

"This will be the first major conference in the world that will devote its debate to the globalisation of trade and we will address the unification of world markets," Ricupero said.

ITT settles overcharge claims

WASHINGTON, Apr 27: ITT Defense and Electronics Inc. agreed Friday to pay the government 645,633 dollars to settle claims it overcharged on several contracts by boosting overhead cost 15 per cent above the actual amounts, reports AP.

Assistant Attorney General Frank Hunger said the agreement resolves claims that a division of the McLean, Virginia, company included more than 300,000 dollars in improper costs on 4.9 million dollars in contracts with NASA, the Navy, the Army and the Department of Energy.

ITT told the government about the overcharges under the Defense Department's voluntary disclosure programme.

Repetitious work emerges as hazard for job safety in US

WASHINGTON, Apr 27: Repetitious work, poor job design and violence have become the most significant safety and health problems in the American workplace, a union study says, reports AP.

Since the early 1970s, rapid changes in the work place have created significant new safety and health problems that put millions of workers at risk, according to the study released Friday by the AFL-CIO trade union.

"Serious injuries and illnesses from ergonomic hazards - poor job design and repetitious work - are the most significant safety and health problems in the workplace today" and "are increasing at epidemic rates," it contended.

Mitsubishi Motor faces troubles in US

TOKYO, Apr 27: The US manufacturing subsidiary of Japan's Mitsubishi Motors Corp. faces financial troubles because of sluggish production and the impact of the strong yen, the parent company announced, reports AP.

Mitsubishi said Friday it would take a one-time charge of 32.6 billion yen (308 million dollars) against earnings for the fiscal year, that ended March 31 because of the loss on its investment.

The subsidiary, Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America, Inc., is already troubled by a federal class action lawsuit alleging the company has permitted sexual harassment of hundreds of women.

The Japanese automaker said in a statement that sluggish production volume since the subsidiary began operating in 1988 and the strong yen had caused a deterioration of its finances. The subsidiary now has liabilities exceeding its assets, Mitsubishi said.

The subsidiary is addressing the situation diligently and taking steps to improve its business results. These include improvements in product quality and reductions in costs," Mitsubishi said in a statement.

MMMA, capitalized at 400 million dollars, is owned 92.5 per cent by Mitsubishi Motors and the rest by other companies in the Mitsubishi group, including trading house Mitsubishi Corp. which holds 3.8 per cent.

The US subsidiary produced 218,507 vehicles in 1995, including major Mitsubishi models such as the Eclipse and the Galant, up from 170,318 in 1994.

Also Friday, Mitsubishi named Takemura Kimura as its new president, replacing Nobuhisa Tsukahara, who is resigning for health reasons.