

2007 DV Lottery announced

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The US State Department has announced the 2007 Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery programme to issue 50,000 US visas.

The registration period for the lottery will begin on October 5 and end on December 4.

Bangladesh is among 358 countries eligible to apply for the DV, according to the announcement.

However, natives of a number of countries including China (mainland-born), India, Pakistan, South Korea, The Philippines, and Vietnam are not eligible to apply for DV 2007.

The DV offers permanent residency visas to citizens of nations that have a traditionally low level of immigration to the United States.

The department said it plans to issue 50,000 permanent residency visas under the DV 2007 programme, which is designed to bring greater racial and ethnic diversity to the United States.

Persons seeking to enter the lottery programme must register online through the designated website -- www.dvlottery.state.gov -- during the registration period.

Details about the registration for DV 2007 are also available at www.bdnews24.com.

The registration period begins at 12:00 pm EST (GMT-5) on October 5, 2005 and ends at 12:00 pm EST (GMT-5) on December 4, 2005.

Registration is free of charge. The US government does not employ any outside consultants or private services to operate the DV programme.

The State Department will notify winning entrants by mail.

In response to demand, the State Department tripled the number of servers hosting the registration website this year.

The 2007 DV Lottery marks the third year that electronic registration is required. Paper entries and mail-in requests for DV Lottery registration are not accepted.

An applicant must have either a high school education or its equivalent, defined as successful completion of a 12-year course of elementary and secondary education; or two years of work experience within the past five years in an occupation requiring at least two years of training or experience to perform.

All entries by an applicant will be disqualified if more than one entry for the applicant is received, regardless of who submitted the entry. Applicants may prepare and submit their own entries, or have someone submit the entry for them.

Recent digital photographs of the applicant and his/her spouse and each child under 21 years of age must be submitted electronically with the Electronic Diversity Visa (EDV) Entry Form. Group or family photos will not be accepted; there must be a separate photo for each family member.

Journo's appeal for help

BSS, Dhaka

Senior journalist Abul Bashar has been hospitalised at Birdem with serious liver complications, coupled with high blood sugar.

He is now under treatment of liver specialist Prof Anisur Rahman at Ward-122, Bed-1 (12th floor), Birdem Hospital.

Bashar has served the national news agency BSS and a number of other national dailies, including The Independent, for 24 years.

Doctors said Bashar should be sent abroad for advanced treatment and liver transplantation immediately. But such treatment involves about Tk 30 lakh, which his family cannot afford.

His family has requested journalists, generous people and philanthropic organisations to extend financial help for the treatment of the ailing journalist.

Bashar has an account with Sonali Bank, Farm Gate Branch. His savings account number is 340-260-96.

Minister for basic reform of education

UNB, Rajshahi

Education Minister M Osman Farruk yesterday said the education system needs to be overhauled to turn the next generation into efficient human resources to cope with the fast-changing world.

"The government has taken various projects to create skilled manpower in the country. The ongoing process to reform the education system is expected to link the students with the world labour market," he said.

He was addressing a workshop on education reform at a local community centre.

Emphasising the need for special training for the teachers, the minister said the school-based evaluation system would inspire the students to be ideal citizens.

Chaired by National Curriculum and Textbook Board Chairman Prof Dr Gazi Anisul Kabir, the workshop was also addressed by Rajshahi City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Director of Secondary Education Sector Development project Bashir Ahmed.

Stop plying of old diesel-run vehicles to improve air quality

Experts suggest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To protect the city dwellers from serious health hazards, stern action should be taken against unscrupulous traders who import old buses, trucks and other motorised vehicles by tampering documents, said experts at a workshop yesterday.

They also urged the government to stop plying of all old diesel-run vehicles which are responsible for emitting sulfur, nitrogen, lead and carbon monoxide in the air.

The workshop on 'Policy options for mitigating diesel vehicle pollution' was organised by the Department of Environment under its Air Quality Management Project (AOMP) at the National Institute of Local Government auditorium at Agargaon in the city.

The speakers said current policy

permits import of four-year-old vehicles and five-year-old engines, but dishonest traders are violating the laws and importing more old vehicles and engines by tampering seals and documents.

They said the government should ban the plying of trucks older than 25 years and buses older than 20 years for maintaining emission standards.

"All vehicles and engines are being imported as these are not produced in the country, and many foreign countries including India produce low standard vehicles and engines only to export to developing countries like Bangladesh," said Dr M Khaliqzaman, senior consultant of the World Bank (WB) in Dhaka.

"The government has taken some measures especially the phas-

ing out of two-stroke three-wheelers in Dhaka from January 2003 and setting up of standards for lubricants to improve the air quality," said Jafar Ahmed Chowdhury, secretary for environment and forest ministry.

"Around 40,000 buses have been converted into CNG for reducing the air pollution," he pointed out.

Creating awareness among the stakeholders can play an effective role in controlling the air pollution, he added.

Chaired by Khan M Ibrahim Hossain, director general of environment department, the workshop was also addressed by WB Environmental Specialist Sameer Akbar, Bangladesh Road and Transport Authority Chairman Dr M A Momen and BRTA Director Engineer Bari.



Children take part in an art competition in the city yesterday. The National Girl Child Advocacy Forum organised the event to mark the Girl Child Day.

'Irregularities in settlement process deprive landless people of Khas land'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Irregularities in settlement process and illegal occupation by land grabbers often drive away the landless people from Khas land, speakers at a dialogue said yesterday.

Complex and prolonged administrative procedure and brokers in connivance with a section of dishonest land officials make a poor person pay Tk 5,000 to 20,000 to get the possession of Khas land although one is supposed to get it with a nominal fee of one taka, they said.

The settlement process, which lacks transparency, takes seven to eight years, said advocate Golam Akbar at the dialogue organised jointly by the Coastal Network and the South Asia Partnership at the National Press Club in the city.

"Many landless people get settlement in papers only but do not get the possession of lands as the officials in some cases sanction more than one settlement for the same piece of land," he said.

There are no land officers (AC land) in many upazilas and no land

settlement committees, resulting in the postponement of land settlement, he added.

The poor people have to undergo various ordeals and obtain political favour and nepotism for a certificate of landless to get Khas land, he said on the basis of a findings gathered on the management of Khas land in coastal areas of Patuakhali, Noakhali and Barguna Districts.

In many cases, Khas land is allocated among the local influential quarters, including landlords, political leaders and even local government representatives, Akbar said.

These grabbers occupy thousands of acres of Khas land where they run various businesses, factories and shrimp culture, he added.

He also suggested a certain time frame for land mutation, one single office for land-related issues at the upazila level and settlement of the land among the landless where they have already been living.

According to an official estimate, there are over 12 lakh acres of land, around half of which has already been leased out to the landless, said

the chairman of Land Reform Board Murtaza Hossain Munshi.

There should be a separate cadre service for land to expedite resolution of land-related issues, he said.

"A strong political commitment is imperative to address the prevailing situation," said AKM Jahangir Hossain MP.

The government will accommodate, as far as possible, the recommendations made at the dialogue, said State Minister for Land UKI Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan.

Union Parishad representatives, landless people and government officials attended the dialogue moderated by Prof Abul Barakat of Dhaka University.

Release of Moulana Masud demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sammilita Olama-Mashaekh Samannay Parishad, a committee of the Islamic scholars, formed a human chain at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding immediate release of Moulana Fariduddin Masud.

In a leaflet circulated by the Parishad, its leaders blamed the Jamaat-e-Islami for August 17 serial bomb blasts, saying the Jamaat wants to create a panic in the country by exploding bombs one after another.

They said Masud is a freedom fighter who became a threat to the Jamaat and Islamist bigots. So, the elite forces could not tolerate him, they added.

"The government, which came to power using Islam, has taken Moulana Masud on remand twice but found no evidence of his involvement in the bomb attacks," the leaders said.

The government has been harassing the innocent people in the name of hunt for attackers while the real culprits go unpunished, they added.

Muktijoddha Samannay Parishad Chairman Abir Ahad, Muktijoddha Oikya Parishad member secretary Sajahan Kabir Bir Pratik, Khelafat Andolon leader Maulana Abdul Hai Azad and leaders of Iqra Bangladesh and Islahul Moslemin joined the programme to express their solidarity. Olama Mashaekh Parishad Chairman Abdul Latif Chowdhury was also present.

INDECENT BEHAVIOUR

JU teacher suspended

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University (JU) authorities yesterday suspended Tanvir Ahmad Siddique, lecturer of the Department of Business Administration, for his indecent behaviour with the students.

"Tanvir has been suspended under Section 10 (A) (2) of University Employees Skill and Discipline Ordinance on charge of indecent, unfair and immoral behaviour with the students of the department," a notification signed by Registrar Kazi Mohiuddin said.

Tanvir said he has got the order but declined to make any comment.

The university authorities took the decision after a departmental meeting recommended necessary steps against Tanvir.

Meanwhile, students of the department, covering their faces with black ribbons, took out a silent procession on the campus yesterday demanding punishment to and removal of the teacher.

They also submitted a memorandum to the vice-chancellor in this regard and staged a sit-in in front of the social science faculty keeping their classrooms under lock and key. No classes and examinations were held at the department yesterday.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) expressed solidarity with the movement while Pragatishil Chhatra Jote brought out a procession on the campus demanding immediate removal of the teacher.

GIRL CHILD DAY

Art competition for children

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Konyashishu Advocacy Forum (National Girl Child Advocacy Forum) yesterday organised an art competition for girl child in the city to mark the National Girl Child Day.

Three hundred formal and non-formal school children, aged between 4 and 16, took part in the competition, with the slogan 'Our Determination: No Girl Child with Malnutrition'. They drew pictures on three different topics.

Professor of drawing and painting Farida Zaman and Programme Officer of Bangladesh Shishu Academy Samina Nafiz were the judges of the competition.

Such programmes will encourage the children and make them aware of their roles and rights, said the speakers, calling for arranging similar programmes across the country.

The prizes will be distributed among the winners at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium in the city on September 30.

Bangladesh has been observing September 30 as National Girl Child Day since 2002.

Int'l photo exhibition begins in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An international exhibition of photographs by ten eminent photographers of the world began at Drik gallery in the city yesterday.

A total of 241 photographs have been put on display at the two-month long exhibition titled 'Tales from a Globalising World'.

The exhibition features thought-provoking works from the ten photographers, including Shehzad Noorani of Bangladesh.

An edited version of the exhibition with 90 selected photographs will also tour Dhaka city on rickshaw vans to outreach areas.

Prof Muzaffer Ahmad, an eminent economist and trustee of the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), inaugurated the exhibition while Swiss Ambassador Dr Dora Rapold was present as the special guest. Managing Director of Drik Dr Shahidul Alam presided over the inaugural ceremony.

Prof Muzaffer termed the exhibition an artistic aspect of globalisation.

"We should think of the challenges that come from globalisation through urbanisation and changes in profession and lifestyle," he said.

The exhibition is the illustrations of different aspects of globalisation, which captured the growing gap between the developed and the developing countries, said Dr Dora Rapold.

The exhibition will remain open till November 30.

The Tales from a Globalising World project is an initiative launched by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in 2002.

The exhibition will also tour different cities of the world.



Teachers of Community Primary Schools stage a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding an increase in their salary.

Change in electoral system a must for fair election

Say freedom fighters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Change in the existing electoral system is imperative to hold a free and fair election in the country, said the speakers at a press conference yesterday.

They said introduction of voter identity card and making the election commission independent are the two preconditions for an impartial election.

The press conference on 'Reforms of electoral systems' was organised by Muktijoddha Gono Parishad at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers proposed to hold the national and local government election on the same day to stop violence, use of muscle power and rigging.

They said the candidates will have to make public statement about their income and properties and if any discrepancy is found their candidature will be cancelled.

The speakers also proposed to keep a box in the ballot paper for 'No-vote' so that the voters have the option to express their no-confidence in none of the candi-

dates.

If the total number of 'No-vote' is higher than the candidate who will bag the highest votes, the election will be cancelled declaring all the candidates disqualified. In that case, a fresh election will be held in next 90 days with new candidates, they said, adding that this would help in selecting better candidates.

Parishad General Secretary Sadek Ahmed Khan said nomination of collaborators, criminals, corrupt persons and defaulters will have to be banned.

In a written speech, he also called for including the expatriates in the voter list so that they can participate in the election.

Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat called for changes in the existing system as the present as well as the previous governments failed to give security to people.

Vice-president Mahmud Jamal Qadery, Publication Secretary Bhaskar Rasa, Women Affairs Secretary Padma Rahman and member of the central committee Syed Mashuk Ahmed were present at the conference.

3 of a family burnt to death in Satkhira

UNB, Satkhira

A couple and their daughter were burnt to death in a fire at their house at Kulya village in Ashashuni, Satkhira, on Wednesday night.

Police said Azharul Islam, 35, his wife Ankhi, 30, and daughter Anika, 7, were sleeping when a burning candle sparked off the blaze.

Azhar lit the candle during a load-shedding before going to bed. The fire led to the explosion of fuel tank of a motorcycle kept in the room, killing Azhar in his sleep and severely injuring his wife and daughter.

Anika died on way to hospital while Ankhi succumbed to her injuries at the Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Photo exhibition begins in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A three-day photography exhibition titled 'Pris Swadesh' (Dear Homeland) began in the port city yesterday.

Chittagong Photojournalist Association (CPJA) organised the exhibition at Chittagong Press Club auditorium.

Chittagong City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury inaugurated the exhibition while Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman was present as chief guest.



Muktijoddha Gono Parishad President Ishtiaq Aziz Ulfat speaks at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are General Secretary Sadek Ahmed Khan, Publicity and Publication Secretary Bhaskar Rasa, member Syed Mashuk Ahmed and Women Affairs Secretary Padma Rahman.

DHAKA TODAY section containing various notices: Debate, Art exhibition, Reception, Friday sermon, and Painting competition.

Death anniversary section featuring a portrait of Husein Ahmed and text about the anniversary of M. Ushari Begum.

WEATHER TODAY section with a weather forecast table for various cities in Bangladesh.