

# Manpower export sector to undergo drastic reforms

**PORIMOL PALMA**

The government is planning major reforms in manpower export sector including changes in emigration rules and procedures.

Although overseas employment is a crucial sector, it is yet to get adequate attention, said a high official of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.

A number of steps are now underway to improve this situation drastically. As part of the process, a committee headed by an official of the

ministry has been formed to monitor high cost of migration to Malaysia and another committee headed by a home ministry official is investigating how a liaison office of Baira (Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies) was set up in Kuala Lumpur, he said.

The expatriates' welfare ministry plans formation of another committee to look into the overall situation in manpower business and identify the problems and irregularities in this sector.

And the government is also communicating with the

International Organisation for Migration for further consultation on cross-border issues that affect labour migration, the official mentioned.

Experts on manpower businesses and migration say the cost of migration becomes high because of sharp competition among recruiting agencies for buying job demand letters or visas from employers in the manpower importing countries.

Manpower brokers or sub-agents at home also realise huge amounts of money, sometimes even more than the recruiting

agent's profit, from overseas job seekers most of whom collect money through loans at high rates of interest or sale of land.

As per normal procedures, workers sign contract papers that describe wages, other facilities and working conditions. But a section of manpower brokers do not care for all this and send workers just as travellers. Unscrupulous recruiting agencies also make fake contract papers, showing exaggerated wages and facilities.

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## Bomb found again at Ruet

RU CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered a powerful bomb in front of the main gate of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet).

Six more bombs and a sawn off rifle were also recovered from the Ruet campus in last one month.

Recently formed militant group 'Jadid al Quada' in their leaflets spread on the spot claimed ownership of the bomb and said it was a powerful remote control bomb, police said.

At around 12:00 noon, a passer-by saw a tin can wrapped with red tape in front of the university gate and informed Ruet security guards who informed Motihar Police Station.

Bomb expert Sub-Inspector Alamgir rushed to the spot and recovered the bomb. The bomb was put in a bucket full of water.

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## Grameenphone's Thai version DTAC hits Bangkok bourse

**SHARIER KHAN, from Bangkok**

Telenor's Thai version of Grameenphone, the DTAC, hit Bangkok securities market yesterday offering 220 million primary shares to the public, demonstrating that the Norwegian company is sensitive to local sentiments.

Sigve Brekke, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DTAC, the second largest mobile phone company in Thailand, says his \$3 billion company is floating 10 percent of its 2.5 billion shares not for money "but to make the Thai people feel that they own DTAC."

Talking to The Daily Star at his Bangkok office yesterday soon after formally launching DTAC's share trading at the Stock Exchange of Thailand, Brekke explained why his company-- which is expecting a

turnover of 60 to 70 billion baht (Tk 1,200 crore to 1,400 crore)-- was listing itself in the share market, if it was not for money.

"Firstly, we want to be listed in the market we operate. Secondly, we want to involve as many Thai people as possible in the company. This our own way of brand building," he said.

DTAC was previously listed in Singapore Stock Exchange in mid-nineties.

Grameenphone's share offloading Grameenphone CEO Eric Aas, who was also present on the occasion, said, "The Grameenphone will also offload its shares not for money. We would like to strengthen the capital market, build up public and corporate confidence and transparency. A lot of things fit into the GP's

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## Mohiuddin may apply for leave to appeal Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The jail authorities are likely to forward the written application of Bangabandhu killer AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed to the Supreme Court by Monday for allowing him to submit a delayed leave to appeal against the High Court (HC) verdict that upheld his death sentence awarded by the trial court.

"Mohiuddin has already written his application. If he submits it today, we will forward it to the Supreme Court on Sunday or Monday," Deputy Inspector General (Prisons) Major Shamsul Haider Siddique told The Daily Star yesterday.

Major Haider said he went to the condemned cell "Rajanigandha" yesterday to have the application but could not take it as Mohiuddin was asleep.

On November 8, 1998, a trial court sentenced Mohiuddin and 14

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## Notices on 965 Ctg bldgs to remove illegal parts in 30 days

UNB, Ctg

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) has served notices on the owners of 965 multi-storied buildings to remove unauthorised parts of their establishments by next 30 days.

Sources said the CDA served the notices on Thursday and warned stern legal action if the owners failed to remove unauthorised parts of their roadside buildings during the time limit.

The CDA has identified those buildings beside Alongkar to port connecting road, Bahaddardhat to Kathghar road, Agrabad access road and Kalurghat to Bahaddardhat road.

Sources said the authority has taken this initiative as traffic movement on those busy roads is being

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Amid rising demand for boats for movement in the flooded areas at the onset of the rains, carpenters get busy with making boats at Baghair Rajendrapur of Keraniganj near the capital.

## DISMAL SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROGRAMME Divisions with low poverty rates get more funds!

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Divisions having lower poverty rates received higher funds under the social safety net programmes (SSNP) than the divisions with higher poverty rates, the latest survey by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) shows.

According to the preliminary report titled "Household Income and Expenditure Survey" released in 2006, Sylhet division having second lowest poverty rate received the highest SSNP benefits whereas Barisal with the highest number of poor people got the third largest SSNP funds.

The BBS report revealed that Sylhet received 22.42 percent of the

SSNP funds for its 33.8 percent inhabitants who live under the poverty line. Meanwhile, Barisal got 13.34 percent fund where the poverty rate is 52 percent.

Dhaka division having the lowest poverty rate with 32 percent bagged 14.27 percent of the SSNP funds, the second highest allocation.

Khulna received the lowest with only 9.58 percent of SSNP funds where the poverty rate is 45.7 percent.

Rajshahi has the second highest poverty rate with 51.2 percent of its population living under the poverty line and the division received 12.07 percent fund.

In the proposed budget for FY08, the government has increased

allocation for SSNP by 36 percent to compensate low-income groups for the rising price of essentials.

The amount of SSNP fund was Tk 1,669 crore in the revised budget for FY07 and the finance adviser has proposed for Tk 2,273 crore funds for FY08.

When contacted, Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam told The Daily Star on Monday, "It's our policy to make more allocations for poverty-prone areas. So we will consider this while distributing the funds."

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the former finance adviser Akbar Ali Khan said, "The government can make additional

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## 3-DAY REMAND ENDS Ex-state minister Salahuddin, ntv MD Bappi sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former state minister for communications Salahuddin Ahmed and ntv Managing Director Enayetur Rahman Bappi were sent to jail yesterday after they were produced before a Dhaka court on completion of their three-day remand in separate cases.

Meanwhile, former BNP lawmaker MAH Selim was shown arrested yesterday in the case filed with Gulshan Police Station for extorting Tk 2.20 crore from Al-Amin Construction Firm.

Abu Naser, an executive of the firm, filed the case on June 20 accusing Selim and his brother Abdur Rob Dakua.

Sub-Inspector Faruq Hossain of

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PHOTO: STAR

Yesterday afternoon's downpour floods the road from Paltan intersection to Dainik Bangla turning in the capital.

## CID probing Sabbir murder and Babar's bribery

SHARIFUL ISLAM

The CID is examining if any case could be filed against former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar for receiving Tk 20 crore from Bashundhara Group chairman in exchange for relieving his son of the Sabbir murder charge.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) started probing the murder of Bashundhara director Humayun Kabir Sabbir and Babar's receiving money soon after the case was transferred to it from the Detective Branch (DB) on June 12.

The DB had found Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan's son Safiat Sobhan

Sanbeer, another Bashundhara Director Shamsuddin Ahmed and Sanbeer's close associate Khairul Hasan Ujjal involved in the murder.

"Our investigation officer is now investigating the case and when the probe is over we will take the next course of action," CID chief Foni Bhushan Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

The joint forces have already recovered Babar's Tk 20 crore and deposited it with the Bangladesh Bank on May 25 after the former state minister admitted during interrogation to receiving the sum from the Bashundhara chairman for not implicating his son in the murder.

Babar admitted that Sobhan

went to him and agreed to provide Tk 50 crore against his demand of Tk 100 crore in exchange for not implicating Sanbeer in the case after investigators detected Sanbeer's involvement in the killing. The detained former state minister for home also admitted that he received the bribe with the consent of the then premier Khaleda Zia and her eldest son Tarique Rahman.

A CID official said they will collect the information gleaned from Babar and decide if a case could be filed against him after consulting with top officials about the findings.

CID Assistant Superintendent

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## AL founding day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) observes its 58th founding anniversary today.

On this day in 1949, East Pakistan Awami Muslim League was founded at the historic Rose Garden in Old Dhaka. Later, the word "Muslim" was dropped from

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Prayer Timing		
June 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-52	6-57
Esha	8-17	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

## Nato air strike kills 25 Afghan civilians

7 police, 20 Taliban also killed

AFP, Kandahar/ Jalalabad

A Nato air strike in southern Afghanistan early yesterday killed 25 civilians, including nine women and three young children, police said amid rising concern about civilian casualties.

Nato's International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) confirmed its troops called in air support after being attacked in Helmand province, and said it was investigating reports of a "small number" of civilian casualties.

Provincial police chief Colonel Mohammad Hassan told AFP the bombing came after Taliban fighters attacked an Isaf convoy from among houses and gardens in a village.

About 20 Taliban were also reported killed in the strike after midnight, he said.

"The Nato forces' air strike on the area mistakenly targeted two to three civilian houses, killing 25 civilians," Hassan said.

The dead included nine women and three children aged from six months to two years old, he said.

The rest were men, including the mullah of the mosque of the village about 14km north of Lashkar Gah town.

Hassan said the bodies of the dead were lying where they had been hit.

The information that 20 Taliban were killed had come from "reports we get from the area and from the locals," he said. "The militants seem to have taken the Taliban bodies with them."

Isaf said the target of the strike was a compound "assessed to have been occupied by up to 30 insurgent fighters, most of whom were killed in the engagement."

"Isaf troops are now investigating reports that a small number of civilians may also have been in the compound," it said in a statement.

It had not yet been possible to determine if civilians had been killed or injured or if any casualties were the result of insurgent or Isaf action, it said.

One Isaf soldier was wounded in

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