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MANPOWER EXPORT TO MALAYSIA

Recruiters trade on workers' woes

PORIMOL PALMA

Negligence of most recruiting agencies and their sub-agents in Bangladesh and Malaysia in selecting skilled jobseekers as per employers' requirements leads to dissatisfaction on both sides, making the workers the ultimate victims, sources concerned said.

Many of these agents make false promises of higher pay to lure the jobseekers, who come mostly from rural areas. These workers get frustrated and resort to protests when they receive wages lower than their expectation in a foreign land.

This was the case of about 800 workers of four textile factories who on October 9 went to the Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur from Johor, a town 400 kilometres off the capital, to

protest against lower wages.

The workers alleged their employers paid each of them only Malaysian ringgit (RM) 200 a month against the promised RM 1,200 since January this year.

These workers are most likely to be sent back home resulting in huge loss, as they had paid recruiting agents Tk 2 lakh or more by selling their land and other belongings and taking loans at high interest rates.

Quoting an official of one of the textile factories in Johor, a Malaysian newspaper, The Star Online, on October 19 reported that the Bangladeshis had previously worked at home as truckers and general workers.

"They felt they were not suited for a job that required them to sit for long hours and sew garments,"

the official said, adding, they wanted to rejoin their former companies [back in Bangladesh] claiming they had earned higher salaries.

The same day, another Malaysian newspaper, The New Straits Times, reported that the problems seem to be rife among Bangladeshi workers compared to workers from other countries. Some employers were still using recruitment agents despite being warned against doing so, it added.

"These agents are illegal. They could be either Malaysians or Bangladeshis who come here on social visit passes and hang around for a while to make contact with employers," said Malaysia's Labour Department Director-General Datuk Ismail Abdul Rahim.

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MANNAN BHUIYAN SAYS

Post-independence govt declared amnesty for collaborators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader and freedom fighter Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said there were Razakars, Al Badrs and Al Shams (collaborators of Pakistan army) during the War of Independence but the post-independence government did not bring them under trial.

He made the remarks at a press briefing when asked on Jamaat Secretary Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed's claim that there is no war criminal in the country.

The party, which came to power after the Liberation War, declared amnesty for the anti-liberation forces, Bhuiyan claimed.

Asked if there would be any alliance with Jamaat in the next election, Bhuiyan said election understanding could be reached with any party to strengthen the election alliance.



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Since growing "golden fibre" is not profitable anymore, farmers now cultivate jute as vegetables. The photo was taken yesterday at Savar on the outskirts of the capital.

College student killed as van hits rickshaw

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college student was killed and another was injured when a covered van hit a rickshaw in Moghbazar in the capital yesterday.

Following the death of Farzana Hossain Silvy, 24, a third year student of marketing department at Dhaka City College, aggrieved locals blocked the Moghbazar to Malibagh road for more than an hour.

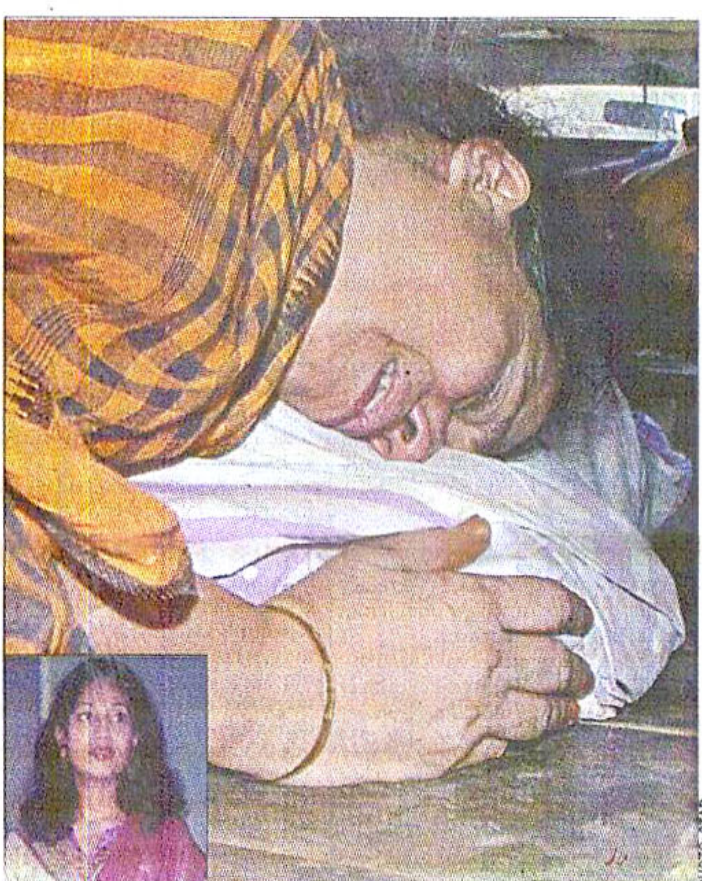
Silvy's classmate Nusrat Sharmin Liza, who was also on the rickshaw, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with injuries.

Police apprehended the covered van but the driver managed to escape.

Liza said Silvy and she were going to their friend's house in Moghbazar from Malibagh and they were supposed to go to a coaching centre in Mirpur from there.

She said the covered van hit the rickshaw from behind around 9:30am. Both of them were ejected from the rickshaw onto the street.

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Mother of Farzana Hossain Silvy, inset, breaks down at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday after the Dhaka City College student was killed in a road accident.

6 killed as bus rams into 3-wheeler

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A Bogra-bound bus from Dhaka rammed into a stationary passenger-laden three-wheeler and veered into a roadside ditch at Mirzapur upazila in Tangail yesterday killing six people and injuring 15 others.

Quoting the injured, SM Badrul Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Mirzapur Police Station, told The Daily Star that the accident occurred around 10:30am on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Kurni Bus Stand and left five passengers of the three-wheeler and a bus passenger dead on the spot.

The driver and helpers of the bus, however, managed to escape capture.

The dead were identified as Mohammad Anser Ali, 60, and Rashmon, 30, of Barati, Habib, 30, and Azanoor, 35, of Shabbulla in Mirzapur upazila, and bus passenger Sumaiya, 7, of Baofal upazila in Patuakhali. An unidentified woman aged about 40 was also killed.

Following the accident, locals

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Inflation won't rise, to stay stable, says BB governor

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Bank Governor Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday said the rate of inflation in the country would remain stable in next few months and it could even decline to some extent, despite IMF apprehension of a rise.

"I assured IMF that the inflation will not increase, rather it will decline in accordance with the latest facts and figures," he told reporters at Zia International Airport on return from the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington.

The governor said he met IMF Deputy Managing Director Takatoshi Kato on the sidelines of the meetings when the IMF senior executive told him of

their apprehension that the inflation in Bangladesh would increase as elsewhere in the world.

"Inflation is a concern and it's getting momentum regionally and globally," he quoted the observations of the meetings.

But locally, he said, the inflation would not increase and it would remain at least stable in next few months. He added that the IMF explained our situation from their point of view.

Salehuddin said the supply side constraints like rise in the prices of essential items and fuel oil on the international market as well as import cost pushed up inflation here. There are some demand side constraints too, but not so harmful at this moment.

"Now our main target is to create employment opportunity and bring dynamism in the private sector," he said.

Replying to a question, the Bangladesh Bank governor said the government will not increase the prices of fuel oil, gas and electricity at the present despite continued pressure from the donors. "It'll hamper (our) economic growth."

"I think any decision to raise the energy prices at this time may hinder growth," said Salehuddin.

Replying to another question, he said the development partners have expressed satisfaction over the ongoing reforms in the country and inquired about how the reforms will progress in the days ahead.

Stolen furnace oil seized in Khulna, 3 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) raided three dealer shops of Padma Oil Company in Khalishpur area of the city on Thursday night and early yesterday and seized 10 lakh litres of stolen and adulterated furnace oil worth over Tk 2 crore, from underground tanks.

They arrested three people. They are Mehedi Hasan and Mujibar Rahman, employees of Saima Fuel Enterprise, and Rafiqul Islam Babul, proprietor of Abdullah Traders.

After interrogation at Rab-6 headquarters at Khalishpur, the arrestees were handed over to Khalishpur Police Station yesterday. Rab also sealed the three underground fuel tanks in presence of a metropolitan magistrate.

Acting on a tip-off, over a hundred Rab members led by Lt Col

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2 Tangail JMB militants get 10-year RI

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A Tangail court sentenced two militants of the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment in two cases, one under the Arms Act and the other under the Explosive Substances Act.

Tangail Special Tribunal-2 Judge Mohammad Golam Hossain, also the additional district and sessions judge of Tangail, delivered the verdict Thursday and fined the convicts Tk 8,000 each, in default they would have to stay five more months in jail.

The convicts are Arman Ali of

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JMB torture victim in Rajshahi sues 63

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A victim of torture of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) filed a case with a Rajshahi court on Thursday, accusing 63 persons of aiding and abetting the activists of the banned militant outfit in torturing and demanding tolls from him in 2004.

Shantu, son of Mujibor Rahman of Jhargram village of Bagmara upazila, lodged the case with a first class magistrate's court, which ordered the officer-in-charge of the upazila police station to investigate the matter and take legal action.

With this, the total number of

cases for abetting militancy stood at 20 in Rajshahi, Natore and Naogaon.

Shantu alleged that the accused persons following the directive of Mojaffar Hossain Dewan came to his house and demanded Tk 50,000 on April 15, 2004.

As he refused to pay the toll, the attackers blindfolded and tied Shantu and took him to the Hamirkutsa torture camp, the complainant said in the case.

The militants hung him upside down from a tree and tortured him. They broke his hands and legs and threw him outside the camp when

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Accomplice of Pichchi Hannan held

UNB, Dhaka

Nazimuddin Babu, a close associate of Pichchi Hannan, was arrested in the city's Sepoybagh area Thursday evening.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-3 raided a house in the area at around 6:00pm and arrested Babu, Dhanmondi unit president of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL). He was wanted in a number of murder, extortion and kidnapping cases.

On Babu's confessional statement, the elite force arrested one of his associates, Rumi, in the city's Kathalagan area. In another drive, the law enforcer recovered a pistol

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Mongla workers end strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Over 3,000 dockworkers of Mongla Port resumed work early yesterday, eleven hours after going on a work abstention demanding payment of their unpaid portion of Eid bonuses.

The workers went on the work abstention around 2:00pm Thursday and resumed work around 1:00am yesterday.

The dockworkers were paid Tk 1,000 each instead of Tk 1,550 Eid bonus. Full payment could not be made due to fund crisis, said a source in the Dock Workers Management Board of the port.

The workers resumed work after authorities concerned assured them of resolving the crisis as soon as possible.

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Delwar, his men barred from visiting Sylhet shrines

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

BNP Secretary-General Khandaker Delwar Hossain was barred from visiting the shrines of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) and Hazrat Shahporan (RA) in Sylhet yesterday.

Delwar along with his two daughters and a number of BNP central leaders was scheduled to visit the two shrines and offer Juma

prayers at the mosque attached to the shrine of Hazrat Shahjalal.

Police intercepted them at Lalabazar, about 8 kilometres from Sylhet city, at noon. The law enforcers said they have been asked from high ups to impose restrictions on the entry of the BNP leader into the city on security grounds.

Delwar and the members of his entourage tried to convince the law

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Tiger kills one in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A Royal Bengal Tiger killed a fisherman near Darpota canal in the Sundarbans Thursday evening.

The victim was identified as Abbas Samad, 35, son of Akkas Ali Sardar of Burigolani in Shyamnagar upazila.

Police quoting locals said the tiger swooped on Samad when he along with other fishermen was catching fish in the canal around 7:00pm. The tiger dragged him into the forest.

His body is yet to be recovered.

71 bridges lie idle for lack of approach roads in Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

People in 12 upazilas of Bogra cannot use any of the 71 bridges and culverts constructed four years ago at a cost of around Tk 50 crore as there are no roads connecting them.

Different government agencies, including the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and the Roads and Highways Department (RHD), built those bridges and culverts during the tenure of the last BNP-led government.

An LGED official said the construction work of a bridge in Dhaowakhola area under sadar upazila completed around one year ago but people cannot use it

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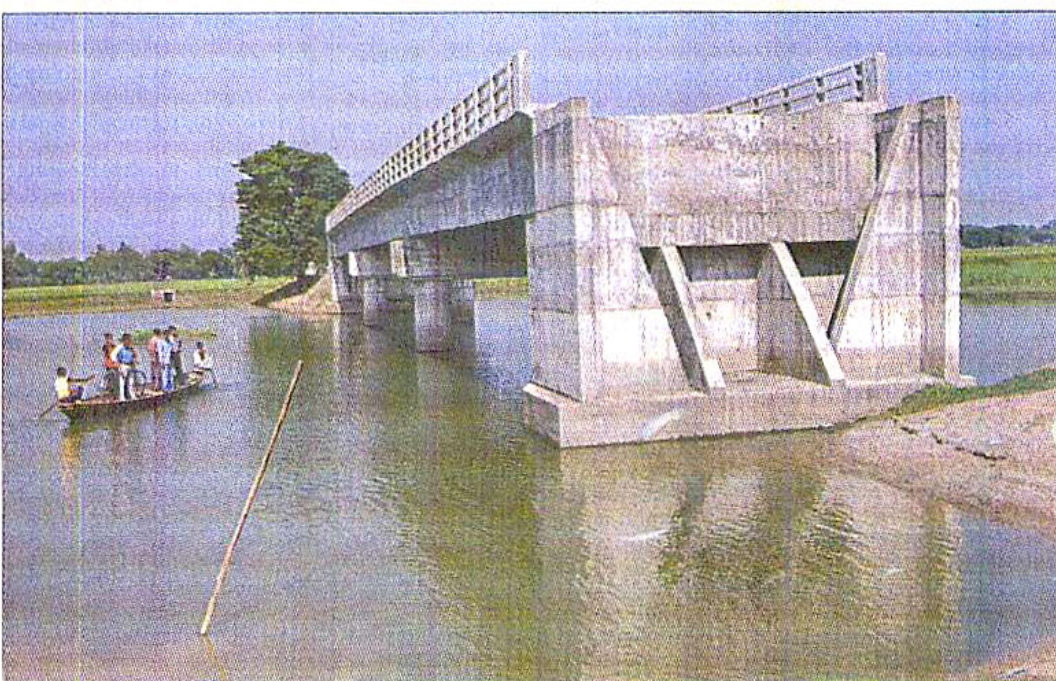


PHOTO: STAR

The Kanirdaha bridge on Baiguni-Durgahat Road in Gabtoli upazila of Bogra has been lying unused for about two years due to lack of approach roads.

India lifts ban on rice export

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India has lifted the ban on exporting superior quality non-Basmati rice priced at over \$425 a tonne, bringing relief to rice growers and exporters.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the federal cabinet here on Thursday after the government received representations from rice growers, particularly from major

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Prayer Timing

October 27

	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-50	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-32	5-35
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

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