

# Arrest of Bihari sparks protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In protest against the arrest of a stranded Pakistani from the city's Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, several hundred residents of the camp put up a barricade on a road in the area for over two hours yesterday afternoon.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members arrested Mohammad Samsad from his camp residence at about 8:30am with a one-shooter gun and a bullet.

Later, the Rab-2 members handed him over to Mohammadpur Police Station and filed a case in this connection.

Meanwhile, several hundred stranded Pakistanis (popularly known as Biharis) took to the streets from 5:00pm and staged a

demonstration. They alleged that during the arrest, there was no firearm in his possession but Rab-2 members filed a case saying that they arrested him with the firearm and bullet.

The agitating camp dwellers also demanded his immediate release.

However, the situation was brought under control after the agitators were assured of proper investigation by Mohammadpur police.

Rab-2 officials, however, said arrested Samsad is the leader of 'S' Group, an extortionists' group at Mohammadpur.

He is also a listed criminal in the area and was arrested with firearm and ammunition, they added.

# Hajj, Umrah exhibition June 5-7

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Hajj and Umrah Exhibition 2008 is going to be held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city from June 5 to 7 to bring together the Muslims willing to observe Hajj and Umrah and agencies providing services.

E3 Solutions Ltd in association with Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) is organising the exhibition, first of its kind in the country that will be a platform for aspirant Hajjis to get to know the facilities provided by different agencies and choose the best options as per their capacity, organisers said yesterday.

Hajj agencies, banks, airlines and other agencies involving Hajj and Umrah will participate in the exhibition, said E3 Solutions Ltd Chairman AZM Fazle Rabbi Khan at a press conference at a city hotel.

He said, "Thousands of people hailing from remote areas cannot directly contact the Hajj agencies. Therefore, they cannot truly avail the services of the agencies."

In a word, most of those willing to observe Hajj or Umrah get victimized in the hands of a section of brokers that also fails the implementation of the National Hajj Policy, Fazle Rabbi said.

Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia have already signed an agreement under which 65,000 Muslims can observe Hajj in the holy city of

Madina this year. Of them, 15,000 will observe the Hajj under government arrangement, while others will do under private arrangement, he noted.

Asked on the allegations that people are subjected to harassment by agencies every year, HAAB President Mohammed Faruque said the number of true complaints is very small.

He said they oppose the government rule that agencies must use Biman Bangladesh Airlines for travel of the pilgrims to Madina.

HAAB Secretary General Maulana Eyaqub Sharafati and E3 Solutions Ltd Managing Director Rezaul Karim were also present at the press conference.

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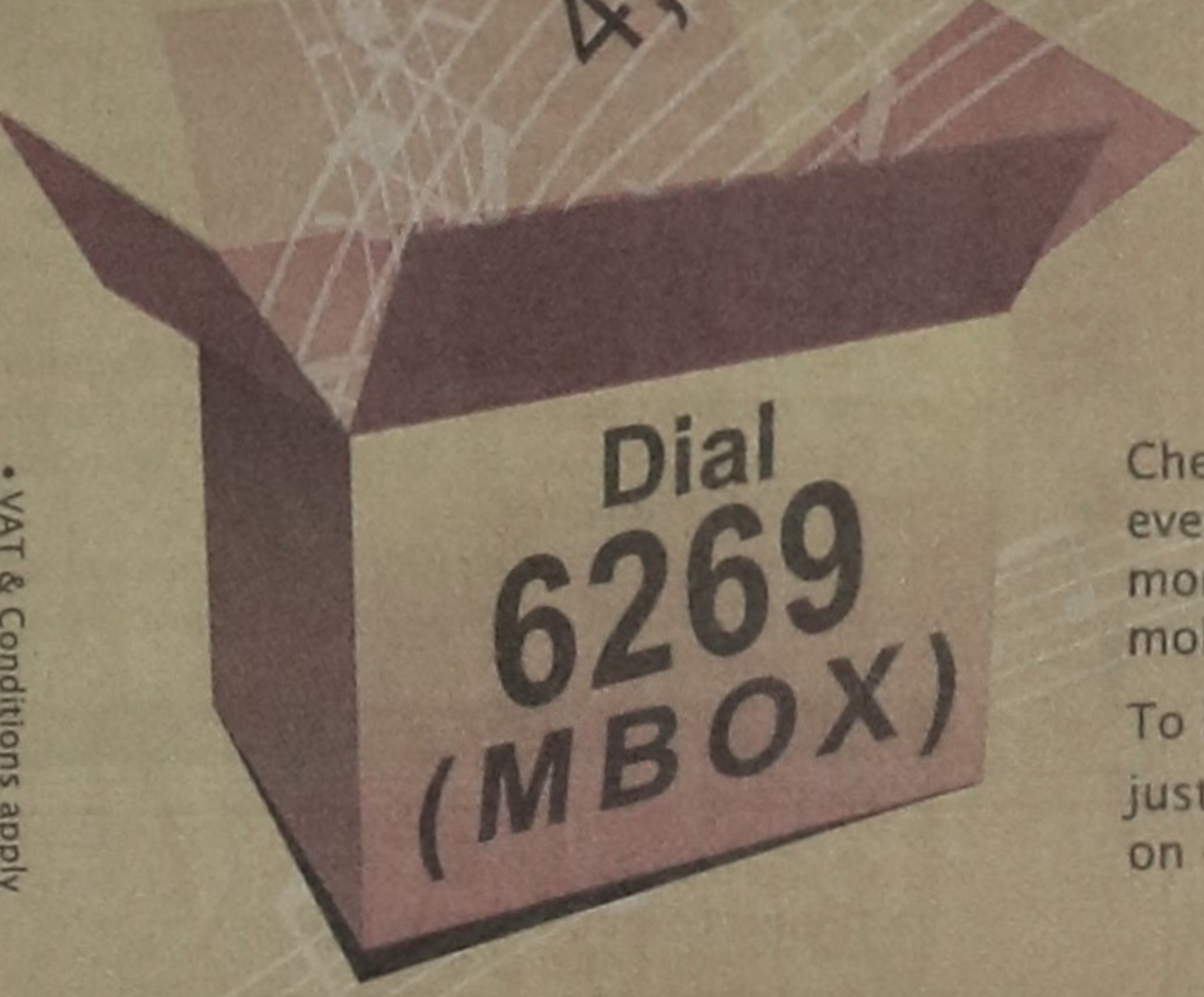
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# Dhaka elected to ILO Governing Board

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has been elected to the Governing Board of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva for the term 2008-11.

Foreign Adviser Iftexhar Ahmed Chowdhury announced it yesterday saying, "This was in recognition of Bangladesh's international standing in the field."

"This entails key responsibilities and our friends of the forum the Asian-Pacific Group, whom we will represent, feel that we are well-equipped to represent them," the foreign adviser added.

Initially Iran was also a candidate. After consultations, Iran and Pakistan were endorsed as deputy members.

The election will be formalised at the International Labour Conference to be held in Geneva ILO headquarters from May 28 to June 13.

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