Form united front to protect rights of migrant workers

Experts tell South Asian countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour experts and civil society members yesterday called on the governments of South Asian countries to form a united front to protect the rights of migrant workers from this region who are working in various parts of the world, particularly in the Gulf countries.

of this region are in great demand in the industrial sector in other regions, but malpractices in the recruitment system are leading to our common problems," said the violation of their rights.

So, the governments of this adviser to a caretaker government. region should recognise it and unite to protect the rights of their workers, they said at a regional

Valuables worth

Tk 7 lakh looted

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

A gang of masked robbers yester-

day looted away valuables worth

around Tk 7 lakh from a house at

Sabujhat village under Srinagar

housemaster Korean expatriate

Mohammad Salauddin, 43, and his

wife Farida Akter, 32. The critically

injured couple were sent to Dhaka

informed the police of the incident,

respond to their call in time.

3:00am and entered the house.

from the scene, they added.

confce begins in

Atwo-day New Asian African Strategic

Partnership (NAASP) ministerial

Republic of South Africa are the co-

Around 60 ministers from Asian,

The NAASP Ministerial

Conference 2008 is carried out as

commitment of support to the strug-

gle of the Palestinian people through

NAASP countries including

Bangladesh positively supported the

and a childhood friend of

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur

at his grave, Qurankhwani, discus-

sion and food distribution among

On the occasion, placing wreath

Rahman, says a press release.

the orphans will be held.

the capacity building assistances.

African and Latin American countries

are expected to attend the conference.

Jakarta July 14

The villagers alleged that they

in Srinagar

upazila on gunpoint.

for treatment.

the robbers.

METRO DESK

says a press release.

chair of the conference.

initiatives.

Employment in South Asia'.

The Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) of Dhaka University in Research Centre organised the workshop at Brac Centre Inn in the

"The migrant workers are help-They said the human resources ing build our nation. They should be treated as VIPs. Our government should raise the issue in the upcoming Saarc summit to discuss Rokia Afzal Rahman, former

Chairing the concluding session of the workshop, she said there was a time when the population of this workshop on 'Recruitment country was considered to be a countries.

Research Unit

Regional Workshop on

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT IN SOUTH ASIA

BRAC Centre, Dhaka

Refugee and Microtop

DRC on Migration

the city yesterday. On her right is Abdul Malek and on her left is Prof CR Abrar.

Practices for Overseas problem, but now the concept has changed. The migrant workers have huge potential and they need support, she added.

Rokia Afzal Rahman also said collaboration with Development that there should be legal advisers in the Bangladesh missions abroad to deal with the issues of migrant workers. "We must find out ways to check fraudulent practices," she

> Presenting the recommendations of the workshop, RMMRU Coordinator Prof CR Abrar said middlemen both in the laboursending and labour-receiving countries play a major role in which also contributes to harassment of workers in the destination

Participants of the workshop recommended that recruiting agencies should verify the current status of the overseas companies before sending workers and ensure that the workers are provided with all information about workplace, facilities and laws of the destination countries.

They also suggested formulating a common code of conduct for the recruiting agencies in the South Asian countries and introducing a rating system for them so that good ones are rewarded and bad ones are penalised.

Shaheen Anam, executive direcincreasing the migration cost, tor of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said labour migration is an issue which can be pursued together at the Saarc level to get the

> "We cannot sit back when we see our workers being cheated and exploited in foreign lands. If the migration can be managed properly, it would benefit us more and more," she said.

Stressing the need to transform low-skilled workers into skilled ones, she said, "It will enhance their dignity and increase their income.

Samir Khosla, a recruiting agent from India, said the oil-rich Gulf countries remain silent when the prices of oil continue to spiral, but they raise a hue and cry when the workers demand wage hike.

"If we, the South Asian nations, work together, we will surely succeed. We have to fight together," he

Abdul Malek, director general of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, said the migration cost of a worker is sometimes higher than his/her one year's

He also emphasised the need to raise awareness among the migrants and increase their skills.





Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed meets Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Bin Ahmad Badawi, left, and Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, right, separately at Hilton Hotel in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday.

Commodore Riaz takes office as CPA chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Commodore Riaz Uddin Ahmed took office as the new chairman of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) yesterday.

He took over the charge from outgoing chairman Commodore M Farooq formally at the CPA office in the morning.

He had been serving as the managing director of Khulna Shipyard before joining as CPA chairman, said a CPA press release.

Commodore RU Ahmed served in different important capacities of Bangladesh Navy where he joined as a cadet in 1978 and got commission in 1980.

He obtained BSC Engineering (Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering) degree from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) in 1983.

Commodore RU Ahmed also achieved PSC degree from Pakistan Naval Staff College in 1994. He completed his AFWC from National Defence College at Mirpur in 2001 and obtained a degree from National Defence University in China in 2004.

also by the developed nations in this

emphasis on sharing best experi-

Bangkok conference of the Bay of

Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral

prising countries of South and

achieved fruitful results in trade,

industry, tourism, monetary coop-

eration, technology transfer, and

ultimately better lives for the people

"It is possible to have a far-

through regional collaborations,"

reaching impact on poverty reduc-

tion and development through

politico-electoral dialogue, she

want a free and fair election with

participation of all parties, all prob-

lems can be solved through peace-

"We don't want any conflict. We

said she knows nothing about it.

"Many regions of the world have

Southeast Asia was set up in 1997.

FROM PAGE 1

the regional body.

Cooperation (Bimstec).

the CA said.

way," he noted.

FROM PAGE 1

ful discussions."

at 10:20am.

D-8 SUMMIT

CA's participation boosts Dhaka's int'l profile

Says foreign adviser

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed's active participation in the D-8 Summit in Kuala Lumpur boosted Bangladesh's international profile as a 'thought leader'.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury made the observation while talking to reporters on the outcome of the summit yesterday.

Iftekhar said the chief adviser's proposal for a Food Fund was enthusiastically received at the summit, adding that Fakhruddin also made recommendations on migrant workers' rights, climate change and agriculture.

He said the chief adviser made significant contribution to the idea of greater emphasis on agricultural productivity in the member countries. "Some of these ideas have been

CA for regional move to fight poverty

He also recalled Bimstec's objec-

the leaders issued in Kuala Lumpur," said the foreign adviser.

"A significant amount of time was spent on discussions with Malaysian leaders on workers' issues and other bilateral matters,' he said, adding that Malaysian labour market was continually expanding for Bangladeshis, now exceeding 445,000.

The Malaysian leaders are now welcoming and appreciating this workforce, he said.

"However, there're some problems which the chief adviser raised with his Malaysian counterpart Dr Abdullah Badawi, who assured him that these would be looked into."

The chief adviser met President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran and Prime minister Syed Makhdoom Yousaf Raza Gillani of Pakistan on the sidelines of the summit, discussing ways and reflected in the Declaration that means of enhancing cooperation.

ways of alleviating poverty.

and delegates.

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed

Chowdhury also spoke at the open-

ing function. Planning Secretary

Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury also

addressed, welcoming the ministers

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India,

Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and

Thailand, representing 1.4 billion or

20 percent of the world population.

The combined GDP of Bimstec

Islam, Bhutan's Finance Minister

Lyonpo Wangdi Norbu, Indian State

Minister for Rural Development

Chandra Sekhar Sahu, Myanmar's

Deputy Minister for National

Planning and Economic

Development Col Thuyain Zaw,

Nepal's National Planning

Commission member Dr Posh Raj

Pandey, Sri Lanka's Minister for

Nation Building Estate

Infrastructure Development Slinda

Dissanayake, and Thailand's Social

Development and Human Security

Minister Chavarat Charnvirat

attended the conference.

Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul

countries is \$750 billion.

Bimstec is a regional body of

3 robbers held while making away with booties

CU CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested three robbers while making away with looted old ornaments and other valuables in the port city's Patenga area yesterday morning.

The arrestees were identified as Kazi Shahriar, 23, son of Shahjahan of Noakhali, Sunny Uddin Apu, 20, son of Mohammad Ali of Patenga in the port city, and Syed Hasan, 18, son of Shahjahan Mian of Faridpur.

Sources said four robbers in the guise of schoolboys entered the house of Asma Islam at Cement Colony of the Patenga area at around 11:30am. They looted six tolas of gold

ornaments worth Tk 1.40 lakh, Tk 5,000 in cash and a camera holding the inmates at gunpoint. They also stabbed Asma, leaving her seriously injured, as she tried to

protest. On information, members of the Rab-7 waylaid the gate of the colony

and caught three of the four robbers. Another of the robbers Mohammad Akramul, 18, son of Ibrahim of Sandwip upazila, managed to flee, said the sources. The Rab-men seized the looted

the gold ornaments, cash and camera from their possession. Asma was rushed to Chittagong

Medical College Hospital.

Obituary METRO DESK

SMA Salam, a freedom fighter and chairman of Homeless Freedom Fighters Association, passed away on July 3, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two sons and a daughter to mourn his death.

He was buried at his village home in Kushtia with state honour.

Muktijoddha Sangsad Dhaka city unit Commander Md Amir Hossen and Deputy Commander MA Gafur condoled the death.

AKMAbdullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

AKM Abdullah, general manger of Jibon Bima Corporation Chittagong Zone, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Holy Cross Hospital yesterday. He left behind his wife, two

daughters, two sons and mother to mourn his death. Officials and employees of libon

Bima Corporation condoled the death.

Firoza Khatun

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Firoza Khatun, mother of Bangladesh University of

Engineering and Technology (Buet) Vice Chancellor Dr AMM Safiullah,

passed away at her residence in Mymensinghon July 6 at the age of 89. She was buried at Goalkibari

graveyard in Mymensingh. Family members requested all tries minister also Jamaat-e-Islami

to pray for her departed soul.

Abdul Hye

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Hye, a school teacher of Munshigram village under Mirersharai in Chittagong, passed away due to old Hearing both sides, the judge set | age complications at his residence on Tuesdayattheage of 100.

Bangladesh Juba Union central committee President Kafi Ratan and General Secretary Hasan Hafizur Rahman Sohel expressed shock at the death.

Chehlum



Abdur Rashid, father of Md Humayun Kabir, a newspaper agent in Khulna, will be held tomorrow

Khalispur in Khulna city, says a press release. Relatives, friends and admirers

are requested to attend the programme and pray for his departed soul.

3 of a family die of unknown disease in Joypurhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Former adviser to a caretaker government Rokia Afzal Rahman speaks at a regional workshop at Brac Centre Inn in

Three people of a family died of an unknown disease within last five days at Molamgarihat village in Kalai, Joypurhat, while another villager has been suffering from The robbers also stabbed | the same disease, according to

> police sources. The dead are Shyam Lal, 45, his wife Arati Rani, 40, and his nephew Ashique Lal, 28, son of Netowa Lal. The other victim, Fuljan, is now undergoing treat-

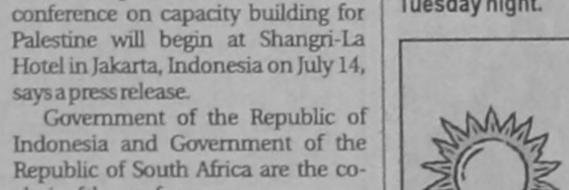
ment at Joypurhat Sadar

Hospital. Family sources said Ashique died at Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital on July 5 and his uncle Shyam Lal died at Joypurhat Sadar Hospital on

Arati Rani, who was undergoing treatment at the Sadar Hospital, died yesterday. But the doctors could not diagnose the



Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seize huge quantity of liquor and arrest four persons in this connection from New DOHS area in the city on Tuesday night.



Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy rainfalls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Highest temperature 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 23.8 degrees Celsius at Sandwip. The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:19am

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some Humidityin Temperature in

City/Town Celsius percentage Morning Min Evening 26.5 32.9 Dhaka 25.5 87 31.8 Chittagong 89 26.2 31.6 Rajshahi 80 26.0 31.5 Khulna 76 25.8 Barisal 60 26.0 35.5 Sylhet 31.7 24.8 67 Cox's Bazar

MTB-Daily Star **Debate Contest** begins today in Ctg

CU CORRESPONDENT

The Mutual Trust Bank - The Daily Star Debate Contest 2008 begins in the port city today.

Drishty Chittagong, an educational and cultural organisation, is organising the contest at Theatre Institute, Chittagong (TIC) auditorium in association with the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA).

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam will inaugurate the contest at 10:00am as the chief guest while CDA Chairman Shah Mohammad Akhteruddin, Resident Editor of the daily Prothom Alo Abul Momen and Mutual Trust Bank Senior Vice President Mohammad Nazrul Islam will attend the cere-

mony as special guests. The 16th school debate, 5th university debate and 1st child debate competitions will take place

during the event. A total of 18 schools will take part in the school debate while 12 schools in the child debate and six universities in the university debate. Radio Foorti is the radio partner

of the event.



New Unicef representative presents credentials METRO DESK

The newly appointed Unicef Country Representative Carel de Rooy yesterday presented his credentials to Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury in the city.

Rooy has replaced Louis-Georges Arsenault who was appointed as the Unicef director of emergency programmes, says a press release. Prior to his new assignment in

Dhaka, Rooy was based in Moscow, serving as the area representative for Russia and Belarus. He spearheaded Unicef's country programmes focusing on vulnerable children and led the humanitarian response in North Caucasus. Rooy first joined the Unicef in 1984

as the chief of water and sanitation

section of the organisation in Nigeria.

regard," the CA said, putting tives of intra-regional support in the form of training, research and ences on poverty alleviation among development as well as beneficial cooperation in the areas of agricul-The conference was held in ture, industry, expansion of trade Dhaka as per a decision of the 2004 and investment, improving in communications and transport, and cooperation with other international organisations for the pur-Technical and Economic poses of improving the living stan-The seven-member body comdard of people.

> "The institutional framework of Bimstec member countries may be devised for intensive and extensive research investigation, and ultimately development of programmes incorporating best practice examples, Fakhruddin said.

Finance Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam, who presided over the conference, said the Bimstec region has the highest number of poor people in the world. "The global price hike of essen-

regional cooperation if we take tials coupled with uncertainty of advantage of the experiences of the food availability would create prob member countries in a concerned lems for those who live below the povertyline," he said, expressing the The 2004 conference decided hope the ministerial conference that a special ministerial meeting of Bimstec would be held on poverty

would thrash out some significant Work together to overcome crisis

> overcome the crisis." Asked about her possible cooperation with the government, the detained BNP chief said, "We want elections and want to cooperate with the government for that. And for that to materialise there is no

> > Expressing resentment over the

"One doesn't need to compare

prices during the regime of Shaista

Khan. He can just look back to the

BNP-led alliance government's

regime when the people could save

money and also have three meals a

ing her detained sons -- Tarique and

Repeating her demand for send-

Asked whether any negotiation is alternative to discussions." going on between her and the gov-As the reporters asked her again ernment, she said, "I'm in custody whether BNP will join the ongoing and have no scope for conversadialogues between the government tions. I knownothing about it." and political parties, Khaleda said, Earlier, the court deferred till July "I'm detained. I will have to go by 20 the hearing on charge framing in whatever decision the four-party

alliance takes."

of the poor."

day," she quipped.

the high profile graft case. The BNP chief was produced before the special court, set up on finance adviser's recent remark the parliament building premises, about skyrocketing prices of rice,

She told the reporters that BNP is

a big democratic party and has been working to establish the rights of the Reiterating her demand for parliamentary election in October

this year, she said, "We want the national election first but the government wants to hold upazila elections in October. There shouldn't be any problem if the parliamentary election is held in October." She demanded withdrawal of the

state of emergency. "It is not possible to hold a free and fair election under the emergency," she said adding, journalists are not being able to write many things due to the emergency. Referring to Awami League Acting President Zillur Rahman's remark that BNP-led 4-party alliance is responsible for ushering in

how 1/11 happened. They know

shouldn't have a debate on it any-

Koko -- abroad for treatment, Khaleda said, "Their health conditions are deteriorating by the day, but the government is not taking any measure." DAY'S PROCEEDINGS The hearing on charge framing in the case could not take place as a petition for staying the case pro-

the incident of 1/11, Khaleda told the reporters, "The people know As the court proceedings started at 10:25am, Khaleda's counsel what happened on the streets at the Advocate Abdur Rezzaque Khan time, you have the video footage. We appealed for adjournment of the

ceedings is pending with the

Appellate Division of Supreme

more rather we should work to hearing for two weeks saying, they had filed a writ petition seeking a stay on the proceedings of the case, which will be heard soon.

He also argued that the hearing

on charge framing cannot start until the petition for the stay order is adjudicated by the higher court. Another defence counsel Barrister Abdur Razzak filed a bail petition for his client former indus-

Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami. He also said the case was filed with a mala fide intention and his client is entitled to bail since he is ill. Prosecution lawyers opposed the bail plea saying, the accused is

involved in corruption. she said, "It sounds very bad, which July 20 as the next date for hearing, but is tantamount to mocking the plight did not give any order on the bail plea immediately. However, later in the afternoon it rejected the bail petition. the current high prices with the

Khaleda's younger son Arafat Rahman Koko, who was exempted from appearing in person before the court on grounds of ill health, was represented by his lawyer Taherul Islam Tawhid.

Other accused in the case including former LGRD minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, former health minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, former agriculture minister MK Anwar, former land minister M Shamsul Islam, former industries minister Motiur Rahman Nizami, and former state minister for energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain were also produced before the court.

The Anti-corruption Commission filed the case with Tejgaon police station on September 2 last year in connection with corruption in awarding Gatco a contract for container handling at depots in Dhaka and Chittagong.



at his residence (Appayan Community Centre) at

