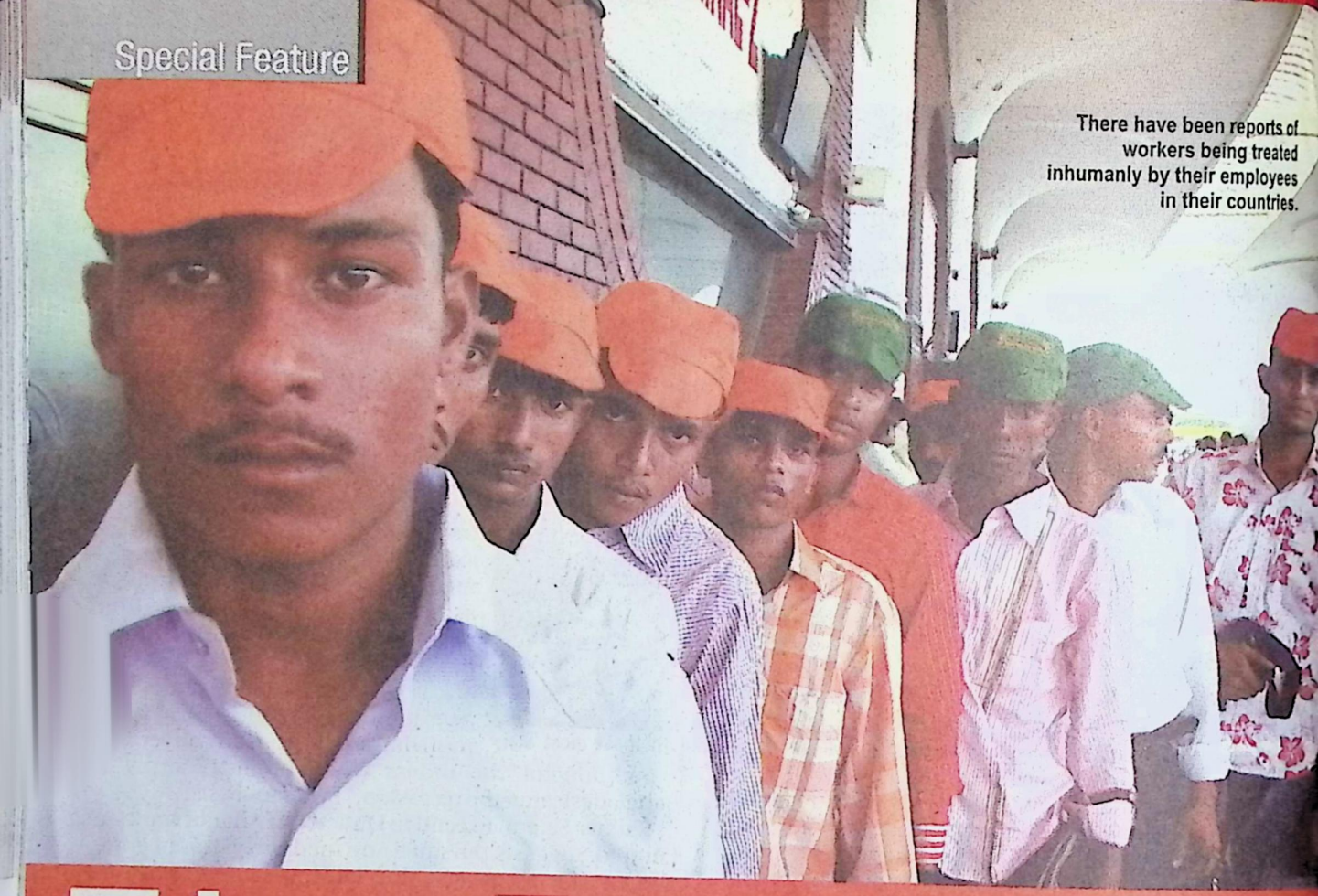


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The Economy

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In the last few months, the plight of migrant workers abroad has caricatured a sorry picture in Bangladesh. Not only have there been reports of workers being treated inhumanly by their employees in their countries, but also several hundred Bangladeshi workers are still stuck in in foreign jails as illegal aliens, thanks to some money swindling agencies in Bangladesh promising poverty-stricken young men jobs and better lives outside Bangladesh. Today, the country, where the inflow of remittance reached a staggering 7 billion dollars in 2008, not only faces the dilemma of providing employment to an extra thousand or two, but also fears of a possible downslide in the country's economy.

However, according to Anu Mohammad, a Professor of Economics of Jahangirnagar University, the economy of Bangladesh will remain, more or less, unaffected. "There will of course be a slight decrease in the inflow of remittance in the country," he says. "Especially because migrant workers returning home in the last few months resided mainly in countries of the Middle East, North America and Malaysia, which have been hit badly by the global recession. However, this will not damage the present status of our economy, at least not in a way we might be led to think because of the global financial meltdown." Professor Anu explains that the countries hit by the recession are already looking for a way out, which obviously would indirectly create demands for foreign labour. "These countries are now tackling their way out of the global recession through public spending, bail outs and so on," he says. "New job markets are also being created where labour will be required, be it in the IT sector, Management or Construction work. A huge number of skilled and semi-skilled workers will always be in demand from our part of the world." Hence, there is also no fear of a decrease in the inflow of foreign remittance by a huge margin as compared to the inflow in the past years, says Professor Anu. "In any case, the government has never created any link, whereby the migrant worker,