

# SENDING REMITTANCES THRU' OFFICIAL CHANNELS Govt mulls incentives for expats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to provide incentives to expatriates sending remittances through official channels as part of a strategy to increase foreign exchange, Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khansaid yesterday.

"Last year the money sent by the migrants was \$10.72 billion. Almost the same amount comes through unofficial channels. If incentives are provided, remittance through official channels will go much higher," he said at a discussion on the eve of May Day.

However, he did not mention any mechanism of providing the incentives. In different sectors like readymade and jute, the government provides certain percentage of cash incentives on export earnings.

In the wake of global economic meltdown, the government last year provided stimulus to different sectors, but not the migrants who returned in thousands from different countries after losing jobs. Zafar said though the expatriate

Bangladesh's official remittance is some 12 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), the government investment is very little, while there is also no good data on them.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a discussion titled "Migrant Workers' Rights: Living with Safety and Dignity" organised by Bangladesh Migration Development Forum, a platform of the NGOs working on migration, with support from ActionAid Bangladesh at the National Press Club in the city.

The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment will request the authorities concerned to include the migrant population when the national census starts next year. There should be rules that the children of the migrants have quotas in good educational institutions, the secretary said.

Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh, suggested including expatriates' issue in the five-year perspective plan and enrolling the migrants as voters soon.

"One to three percent of the remit-

tances sent by them should be used for their welfare," she said.

Prof Ishrat Shamim of Dhaka University suggested that union parishads make a list of all migrants for use in development planning and addressing problems.

Dr AQM Mahub of the university suggested formation of a welfare society for the returnee migrants as is there for the army.

Ali Haider Chowdhury, secretary general of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, said around 60 percent of the migrants go abroad with visas collected by their relatives or brokers.

"But, the recruiting agencies have to process them. Now, if the visas were fake, is it the recruiting agency that will compensate," he said, suggesting that the government streamline the issue.

Shamsun Nahar Aziz Lina of Shakkor and Syed Mahub Elahi of Oviabashi Karmi Kallyan Forum presented a keynote, while Rabeya Sultana and Lutfun Nahar of ActionAid spoke at the discussion.



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon forms a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding a halt to realisation of farm loans from farmers affected by floods in haor areas.



Karmojibi Nari takes out a procession in the city yesterday demanding formulation of a law on agricultural labour immediately to ensure rights of women workers in the sector.

## 'Give first class status to asst teachers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Bangladesh Government Secondary Assistant Teachers' Association have made a five-point demand, including ensuring first class status for them.

They placed the demands at the national council of the association at Institute of Diploma Engineers in the city yesterday.

Other demands of the association include formation of a separate directorate for secondary level, appointment of thana education officers and district education officers from teachers through promotion and transfers them from one school to another after every three years as per the law.

Addressing the council, Rashed Khan Menon, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on education ministry, said his committee has already sent a proposal to

the education ministry recommending fulfilment of the demands.

The proposal may be laid before the parliament its next session, he added.

Menon said the government plans to introduce a separate pay scale for teachers to help them get rid of their financial woes and to encourage them to impart quality education.

About the proposed education policy, he said the policy has been drafted with a view to strengthening the movement for establishing a non-communal democracy.

He also sought cooperation from all quarters, especially from teachers, to implement the policy.

Speaking as the special guest, noted writer Dr Zafar Iqbal stressed the need for establishing teaching as the most dignified profession in the country.

## Two children electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Two children were electrocuted at Agailjhara upazila here yesterday while they were taking bath in a pond of upazila parishad quarter.

The deceased were identified as Shawan Fakir, 10, son of rickshawpuller Halim Fakir, and Ali Fakir, 12, son of Majid Fakir. Both were cousins and residents of Manoshi Fulshi village of the upazila.

Witness said they were electrocuted as they came in contact with a snapped live electric wire while diving into the pond to catch a dead fish.

Another child Piyal Serniabad, 15, was also injured as he got into the pond to save the boys. But hearing his screaming, some cricket-playing boys rescued him.

A woman named Sarola, 45, also was injured as she came to wash her cloths in the pond at that time.

The live electric wire fell into the pond after a storm on Thursday.

## Attack on NGO official

UNB, Gopalganj

Miscearants cut the tendons of both the legs of an NGO official at Parkushli village at Sadar upazila in Gopalganj.

The victim, Zakir Hossain, executive officer of NRDO, said 10 or 12 miscearants intercepted him and cut the tendons of his two legs at about 6:30am when he was going to his office at Parkushli Bazaar.

The attackers fled the scene when Zakir raised an alarm.

## Call to frame agri labour law

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Karmojibi Nari, a women's rights organisation, yesterday demanded that the government formulate a law on agricultural labour immediately to ensure the rights of women workers in this sector.

Addressing a rally at Muktagon in the city, the leaders of the organisation also called for declaring Tk 5,000 as minimum wage for garment workers.

They said they have been running a postcard campaign since April 19 and will send 10,000 postcards to the prime minister and the labour and employment minister to press home their demands.

At the programme organised on the eve of May Day and its 19th founding anniversary, they dropped the postcards into a symbolic letterbox as part of their campaign.

Besides, they will collect one lakh signatures and submit the mass signatures along with a memorandum to the premier demanding formulation of the law.

Lawmaker Hasanul Haq Inu said no owners can live well keeping the workers unhappy and so they have to think about the welfare of the workers.

He demanded that the government introduce ration cards for the workers and announce Tk 5,000 as a minimum wage.

Referring to recent incidents in the garment sector, Inu, also president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, said these are happening due to lack of workers' representatives at the factories.

He urged the government to give back the right to form trade unions at the factories immediately.

Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, chairman of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), said the constitution of the country states about equal rights of all and so it cannot go with a section of the society moves on and the other remains backward.

Meher Afroz Chumki MP and Sharmin Kabir, general secretary of Karmojibi Nari, also spoke.

## Jubo League men attack Kader Siddiqui's motorcade

UNB, Tangail

A group of Awami Jubo League workers attacked the motorcade of Krishak Sramik Janata League chief Abdul Kader Siddiqui at Matikata in Bhuapur, Tangail, yesterday afternoon.

The attack led to a clash between two rival groups, leaving at least 15 people injured. One microbus and three motorbikes were also vandalised during the clash.

Police and witnesses said Kader Siddiqui went to Matikata at about 4:30pm to supervise the work of his firm.

At that time, local Jubo League was holding a meeting at Matikata bus stand. All of a sudden, some Jubo League workers chanted 'Joy Bangla' slogan and attacked Siddiqui's motorcade.

Local photographer Abdur Razzak was injured along with dozen others. Seriously injured Janata League worker Abdur Razzak was admitted to Tangail General Hospital.

Bhuapur Upazila AL president Masudul Huq Masud said that the clash erupted when Siddiqui's motorcade was passing the Jubo League rally.



Relatives of jhut trader Rokon Uddin (inset) break down in tears after he was shot dead by criminals at Kalabagan in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

## Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the 6th death anniversary of Abdur Rashid, a former senior assistant commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, says a press release.

During his 34-year career, he played a significant role in forming and structuring Dhaka Metropolitan Police during the post-independence period.

His eldest son Sadat Hossain Salim, president of Dhaka Club, has requested all to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Ramakrishna Mission Day

METRO DESK

The 114th Establishment Day of Ramakrishna Mission will be observed at Ramakrishna Math and Mission in the city today.

At 6:30pm, there will be discourses on 'The Ideal of Ramakrishna Mission and its advancement' with Justice Gour Gopal Saha in the chair, says a press release.

There will be a special puja in the morning and a film show at 5:00pm.

Besides, following the discussion, a dramatic performance 'Parikrama' will be staged on the background of establishment of Ramakrishna Mission.

### 1599 Phensidyl bottles seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Law enforcers in separate drives arrested three drug peddlers with 1599 bottles of phensidyl from Shibganj in the district early yesterday.

The arrestees were identified as Mohammad Morsalin, 30, Bablu Mia, 44, and Shabbir Hossain, 30.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team raided Uttar Mokimpur village at around 12:15am and arrested Morsalin with 989 bottles of phensidyl.

In another drive, BDR men arrested Babul and Shabbir with 610 bottles of phensidyl from Hazarbhigi village at around 2:30am.

### Woman found dead

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

The body of a woman was found hanging from a mango tree at Pudda under Nikli upazila in the district yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Alema, 32, wife of Shahed Ali.

Locals and witnesses said although Alema's body was hanging from a mango tree nearby her house her legs were touching the ground.

Mahbubul Alam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Nikli Police Station, said that after autopsy it will become clear whether it was suicide or a murder.

### Boy killed in wall collapse

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A Schoolboy was killed when a muddy wall collapsed on him at Madhkhala village under Hossainpur upazila in the district yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Hridoy, 10, son of Abdur Rashid and a class three student of local Brac School.

Hridoy was working at the house with his father when the wall collapsed.

### DW test transmission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deutsche Welle (DW), a Germany-based international broadcaster, will start its second phase of test transmission in Khulna, Rajshahi and Sylhet on Thursday.

DW-Radio will be broadcasted daily on 102.0 MHz in Khulna, 105.0 MHz in Rajshahi and 105.4 MHz in Rangpur from 8:00am to 8:30 am and from 8:00pm to 8:30pm, said a press release.

Earlier, the radio started its first phase of test transmission in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet on April 14.

The state-run Bangladesh Betar signed an agreement with the DW to launch its test transmission through Bangladesh Betar's FM network that came into effect from March 9.

## WEATHER

### Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:27pm today and rises at 5:24am tomorrow.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 37.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 20 degrees at Rangpur and Dinajpur.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	24.2	79	70
Chittagong	32.7	26.0	66	75
Rajshahi	33.6	23.8	74	65
Khulna	36.4	27.5	75	72
Barisal	34.2	24.4	70	67
Sylhet	26.8	22.2	96	81
Cox's Bazar	35.0	26.0	66	67

## 12 killed in road accidents

METRO DESK

Twelve people were killed in separate road accidents across the country in the last two days.

UNB reports: Three people were killed in a road accident on Barisal-Dhaka highway at Bamrail at Uzirpur upazila in Barisal yesterday afternoon.

Two of the victims were identified as Kamal Hossain, 29, and Ali Hossain, 35, but the identity of the other, about 55, could not be known immediately.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at 4:30pm when a hired motorcycle with two passengers was going to Toriki from Uzirpur.

A truck coming from the opposite direction rammed the motorcycle, killing the three motorbike riders on the spot.

A report from Sirajganj adds: A schoolboy was killed in a road accident on Hatiqumrul-Bonpara highway at Tarash upazila in Sirajganj yesterday.

The victim was identified as Anwar Hossain, 10, a student of class IV and son of Yunus Ali of Hamkuria village of the same upazila.

The accident took place when a bus knocked him down near No Nine Bridge while he was walking along the road.

Another report from Chittagong adds: A highway policeman was killed in a road accident near Kumira highway police outpost at Sitakunda upazila yesterday.

The victim was identified Haider Hossain, 40, a havalder of the outpost. He hailed from Faridpur district.

Police said Haider signaled a truck to stop, but the truck driver tried to run away ignoring his signal, leaving him injured at about 8:00am.

The injured policeman died on the way to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Later, police seized the truck, but its driver managed to escape.

Another reports adds: Five people were killed and seven others injured in separate road accidents in Gazipur on Thursday night.

Police said the first accident occurred at Nauraz at about 11:00pm when a bus rammed into a human hauler, leaving Badal Chandra Das, 40, and Shankar Chandra, 35, dead on the spot.

Nine people injured in the accident were admitted to Sadar Hospital where Harun Mia, 25, driver of the human hauler, and another unidentified man succumbed to their injuries.

All the victims are passengers of the human hauler.

In another accident, Ziaul Haque, helper of a pick-up van, was injured in a head-on collision between a truck and his pick-up at Bagher Bazar in Sadar upazila on Thursday evening.

He succumbed to his injuries on the way to a local hospital.

Our correspondent in Manikganj adds: Two women were killed and 10 others injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Manikganj on Thursday night.

The victims were identified as Bilkis Begum, 25, and Julekha Begum, 50.

The accident took place at around 8:30pm when an Aricha-bound bus collided with a Dhaka-bound truck near Manikganj busstand, leaving 12 passengers injured.

Of them, seven were rushed to Monno General Hospital where the on duty doctors declared the two women dead.