

Only IOM to repatriate Bangladeshis in Libya

Approves cabinet meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet committee on economic affairs at a meeting yesterday approved a p p o i n t m e n t of International Organization for Migration (IOM) as the single agency for repatriating Bangladeshi migrants fleeing conflict-torn Libya.

The approval came upon an application from expatriates' welfare ministry saying there is a provision under Public Procurement Rules-2008 of appointing a single agency for jobs under emergency situation.

Starting from March, IOM, in coordination with the government, repatriated over 30,000 Bangladeshis who took shelter in Egypt and Tunisia, while Bangladesh Biman and respective employers repatriated nearly 6,000.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith chaired the meeting at the Secretariat in the city.

On the government's request, World Bank agreed to lend Bangladesh US \$40 million, of which the government will pay IOM US \$12.6 million as repatriation cost of 10,000 Bangladeshis and US \$775 to each Libya returnee as grant.

IOM in coordination with Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment is preparing the procedures to disburse the grant to returnees. Many returned empty handed and are indebted, the returnees said.

"We can start disbursing the money after a month," a spokesperson of IOM told The Daily Star.



Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader inaugurates a weeklong adventure festival at Dhaka University yesterday marking first anniversary of conquering Mount Everest by Musa Ibrahim.

PHOTO: STAR

PILKHANA CARNAGE CASE

Charges against 847 accused read out in court

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday completed reading out charges against 847 accused, including former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and Awami League leader Torab Ali in the BDR carnage case.

Charges against 47 accused, including 23 civilians, were read out at a makeshift court in the capital's Bakshi Bazar area.

On April 12, 26 and May 9 charges against 803 accused were read out by the prosecution. Of the 850 accused, three have died while 21 others are

absconding.

The court proceedings began at 9:40am and continued for two hours.

The court adjourned the trial proceedings till June 13.

Prosecutor Mosharruf Hossain Kajol read out the charges before Judge Mohammad Zohurul Hoque and then prayed for framing charges against all the accused.

After completion of the prosecution submissions, lawyers of 11 accused made submissions to discharge their clients from the

charges.

At one stage, prosecution and defence were locked in debate regarding simultaneous trial of two cases-- one for murder, arson, looting, hiding of bodies and sedition and the other for using explosives.

The judge, however, said the trial of the cases would be run separately.

Before the hearing, all the accused, including Pintu, were produced before the court under tight security. Additional law enforcers including Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were deployed inside and

outside the courtroom.

All the prosecutors including Anisul Haque and Sheikh Baharul were present at the court during the hearing.

Last year, in July the CID pressed charges against 824 jawans and 23 civilians for murder, arson, looting, hiding of bodies and sedition.

At least 74 people, including 57 army officers, were killed in the February 25-26 carnage in 2009 at the Pilkhana headquarters of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), earlier known as BDR.

Adventure festival begins at DU

Marking Musa's Everest glory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a bid to attract youths towards adventurous activities, a week-long adventure festival began on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

The North Alpine Club Bangladesh has organised the festival styled 'Shah Cement Adventure Fest 2011' marking the first anniversary of conquering the highest peak on earth the Mount Everest by mountaineer Musa Ibrahim.

As part of the festival, various adventurous events, including bicycling, games, mini marathon, skating, triathlon and climbing competition will be organised at several universities, including Dhaka University and Jahangirnagar University.

Musa, the founding general secretary of the North Alpine Club, reached the peak of Everest on May 23 last year as a first Bangladeshi.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister GM Quader inaugurated the festival on Dhaka University's Teacher-Student Centre premises in the morning.

Among others, DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, TSC Director Alamgir Hossain, Everest conqueror Musa's associate Lal Bahadur Zirel and North Alpine Club President Anisul Haque were present at the ceremony.

Addressing the session, speakers congratulated Musa once again for his feat on the Everest bringing proud for the nation. They also congratulated another mountaineer MA Muhith who also climbed the peak on Saturday (May 20 this year), after Musa Ibrahim as the second Bangladeshi.

GM Qader said Musa has proved that people of Bangladesh love adventure and can do adventurous tasks.

He said the core source of inspiration of doing publicity for the expansion of tourism of Bangladesh is its diversified people.

Musa said the aim of organising such adventure festival is to provide some opportunities to youths to do some adventurous activities.

North Alpine Club President Anisul Haque hoped that the youths of Bangladesh will establish the country one of the best state in the globe.

He congratulated Musa for bringing the proud for the nation conquering the natural and financial obstacles.

The Daily Star, Channel i and Radio abc are the media partner of this festival. The adventure fair will continue at TSC from 10:00am to 6:00pm daily till May 27 while bicycling and adventurous game show will be held on the same day.

Mini marathon at DU and triathlon at Jahangirnagar University will be held on May 28 while the adventurous films exhibition and climbing competition will held the next day.

83pc child domestic helps abused physically, 17pc sexually: Study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 17 percent of the child domestic workers are abused sexually while 83 percent physically by the family members of their employers, says a study.

The study was conducted surveying 849 domestic child workers of three wards of Dhanmondi, Mirpur and Mohammadpur in the city during August, September and October last year. Some employers of the child workers also were interviewed.

The findings of the study titled "Study on The Situation of Domestic Child Workers in Dhaka City" were revealed at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday.

Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University AAMS Arefin Siddique and Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF), among others, were present at the event.

The study reveals that 52 percent of the 849 child labours at home are abused regularly while 95 percent verbally.

About 328 children have to do hazardous works everyday, including ironing clothes, washing heavy clothes, boiling water, operating motor for pumping water, lifting heavy goods and going to shops crossing roads.

Seventy nine percent of the work are done on monthly contact basis which is ranging from Tk300-Tk1,200.

The domestic helps, aged between six years to 18 years, do such domestic work due to financial crisis, large number of family members and parents' sickness and death.

Associate Professor of Institute of Social Welfare and Research of Dhaka University Dr M Rezaul Islam who conducted the research said the study was conducted to visualize the real situation

of child domestic workers in Dhaka.

"We have interviewed 849 household owners to cross-check the data," he said.

He said there were significant level of variations in the research findings in terms of locations and respondents.

About 567 child workers alleged of being abused in several ways while only about 93 employers admitted it. Though 144 child workers alleged of being abused sexually, only nine employers admitted about the abuse, says the study.

Rezaul Islam suggested taking initiatives for rural development and target based project to eliminate child labour gradually.

He also stressed the need for government declaration to stop hazardous work and up-dating UN conventions, child laws and child labour laws in Bangladesh.



Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad speaks at a press conference organised on the occasion of the 112th birth anniversary of Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam at the ministry yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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