

Recruitment thru' states

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Referring to labour abuses and mismanagement during 2007-08, Mosharrar said they also agreed that migration cost of a jobseeker would not be more than his three months' wages. He went on, "We agreed that the process will involve no middlemen. Because, whenever there are middlemen, the cost goes higher."
At yesterday's meeting, a joint working committee was formed for finalising the memorandum of understanding (MoU) today, which will be approved by the Malaysian cabinet before its signing anytime soon. Then fresh recruitment of workers will start, he said.
Replying to a question, Mosharrar said, "We want to build a sound recruitment system. Then, gradually we will leave the recruitment issue to the private sector, but not now."
Malaysia now has around four lakh Bangladeshi workers. Subramaniam also called

on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
The visit of the delegation led by him is considered crucial as Kuala Lumpur froze recruitment of workers from Bangladesh in early 2009 following malpractices in the recruitment process. And now it is set to hire several lakh workers for its manufacturing and plantation sectors in the next few years.
Against this backdrop, private recruiting agencies of both the countries and unauthorised brokers allegedly lobbied the authorities for allowing recruitment by them.
Earlier investigations had revealed that jobseekers were charged over Tk 2 lakh each for a job in Malaysia while the government-fixed rate was Tk 84,000 each. As recruiting more workers meant more money, manpower syndicates even managed recruitment of excessive workers, leaving them in troubles.
Mosharrar said the migra-

tion cost was so high that the workers could not recover the money even by working for three years. For that, many overstayed their visas and became irregular. Malaysia is now regularising them.
He mentioned that the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training has offices in 42 districts and expatriate desks in other districts. But the recruiting agencies do not have offices outside Dhaka.
Asked if Malaysia has abolished outsourcing system of labour recruitment, Subramaniam said they have already reduced the activities of outsourcing agents which were a major reason behind labour exploitation.
"We will gradually phase-out outsourcing agents. Policy-wise, in the long-term we will have no outsourcing agents," he added.
The Malaysian delegation is scheduled to leave Dhaka tomorrow.

Student pollute-ics

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literally and violently and with not a worry in the world --- on workers of the opposition-affiliated Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal --- have been observed and remarked on in nearly every home in this country.
The images are, to say the least, appalling. At Dhaka University, as the JCD activists waited for their meeting with the vice chancellor, BCL men launched a full-scale attack on them. The violence was mind-boggling. No one, not the police, not the university administration, stepped in to bring this ugly situation to an end. At Rajshahi University, the JCD men, attempting to bring out a procession to observe the anniversary of the BNP chairperson's release from detention four years ago, bumped into a force of angry BCL activists who swiftly went into a blitzkrieg. The violence, again, was stupefying. The beating and kicking and abuse went on with impunity.
Which raises the very disturbing question: Have the leading lights of the ruling party taken note of the activities of their young followers and the damage they have been causing their

party and government? Time was when students played a clear, definitive and glorious role in espousing the national cause, in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. That role led to a series of triumphs on the national scale.
Now, questions again: What lessons are we getting from student politics today? Or hasn't student politics mutated into simple mindless violence which often underpins medieval behaviour? The two incidents we cite have so far not elicited any response from the ruling party. That has the potential of creating a dangerous precedent for the future. Those at the receiving end today could well turn out to be at the giving end tomorrow. That is an alarming prospect.
The studied silence of our leaders will push their young followers to the depths of degradation. Yes, the education minister has alerted the vice chancellors of public universities to the need to tackle such disorder. But his sentiments need to be reciprocated by others in the corridors of power.
A final query: When will these ugly scenes become a thing of a forgettable past?

After Tanvir

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Many of these bills bear no original signatures of the Agargaon branch officials. Gautam forged those bills and took away the money from those banks, according to some former and incumbent officials of the branch.
"The figure may rise further if more banks come forward with a demand for payment against those bills. So far, we have got Tk 53 crore claim from 17 branches of 13 banks," said a senior official at Agargaon branch, asking not to be identified.
Gautam took every step so cunningly that if Green Printers failed to pay the loans, he would not be charged first and the responsibility would fall on the "owner" of the company.
He operated the company solely but showed one Abul Hossain, a small garment businessman in Narayanganj, as the proprietor of the company on paper.
Consequently, Abul has been passing sleepless nights. In May this year, he learned that Gautam had pocketed Tk 53 crore from different banks by selling bills given acceptance by the Sonali Bank.
Abul received two letters from the bank in May for payment of expired accepted bills. A smart Gautam replied to the bank through a letter signed by Abul with a promise to repay the loans.
"My husband's health has deteriorated rapidly in the last few months. He is in constant fear that Gautam might fly abroad, leaving all the liabilities on his shoulder," said Lutfa Begum, wife of Abul.
Abul and Lutfa have four sons, of whom two are physically challenged.
"We don't know anything... my husband cannot even read or write... he is a very simple man," claimed a depressed Lutfa. "Gautam might have forged my husband's signature."
Even as Gautam pocketed crores of taka using Abul's name, her husband's small garment business was shut down for lack of funds, she added.
Lutfa, 40, said they first came to know about the loan a couple of months ago

when Sonali Bank's board summoned them. She said Gautam had asked her husband to tell the bank board that they took only Tk 2 crore in loans and would repay it soon.
Ashraful Islam Sumon, the 20-year-old college-going son of Abul, seems very worried about everything. "My father is a diabetic and is under great stress now."
WHO IS THIS GAUTAM?
Hailing from Shingaspur union of Sadar upazila in Narail, Gautam enrolled at Dhaka University in the mid-1980s. He got involved in politics and became convener of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student's wing of the BNP, in 1990 when the university campus became a focal point of the anti-Ershad movement.
He bagged the BNP's nomination from Narail-1 in the 1991 parliamentary elections. Though his party came to power, he conceded a heavy defeat to the Awami League's Dhirendra Nath Saha.
When his party came to power, he was made a member of the Trustee Board of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. He set up companies named Global Associates (BD) and Green Fashion between 1995 and 2000.
Later, he set up Green Printers, Global Textiles and Global Fabrics.
Gautam started dealing with the Sonali Bank's Agargaon branch in 2005 in the name of Green Printers and availed ILC facility in 2007 when the Principal Office of the bank allowed him an ILC limit of Tk 1 crore, according to the bank.
The limit was later enhanced to Tk 1.5 crore in 2010 and Tk 2 crore in 2011. Again, the limit was increased to Tk 5 crore the same year.
Initially, he impressed the bankers with his demeanour and enhanced their trust by paying back the loans regularly, according to bank sources.
"He was doing business with the branch with a good reputation till the middle of 2011 and started fraudulence in the last quarter of that year," observed a former manager of the Agargaon branch.

Speaking anonymously, another official of the branch said Gautam's fraud is more serious than that of Tanvir Mahmud of Hall-Mark as Gautam sold the bills to other banks by forging official signatures.
The official explained: "There was no ILC opening form and acceptance voucher in Agargaon branch as it was not an authorised dealer branch. The client himself brought those papers from other branches and submitted them to the Agargaon branch."
"He forged my signature and those of some other officials of the branch and took loans against these bills from different private banks between the end of 2011 and April this year. We came to know of the issue first in May when different private banks submitted their claims against those bills," said Mohammad Moslemuddin, a former official of the branch.
Gautam was aided most by Nurul Islam, one of his employees, in his fraud. He opened an account in Nurul Islam's name with the National Bank's foreign exchange branch in 2011. He showed Nurul as an owner of Gomti Textiles (which does not exist in reality) so that he could run his ILC business.
By the time the Sonali Bank officials realised Gautam's fraud, he had pocketed Tk 53 crore from different banks and passed the liability on to the bank's Agargaon branch.
"If we had not stopped business with him in May this year, it could have turned into another Ruposhi Bangla Hotel branch," claimed an official of the branch.
Gautam was not available for comment despite repeated efforts over the last two weeks. He did not pick up any phone calls or respond to text messages of The Daily Star correspondent, who even tried to meet him at his East Rampura garment office in vain.
"Nowadays he hardly comes to the office," said Sajib, office assistant of Green Printers at Rampura. Sajib claimed he did not know Gautam's home address.

Ghulam Azam

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Sultana replied in the affirmative.
The defence counsel then asked whether Ghulam Azam was made accused in the cases filed for killing intellectuals.
He was not made accused as a planner or for any other involvements in the cases filed for killing intellectuals, replied the witness.
"Each case was filed for killing one intellectual. And my testimony today is not for any individual killing but for the role of Ghulam Azam in mass killing during the Liberation War in 1971," she said.
She then said two cases had been filed against Ghulam Azam in 1972 for different incidents in 1971.
"Ghulam Azam was accused in those cases for his association," Sultana said.
She also said she knew that documents regarding killing intellectuals had been found in the house of a former minister of Pakistan. She, however, could not name the minister.
The defence counsel told the witness that Ghulam Azam had not been in Bangladesh [then East Pakistan] between November 22, 1971 and December 16 of that year.
"I know he met Yahya Khan on December 1 which suggests he might not be in the country during the period," said the witness.
Sultana Kamal's cross-examination will resume today.
Ghulam Azam was present upon to form the Peace Committee during the Liberation War and it was published in the Daily Purbadesh and the Daily Azad on April 5 and April 7 in 1971, she said, adding that these records had been submitted to the investigation agency.
In response to another question, Sultana said several cases on intellectual killings had been filed after the Liberation war, during the tenure of Bangabandhu government, but she did not know if the number of the cases was 50.
Defence counsel Mizanul then asked the witness whether she knew that three cases had been filed for the killing of Shahidullah Kaysar, Dr Alim Chowdhury and Munier Chowdhury.

Abul said Sayedee had lived at New Town in Jessore until April 3 or 4 in 1971. Afterwards he along with Sayedee and two other neighbours had taken shelter in a house at Dhanghata village in Jessore and stayed there for seven to eight days.
Following the deposition, prosecution Syed Haidar Ali cross-examined the defence witness.
During the cross-examination, the witness said he had previously given testimony in many cases, but this was his first deposition in such case.
The prosecution later made a suggestion that Abul was a professional witness and had come to testify for the accused for money.
"It is not true," replied Abul.
The case proceedings were adjourned until today.
Sayedee was produced before the tribunal yesterday. The Jamaat leader is facing 20 specific charges of crimes against humanity allegedly committed during the 1971's Liberation War.
KAMARUZZAMAN CASE
The International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday adjourned the case proceeding against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Muhammad Kamaruzzaman until September 17, as the prosecution could not produce its witness.
The three-member tribunal headed by its Chairman Justice ATM Fazle Kabir re-fixed the date after Prosecutor AKM Saiful Islam said they could not produce witnesses due to their illness.
"You have given names of three witnesses [to the defence]. Are all of them ill?" asked Justice Fazle Kabir.
"Two of them are ill and father of another witness is also ill. So they couldn't be produced," replied Saiful Islam.
Six prosecution witnesses have already given their testimonies in the case against the Jamaat assistant secretary general.
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Five top Destiny

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Gofranul Huq and Sayed-ur Rahman.
On May 24, the Bangladesh Bank froze the bank accounts of the group's all but two sister concerns -- Boishakhi Media Limited and Daik Destiny -- for a month.
The anti-graft watchdog on July 31 sued 22 officials of Destiny Group for laundering Tk 3,285 crore by cheating investors.
RAILWAY GATE SCANDAL
The ACC will lodge six cases against some railway officials including Yusuf Ali Mridha, suspended general manager of Bangladesh Railway (east zone). The officials were allegedly involved in irregularities in the recruitment of staff for the railway.
"After a primary investigation, we have given permission to file the cases. Our officer has gone to Chittagong and the cases will be filed in a day or two," said Faizur.
Widespread irregularities and corruption in railway's recruitment came to light when Azam, driver of former railway minister Suranjit Sengupta's APS Omar Faruq Talukder, pulled over Faruq's microbus to the Pilkhana headquarters of Border Guard Bangladesh in the wee hours of April 9.
The ACC in its preliminary probe found irregularities in the recruitment to 1,069 posts. Some railway officials and teachers of a

high school and a college were involved in the recruitment process.
PADMA BRIDGE 'GRAFT'
The ACC secretary could not mention any specific time frame for completing the investigation into the alleged corruption in the appointment of a consultant for the Padma bridge project.
"More time is required for this; some foreign agencies are being enquired. We have some information but we are waiting for more," said Faizur.
The anti-graft body has so far quizzed 27 individuals about the alleged graft.
AHAB CHIEF SUED IN RAJSHAH
Among the other major cases filed by the ACC last month, chief of Ahle Hadith Andolon Bangladesh (AHAB) Asadullah Al Galib was sued on August 15 for indulging in "profitable NGO activities" despite holding a job at a public university.
A probe by the anti-graft body found that Galib, a professor at Arabic department at Rajshahi University, received donations from local and foreign sources and misappropriated the funds under an NGO named Tawheed Trust.
Galib has been sued for flouting the Bangladesh Service Rules and running the NGO without permission from the university authorities.

West Bengal

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yesterday.
It used up to 30 percent of the water for power generation, he said, "Yet its government [alluding to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee] says, 'we shall not give more than 25 percent of our water to Bangladesh', even though there is no storage possible." The secretary was addressing a dialogue in New Delhi on interlinking of rivers.
India and Bangladesh failed to sign the Teesta water-sharing agreement due to Mamata's last-minute opposition during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka last year.
Indian states having ample water resources pretended to be suffering from a scarcity of water whenever the issue of inter-basin transfer was put across the table, Vijay Singh said.
Speaking at the dialogue, India's Water Resources Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal lamented that people were "okay with the water going waste" but not receptive to the idea of inter-basin transfer.
He said interlinking did not mean depriving one region of water for another. If there is a surplus of water in a basin and if it could be legitimately transferred to

regions in deficit without harming the economy of the region of the former one, he said, "why should we not attempt to transfer that?"
Vincent H Pala, India's junior minister for water resources, said efforts should be made for international agreements between neighbouring countries on a bilateral basis for exchange of hydrological data of international rivers.
Negotiations on sharing and management of the water of international rivers should be done on a bilateral basis in consultative association with riparian states, keeping paramount the national interest, he said.
Earlier, setting the tone for the discussion, S.P. Kakran, chairman of the Central Water Commission, said the governments at the centre and in the states were aware of the issues and challenges they would face in implementing the interlinking project.
There were people who supported the (inter-linking) project and some were against it, he said, adding, "people who have been facing acute water shortages and drought-like situations for generations in their regions see a ray of hope in this project."