

Govt to speed up worker migration to Malaysia

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government will sit with Malaysian authorities on June 24 in Kuala Lumpur to find ways to speed up the recruitment of Bangladeshi workers to the Southeast Asian nation.

Bangladesh is currently sending its people to Malaysia under a government to government (G2G) arrangement following a memorandum of understanding signed between the two countries in November 2012.

Although the initiative has brought down migration costs significantly, the migration flow is not satisfactory.

"Definitely, the G2G is a new system of recruitment of the migrant workers and migration flow might be somewhat stymied. But we have decided to speed up the flow this year after the discussion with Malaysia," Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, minister for expatriates' welfare and overseas employment, said yesterday.

Hossain spoke with a group of reporters who cover migration and manpower, at a meeting in his ministry.

Only 4,000 Bangladeshis have so far migrated to Malaysia for plantation jobs

under the G2G process between April 2013 and May 2014 against the ministry's target of sending 10,000, said officials of Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur.

The migration flow might have increased in many numbers, but the government is strict to thwart any kind of irregularity in the recruitment process, Hossain said.

The government does not want to open any window for recruiting agencies and middlemen to weasel in to exploit migrant jobseekers, he said.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Home Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi yesterday warned that employers must pick up foreign workers under their care within 24 hours from the latter's arrival at that country's entry points.

Foreign workers who are unattended to by their employers within the stipulated period would be deported at the cost of the employers, he told local reporters.

Employers who fail to abide by this rule, which will take effect immediately, will be blacklisted by the Immigration Department and will not be allowed to hire another foreign worker to replace the one they had left behind, Ahmad Zahid added.

New chief for Alliance Capital

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Kh Asadul Islam Ripon has recently been appointed as the managing director and chief executive of Alliance Capital Asset Management Ltd, the company said in a statement yesterday.

Prior to the appointment, Ripon was the founding managing director and CEO of City Brokerage Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the City Bank Ltd.

He also served the City Bank as executive vice president and head of brokerage since July 2009 and was the chief executive of IDLC Securities Ltd.

He began his career with Premium Securities Ltd and later moved to Peregrine Capital Ltd, followed by a shift to the Union Capital Ltd (UCL). He later became the director



Firoz Ahmed Khan, head of retail banking at Brac Bank, and Regina Nasser, director for sales and marketing at Dusai Hotel and Resorts, attend the signing of an agreement recently to provide special discounts to the bank's premium banking customers and platinum credit cardholders for the resort's services.

Go after tax dodgers

FROM PAGE B1

Mostafizur Rahman, primary and mass education minister, said the government is failing in its efforts to clamp down on mighty tax dodgers.

"Who dodges tax? The people who can control both the ruling and opposition parties. The public are not able to establish control over them."

He said the Awami League, BNP or their allies never debate over cutting the hefty non-development expenditure. "The non-development budget has come to this stage for those who are evading the taxes and the people who are helping them evade tax."

The government plan to award a new payscale to public servants also drew criticism from the minister.

"BNP may even say that if they come to power they will provide two payscales to government employees, even if they are not mentioned in the election manifesto. The perception is they [the government officials] bring us to power—all problems lie here."

He said he does not think the government takes up any project for any bad intention.

"If the reliance on the implementers deepens in the project execution stage, then you will not get the desired results."

Abdul Mannan, a former state minister, said irrespective of parties in power, the budget should be pro-people and coordinated, while lamenting the cut in allocation for agriculture sector.

"What a pity! This is the sector where we should provide more allocation."

Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, chairman of Unnayan Onneshan, a research organisation, said the finance minister should have imposed inheritance tax to boost collection, as the value of property has skyrocketed in the country. He criticised the social safety net projects, saying the state has taken up those programmes in order to purposefully exclude some people.

"If the allocations under the safety net programmes are added together and distributed among all the poor people, there will be no poverty in the country."

During the discussion, SUPRO said the allocation for sectors such as health and education are inadequate and should be increased before the budget is passed.

"The allocation for the primary education has gone up in numbers but has actually gone down in terms of size of the budget. This may pose a challenge to achieving Millennium Development Goal on quality education."

"Likewise, it will be tough to ensure health care for the poor with the allocation for the health sector."

It demanded implementation of the district budget for the six new districts in the upcoming fiscal year the way the government did in case of Tangail in the outgoing fiscal year. The organisation also urged the government to bring in the required structural reforms and ensure public participation in the process.

"However, we are upset, as the district budget was not prepared on the basis of the grassroots recommendations," said Shakera Nahar, campaign coordinator of SUPRO, while presenting the budget analysis by the organisation.

She said the budget for tackling climate change is not consistent with the needs of different regions. "If not properly implemented, women also will not benefit from the gender budget."

SUPRO is a national network of grassroots NGOs, working to establish economic, social and cultural rights of the poor and marginalised by facilitating rights-based activism at the grassroots, national and global level.

MA Quader, executive committee member of SUPRO, presided over the discussion, which was also attended by district level officials of the organisation.



HBM Iqbal, chairman of Premier Bank; KAM Majedur Rahman, managing director; and Vikas Varma, MasterCard's area head for South Asia, and Syed Mohammad Kamal, country manager for Bangladesh, attend the launch of MasterCard Reloadable Hajj and Travel Prepaid Card on Tuesday. The card will be used as an alternate to travellers' cheque or cash.

Transcom chief dreams big

FROM PAGE B1

But he was no stranger to business. His family has been dealing in tea since 1885. So, when things fell apart and became tough, he never lost hope.

"What gets me going was my self belief. You have to believe in yourself. This is not overconfidence, nor arrogance, but some kind of faith in yourself that you can do it. In other words, you have to remain positive while in crisis."

In the 1980s, Rahman became the sole importer and distributor of Nestlé products. There was no turning back after that.

In the 1990s, he bought Smith, Kline and French, a US-based pharmaceuticals which had just merged into Beecham, a British company, and renamed it Eskayef.

It became the first Bangladeshi company to buy a multinational. But in the first year, business was not good.

The entire sales of Eskayef were Tk 1.3

crore and the loss was Tk 1.29 crore. For every lakh sold, there was an equal amount of loss.

He kept the management as it was, and did not change the management practices that Smith, Kline and French used to follow.

Describing his management philosophy, Rahman said: "Respect to colleagues and co-workers is crucially important. Trust is the backbone of good management. Either you trust your colleague or you don't. There cannot be anything called half trust."

Eskayef did not break even in the next five years. But slowly but surely his policy bore its fruit.

Responding to a question where he would like to see Transcom in the next 10 years, he said: "We are running a successful group only with local professionals. I firmly believe our professional are on par with best international professionals. Ten years down the line I would like to see Transcom emerging as a Bangladeshi multinational."

C&F agents call off strike

FROM PAGE B1

Import consignments would be re-inspected if there are discrepancies between documents or there are inadequacies in the first examination report, according to the NBR.

"The NBR has agreed to accept our logical demands and promised to issue a guideline in this regard," said Sheikh Md Farid, president of DCAA.

The stalemate between the C&F agents and customs officials affected delivery of import consignments, leading to a pile of imported goods at the ICD, which handles 178 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) a day.

The imports-laden containers coming from Chittagong Port rose to 1,448 TEUs yesterday, from 1,386 TEUs the day before, according to ICD data.

The deadlock began after the customs house at the ICD tightened measures for inspections of consignments in a bid to stop tax evasion. Enraged by the move, a

section of the C&F agents went on strike bypassing their platform.

Insiders, however, said some leaders of the platform and some other agents having links with the ruling party were behind the strike, as the detection of tax-dodging went against their interests.

The agents alleged 'harassment' by ICD Customs House Commissioner Maruful Islam, who, they said, demands frequent re-examination of import consignments. The re-inspection costs time and money, the agents said.

However, customs officials said only 17 of the 4,026 consignments were re-inspected since Islam assumed his current position. Besides, duty evasion was detected during re-inspection, the officials added.

Strikers demanded removal of Customs Commissioner Islam and Joint Customs Commissioner Khaled Mohammad Abu Hossain, accusing them of enforcing "dictatorial" rules.

BWCCI unveils plan to promote women entrepreneurs

FROM PAGE B1

The areas are: capacity development, product development, marketing, research and development, leadership development, export market promotion, facilitating access to finance, advocacy, ICT, e-commerce and digitalisation, environmental conservation, reduce gender disparities, sexual and reproductive health rights.

The BWCCI president also showed in her presentation that about Tk 218 crore would be required to materialise the initiative.

"Women entrepreneurs should not remain diminutive in the SME sector," Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra, a legal aid and human rights organisation, said.

Rather, they should aim to become big and large entrepreneurs, all the while keeping their skills, efficiency and professionalism, she added.

Ayesha Khanam, president of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, urged the government and the society to come forward to help with BWCCI's plan of promoting women entrepreneurship in the country.

A monitoring mechanism at the finance ministry, ministry of women and children affairs and planning commission is mandatory to ensure proper utilisation of the fund for women development, she added.

Budget: policy and institutional reforms

FROM PAGE B4

In other areas the record is mixed. Primary energy continues to pose a challenge. The budget talks about increasing gas supply but there is no mention of a coal policy. The absence of a long-term primary fuel strategy remains a serious weakness of the government's energy policy.

In the transport sector the budget adopts a highly ambitious stance including the construction of the Padma bridge. The emphasis on transport is good but higher allocations through ADP are not enough. A review of past experience shows a serious implementation constraint in the roads sector. Too many projects are ongoing with slow implementation. A better strategy would be to adopt a phased implementation plan with high-priority projects on the frontline along with time-bound completion plans.

Procurement continues to pose corruption problems and delays in infrastructure project implementation. I have been repeatedly emphasising the importance of doing turnkey projects for large infrastructure to avoid procurement debacles and capacity constraints. The government may want to think seriously about this. Reliance on development partners (such as World Bank, ADB, IDB, and JICA) for doing turnkey style large infrastructure projects can be instrumental in accelerating the supply of essential infrastructure.

I welcome the finance minister's announcement of the adoption of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS). It is high time that Bangladesh introduces a modern social protection system that seeks to provide predictable cash transfers to the poor and the vulnerable members of the society through a combination of budget transfers and employment-based social insurance. The adoption of the NSPS will be a major step forward in the government's effort to fight poverty and reduce social vulnerability. However, considerable preparatory work will be needed to implement the NSPS. Alongside, the proposed health insurance policy should also be implemented.

Finally, the idea of introducing a green tax is commendable. Considerable work needs to be done to make fiscal policy an effective instrument for fighting pollution and environmental degradation. Yet, the signal sent through this move is an excellent step forward. The next step would be to prepare the groundwork for incorporating a system of taxes and subsidies in the future budgets for environmental management and climate change.

Sadiq Ahmed is vice chairman of Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh. He can be reached at sadiqahmed1952@gmail.com.

Singer launches two European brands

FROM PAGE B1

The products will be sold in Bangladesh exclusively through 371 Singer Mega and Singer Plus outlets and 200 Singer Pro dealer shops.

Singer will open two exclusive outlets in Bangladesh this year for selling Beko products, Walker said.

Beko fridges will sell at Tk 1.45 lakh to Tk

2.10 lakh, while microwave ovens at Tk 40,000 to Tk 90,000.

A Grundig branded 32-inch LED TV will cost Tk 44,000 and the 55-inch one Tk 260,000. Singer Bangladesh's revenues stood at Tk 660 crore in 2013, down 1.47 percent year-on-year.

Hüseyin Müftüoğlu, Turkish ambassador to Bangladesh, also attended the event.

Bangladesh Tea Board
171-172, Baizid Bostami Road
Nasirabad, Chittagong

"বেশি বেশি চা পান করুন।
স্বাস্থ্য সুন্দর রাখুন।"

"বেশি বেশি লিকার চা পানে
ক্যাপার, হৃদরোগ হার মানে।"

Re-Tender Invitation for Construction Works

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Commerce.						
2	Agency	Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB).						
3	Procuring entity name	Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB).						
4	Invitation for	Construction of 2 storied 1 No. & 1 storied 1 No. Production Factory Buildings for Tea Factory, Patharia Tea Estate, Dakshinbagh, Baralekha, Moulvibazar.						
5	Invitation Ref. No. & date	BTB/gardencell-11/2009-161(2)/(3) Date: 08/06/2014.						
6	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).						
7	Budget and source of funds	Garden Cell related fund.						
8	Project/programme name	Construction of Tea Factory.						
9	Tender selling date start, last selling date & places of tender selling	From 12/06/2014 to 25/06/2014; 01, Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB), 171-172, Baizid Bostami Road, Nasirabad, Chittagong.						
10	Tender receiving date, time & place	26/06/2014 at 12:00 noon; Bangladesh Tea Board, 171-172, Baizid Bostami Road, Nasirabad, Chittagong.						
11	Tender opening date, time & place	26/06/2014 at 12:10pm; Bangladesh Tea Board, 171-172, Baizid Bostami Road, Nasirabad, Chittagong.						
12	Eligibility of tenderer	a) General experience in civil construction work for at least 5 years. b) Experience of factory/building works of minimum taka 3.00 core in a single contract within last 10 years. c) Average annual construction turnover Taka 6.00 core within last 3 years. d) Liquid asset or working capital or credit facilities of the tenderer shall be Tk 2.00 core. e) Up-to-date bank solvency certificate. f) Up-to-date income tax clearance certificate, VAT Registration certificate & trade license; g) List of equipments, mixture machine, vibrator machine, centering & steel shuttering materials; h) List of engineers, supervisors, skill mason, plumber, electrician etc. Also necessary papers to be submitted complying the conditions mentioned in the tender document.						
13	Special instructions	(i) The procuring entity reserves the right to amend or change the design if necessary arises. (ii) If the arithmetic error is more than 5% the tender shall be rejected. (iii) If the unit rate of one or more items is excessively more or less rate analysis must be submitted. (iv) Bank certificate must be submitted in proof of liquid asset. (v) In case of front loading, current bill will be paid at the estimated rates and the remaining dues will be adjusted to the final payment.						
14	Price of tender document	Tk. 2000 (two thousand) only each set (non-returnable).						
15	Identification of works	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Location</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Tender security in the form of DD/Pay-Order amount Tk.</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Completion time in months</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Construction of 2 storied 1 No. & 1 storied 1 No. Production Factory Buildings for Tea Factory</td> <td>10.00 (ten) lac in favour of Secretary, Bangladesh Tea Board</td> <td>18 (eighteen) months</td> </tr> </table>	Location	Tender security in the form of DD/Pay-Order amount Tk.	Completion time in months	Construction of 2 storied 1 No. & 1 storied 1 No. Production Factory Buildings for Tea Factory	10.00 (ten) lac in favour of Secretary, Bangladesh Tea Board	18 (eighteen) months
Location	Tender security in the form of DD/Pay-Order amount Tk.	Completion time in months						
Construction of 2 storied 1 No. & 1 storied 1 No. Production Factory Buildings for Tea Factory	10.00 (ten) lac in favour of Secretary, Bangladesh Tea Board	18 (eighteen) months						
16	Name, designation & address of the official inviting tender	Secretary, Bangladesh Tea Board, 171-172, Baizid Bostami Road, Nasirabad, Chittagong; Ph: 031-682096, Fax: 031-682863, E-mail: secretary@teaboard.gov.bd, Website: www.teaboard.gov.bd						
17	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings.							

Secretary
Bangladesh Tea Board

GD-2483



M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman of ACI Formulations, presides over the 18th annual general meeting of the company at Officers' Club on Bailey Road, Dhaka on Tuesday. ACI formulations declared 25 percent cash dividend for 2013. Shusmita Anis, managing director, was also present.



MA Rashid, chairman of Peoples Insurance, presides over the 29th annual general meeting of the company at Eskatod, Dhaka recently. The company announced 12.5 percent cash dividend for 2013. MH Khaled, managing director, was also present.