

Move to speed up

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The Malaysian minister then said they would hire Bangladeshi workers for construction, manufacturing and service sectors apart from plantation but did not mention when the workers would be recruited.

"The Malaysian minister assured us of hiring 12,000 workers for plantation sector for its Sarawak province. We believe the process might start from December," the expatriates' welfare secretary hoped.

Around 20,000 to 30,000 Bangladeshis may be able to get jobs in

agriculture, construction, cleaning and some other professions by June next year if the recruitment process for all these sectors starts, he added.

Asked if the issue of trafficking of Bangladeshis through Thailand-Malaysia border will be raised at the meeting, the secretary avoided a reply.

However, Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) leaders said illegal migration by sea can be reduced significantly if the Malaysian authorities open all its sectors to ensure available jobs for Bangladeshi workers.

Malaysian family sues

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The family is also suing Malaysia's government, civil aviation authorities, immigration department and air force for negligence.

"Our clients are after the truth. We have confidence in our judiciary system that this suit will be heard and dealt with fairly," a statement by the family's legal team said.

Chong said the family would seek damages but declined to specify a figure.

MH370 inexplicably disappeared on March 8 with 239 people aboard en

route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing in what remains one of history's great aviation mysteries.

Malaysia's government believes the flight diverted to the far southern Indian Ocean, citing sketchy satellite data, but no trace has been found despite an extensive search.

Neither the government nor airline has revealed any results from investigations launched in the aftermath of the tragedy, and consistently stresses that only recovery of the lost Boeing 777 aircraft will provide full answers.

Truck takes lives of kid

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critically injured, said Manjur Kader, officer-in-charge of Narayanganj Sadar Model Police Station.

The rickshaw-puller was also hurt in the accident. Both the injured have been undergoing treatment at

Narayanganj 300-bed Hospital.

Locals seized the truck and set fire to the vehicle. They also put a barricade on the road, protesting the accident.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control around 11:45am.

A saga of disgrace

FROM PAGE 1

Khaleda made a grievous political mistake by picking Nizami as a minister. But that was not all. She made another Jamaat-e-Islami leader Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed a technocrat minister. A tribunal last year handed Mojaheed death penalty for committing crimes against humanity.

For Khaleda, induction of the two anti-liberation leaders into her cabinet was only following in the footsteps of her predecessors.

Her husband Gen Ziaur Rahman, founder of BNP, started the practice. He made anti-liberation leader Shah Azizur Rahman a minister in 1978 and the prime minister the following year.

Shah Aziz was again made the prime minister by Justice Abdus Sattar-led BNP government in 1981.

Gen Zia who became the chief martial law administrator and later took the office of the president had desperately relied on the anti-liberation forces to consolidate his political power base.

In the process, he made Abdul Alim a minister in 1978. A tribunal last year convicted Alim of crimes against

humanity.

Anti-liberation leader Abdur Rahman Biswas might be considered as more fortunate than many others. He was made a minister by Gen Zia in 1979. The Khaleda-led BNP in 1991 elected Biswas the parliament's Speaker and later the country's president.

A veteran freedom fighter, Gen Zia opened the door for anti-liberation forces, including Jamaat and other fundamentalist political parties to consolidate in Bangladesh's politics by withdrawing the constitutional ban on their politics.

Gen HM Ershad then came up on the scene. Based in Pakistan in 1971, his role as an army officer was reportedly against the Liberation War.

Despite being a repatriated officer, he managed some quick promotions in Bangladesh Army. Finally, he grabbed state power in March 1982 by overthrowing the then elected president.

Like Gen Zia, he also counted on the support of the anti-liberation forces. In 1986, he made Salauddin Quader Chowdhury a minister. A tribunal last



MINISTER GETS MARRIED

The groom, Railway Minister Mazibul Hoque, and bride Honufa Akhter Rikta at their wedding at Mirakhola of Chandina in Comilla yesterday. The minister, after staying single for 68 years, tied the knot with the 29-year-old with a *denmhor* of Tk 5,00,001. The minister went to his new father-in-law's house flying the national flag on his car.

PHOTO: STAR

No worries about them

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As the incident caught media attention, they were almost isolated in their localities amid rumours that they bore Ebola virus, although they were declared unaffected when screened later.

Abdul Hossain Dulu, one of the returnees, was forced by his villagers to leave his ancestral home at Nagra village of Kotalipara in Gopalganj. They even planned to burn his house.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dulu narrated his ordeal.

"I had to flee my village home and go into hiding for 10 days, sensing that my house might be attacked and burnt," he said.

"My relatives heard some villagers saying 'burn his house and kill him,'"

said Dulu, still panic-stricken.

Some opportunist villagers spread the rumour in a bid to grab their ancestral property, he said, adding that they have around 10 bighas of land.

Dulu, who worked as a supervisor at a Super Market in Liberia's capital Monrovia, also said he was in regular contact with Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed since he had arrived and had his health checked in Dhaka.

The civil surgeon and the deputy inspector general of police have been requested to ensure his security, said Prof Be-Nazir.

The other returnees are Ruhul Amin, 35; his relative Sethu Begum, 25, her son Tasrin Sonnet Hawlader, 7, and daughter Oyshee, 2; and Mahbub

Sardar, 30.

Contacted, Ruhul Amin yesterday said he, Sethu and her kids too were almost isolated by villagers although they were undergoing health check-ups under the supervision of physicians.

"I hope now there will be no fear among people as we have passed the incubation period," he said.

Following media coverage of the airport incident, the ministries concerned were prompted to hold an inter-ministerial meeting at the airport.

It was decided in the meeting that screening measures would be stepped up and archway thermal scanners set up at all international airports.

Sourcing of the scanners has got under way.

Representatives of airlines, immigration police, health officials and Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh also held a coordination meeting where all airlines were asked to enquire about all Bangladesh-bound flights so that passengers from Ebola affected countries could be identified.

The Ebola epidemic in West Africa is the largest ever outbreak of the disease with a rapidly rising death toll in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where it has killed nearly 5,000 people and affected at least 10,000.

There have also been a few cases in three other West African countries, Spain and the United States.

Fire again at city's BSEC

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flame. After around two hours' operation, 21 firefighting units managed to extinguish the blaze.

The fire did not spread to other floors, said Brig Gen Ali Ahmed Khan, director general of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Zahurul Amin Miah, deputy director of fire service, said the middle section of the 10th floor was completely destroyed. Some rooms on the edges of the floor were damaged by the heat and smoke caused by the fire.

About 100 firefighters, assisted by police and Rapid Action Battalion personnel and volunteers, took part in dousing the blaze. Traffic was curbed along Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue on which the building stands.

The blaze also damaged some transmission equipment on the rooftop, putting Ntv and Rtv temporarily off-air. Apart from the daily's office, the chamber of barrister Tanjib-ul-Alam and a garment accessories office were also damaged.

A fire in the building killed four people and injured more than 30 in February 2007. In December the same year, another fire on the building's ground floor was reported but there was no casualty.

Abbas Ali Hawladar, a peon of the Amar Desh, was the first to detect yesterday's fire and the last to come out of his office.

"Our newspaper was supposed to move to a new office in Niketon today. Around 10 people, including Amar Desh staff, an electrician and some labourers, were pulling down furniture, air conditioners and other equipment," he told this correspondent.

"Suddenly I heard a sound from the storeroom. The room was locked. Around 10 minutes later, I saw flames through the opening between the ceiling and the wall. We called in the storekeeper who had the keys to the room. After unlocking the room several minutes later, we tried to douse the fire using handheld fire-extinguishers and water. But we failed."

When it became hard for them to breathe due to increasing smoke and heat, they climbed down the building using the fire exit, he added.

SAFETY STANDARDS

The building had only one fire exit and a staircase, which firemen said are not enough.

After the 2007 fire, experts made a number of recommendations, including installation of at least two fire exits

and auto ventilation system in the centrally air-conditioned building.

"But we didn't see any auto ventilation system. If it is in place, black smoke belches out. This negligence could have led to casualties if all the offices were open," said a senior firefighter engaged in yesterday's operation.

Some fire safety gears, like internal hose pipe and extinguisher, were there but not all of those were maintained properly and so, could not be used yesterday, he added.

Some firemen said they didn't see any smoke alarm or sprinkler either.

BSEC Chairman Intiaz Hossain Chowdhury, however, claimed all the floors were well-equipped with fire safety equipment. "It was an accident. The fire spread because of sheets of paper in the newspaper office," he told journalists at the spot during the incident.

As for the cause of the fire, firefighters suspected that an eclectic short circuit during the shifting of Amar Desh office equipment might have started the flame. However, the exact cause can be known after the investigation, they said.

Two five-member committees -- one by the BSEC and another by Fire Service and Civil Defence -- were formed to probe the incident.

Visiting the spot in the afternoon, State Minister for Home Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said investigation was on to see whether the Amar Desh authorities had taken adequate fire safety measures.

Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu, BNP's acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Ntv Chairman Mosaddeque Ali Falu also visited the building.

AMAR DESH'S ALLEGATION

"This was not a fire under normal circumstances," Syed Abdal Ahmed, executive editor of the daily, told reporters following the fire.

"Around 500 of our journalists have been living in hardship after the government sealed-off our press and locked up our editor Mahmudur Rahman," he said, demanding proper investigation into and compensation for the incident.

The Amar Desh is now functioning online only as the government sealed off its press in April 2013.

In a statement in the evening, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul alleged that the fire was a "sabotage" to completely destroy the daily. He blamed the government for the incident.

Mir Quasem

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senior jail super of the prison.

On Thursday, the International Crimes Tribunal-2 set the date for delivering the long-awaited verdict, six months after the conclusion of his trial procedures.

Quasem, the alleged chief of infamous Chittagong Al-Badr Bahini, an auxiliary force of Pakistani army, faces 14 charges, including murder committed in the city between November and December 16, 1971.

The prosecution sought capital

punishment for Mir Quasem, a member of Jamaat's central executive council and also considered as one of the top financiers of the party, claiming that they had been able to prove 12 out of 14 charges. The defence sought his acquittal saying the prosecution couldn't prove any charges.

If convicted, the 62-year-old may face death penalty.

On May 4, the Tribunal-2 concluded the hearing of closing arguments in the case against Quasem and kept the verdict awaiting.

Main coordinator of JMB captured

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They were paraded before the media at the Rab headquarters in Uttara yesterday afternoon, after their arrests around 2:30am from Sirajganj Railway Station.

According to the Rab, they were going to Joydevpur from Chapainawabganj.

Commander Mufti said they recovered four IEDs from the possession of the suspected militants, and if exploded they can kill people within 30 to 35 meter (about 100 feet) radius.

Also seized are 75 electronic detonators, 10kg power gels, 155 circuits, three igniters and one power regulator, he added.

The JMB operatives were moving the explosives and IEDs in the face of the recent crackdown on militants across the country, the Rab official said.

He, however, could not say where those explosives were being taken or where they came from.

"The final destination of the recovered IEDs and explosives was not Joydevpur. They [militants] usually move explosives in relays," he said, adding that the arrestees were perhaps trying to hand those over to another group.

According to him, the militants were regrouping, taking advantage of the current political situation. They

were also plotting to reassert their existence by exploding bombs at public gatherings across the country.

Abdun Nur used to maintain contact with absconding JMB chief Sohail Mahfuz and other leaders who fled the country. He also was in touch with the detained JMB leaders, claimed Commander Mufti.

Nur was a notorious robber before becoming a JMB operative, Mufti said, adding that he was accused in six robbery cases and served five years in a Gopalganj Jail where some detained JMB men motivated him to join the militant group. He came out of prison in 2010.

Asked whether the detainees made the IEDs themselves, the Rab official

said, "They did not have the expertise to make bombs. We are trying to find out who made those and where those came from."

Earlier on September 19, the Detective Branch of police claimed to have arrested JMB acting chief Abdullah Al-Tasnim Nahid.

Nahid, 29, and six of his accomplices were paraded before the media at the DB office in the capital.

When pointed this out, Commander Mufti said: "We do not know whom the police [detectives] arrested. But we are sure Abdun Nur is the main coordinator of the JMB and also the chief of its Chapainawabganj unit."

Heroic death of a house help

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strong currents. The rescued boys are aged between six and 10 years.

"I came to the beach and found that Safiya was struggling to swim back to the beach...she was plunging into the water and emerging out again...we finally pulled her out but she later died just before the arrival of the ambulance," Abu Abdullah, her employer, was quoted by the portal as saying.

"She was so brave and sacrificed her life for our children without hesita-

tion...she paid with her life for this noble and courage act," he said.

Safiya had been with Abdullah's family for nearly four years, and she had been planning to get her daughter married in the next two months, the report says quoting Abdullah.

Abdullah is in touch with Safiya's family in Bangladesh to arrange for the repatriation of her body and to raise funds from the families whose kids were rescued to send money to her family, the report says.

It was not possible to reach the Bangladesh embassy in Abu Dhabi over the phone yesterday.

Khondoker Showkat Hossain, secretary to the expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry, said he would look into the matter immediately and arrange everything to bring her body back. "It's really saddening that she died. But she did us proud by sacrificing her life for four children. We will do everything for her family in Bangladesh," he said.

Experts caution over Ebola hopes

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Deputy health minister Tolbert Nyensuah said that even if it managed to achieve no new cases, Liberia would not be able to consider itself Ebola-free until neighbours Guinea and Sierra Leone had eradicated the virus.

The outbreak has taken a huge toll on health workers in the region, with

272 deaths, most of them in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced the \$100-million (80-million-euro) donation, describing it as a "first down payment", as he visited the UN Mission on Ebola Emergency Response headquarters in Ghana.

"We have to end this epidemic, there's just no other way around it.

We've got to get to zero," he said, admitting the world had reacted too slowly and describing the economies of the three worst-hit countries as "devastated".

Researchers warned that traditional west African funeral rites, including kissing and touching a dead body, had driven the initial spread of Ebola and must be halted.