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Showbiz

BCL & VIOLENCE

Political impunity, administrative favours behind recent spur of untoward incidents?

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STOP BEING A BULLY

Australia, Britain tell Putin as West, Russia divide widens over Ukraine

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Cheated workers denied justice

Fortune seekers trapped in false promises by manpower brokers; culprits mostly unpunished

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPOLO

In January last year, Mosharraf Hossain along with 26 other Bangladeshis went to Iraq to work for a construction firm. Some local brokers arranged their jobs through four Bangladeshi recruiting agencies.

Each of the poor men paid Tk 2.5 lakh for the job in what the agencies said was an Iraqi company. Like in most cases, they gave the money without any receipts.

Under the verbal agreement, they were to get a minimum monthly pay of Tk 25,000 plus lodging. But when they landed in the Middle East country, there was no job. The agencies' brokers confined them at a labour camp of the company, M Kodia General Trading, in Najaf city and asked them to wait.

But it soon became clear to them that they were cheated by the brokers and the agencies, and contacted their families back home. After living in terrible conditions for nearly a year,

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Ministry received **110** complaints in **9** months till Sept

Upon probe, licences of six agencies suspended

Culprits get off the hook because of lack of evidence

Brokers do not give any money receipt in most cases



A worker of a garage giving a rundown bus a fresh coat of paint at Matuail in Dhaka on Wednesday. Old unfit buses are being made to look good so that mobile courts do not stop and fine them. A newly painted bus, top inset, plying a street in Mirpur-10 while unfit buses are parked in the capital's Kamalapur for repairs.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



31 foreigners detained for illegal stay

DB launches crackdown in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday arrested 31 foreign nationals, including two women, of 10 African countries from the capital during a massive crackdown on foreigners staying illegally in Bangladesh.

Of the arrestees, 12 are from Nigeria, five from Uganda, four from Cameroon, three from Gambia, two from Ivory Coast, one each from Senegal, Kenya, Togo, Mali and Mozambique.

The drive came a month after Algerian national Abuubaida Kadir allegedly murdered O-level student Zubair Ahmed in Uttara. Kadir has been staying illegally in the country for more than a decade.

Following Zubair's killing on October 4, detectives started preparing a list of foreigners staying illegally in the country and their whereabouts. So far, they have found 350 locations including hotels and houses where they are staying, detectives said.

Around 300 policemen in 40 separate groups yesterday raided 147 places in Banasree, Gulshan and Uttara and made the arrests, said police.

"We'll continue the drives to arrest the illegal foreigners," said Krishna Pada Roy, deputy commissioner of Detective

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BANGLADESH-INDIA RELATIONS

Much progress made, need to build trust

Observe ex-envoys at maiden summit

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Noted diplomats from Bangladesh and India yesterday called for moving forward with the agenda of comprehensive economic cooperation and integration, building on achievements made in the past.

They said the neighbours in the last six years have made significant improvement in their relations by addressing security concerns, border management and trade, but India has to take the bigger share in responsibility to build trust and confidence.

Over a dozen former high commissioners of Bangladesh and India, who served in Dhaka and New Delhi in the last four decades, also called for developing such a mechanism that will solve bilateral issues based on law and rights.

They said India should immediately address the two vital issues -- ratification of

Call for economic integration

India has to play bigger role

JRC should be autonomous

India's response to Teesta, LBA not encouraging

the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and signing of the Teesta River Water Sharing deal. This, they observed, would help further develop trust and confidence.

"The water issue is crucial. It is going to dominate the bilateral relations [in the coming days]," said former Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh Muchkund Dubey.

He suggested resolution of all other sensitive outstanding issues on their legal basis following the example of the international arbitrations over the maritime boundary dispute between India and Bangladesh.

Dubey, who served in Bangladesh between 1979 and 1982, suggested that the two countries go for a framework for economic cooperation and integration, which will have legal protection, especially for

PHOTO ON PAGE 5

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HT Imam's comments irk Hasina

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday came down hard on her Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam for his comments on BCS exams and role of the administration in the January 5 national elections.

Hasina castigated the adviser at a meeting of the Awami League Parliamentary Board held at the PM's official residence -- Gono Bhaban.

The ALPB members too reprimanded Imam for his comments, meeting sources told The Daily Star, preferring anonymity.

Imam's speech, the ALPB members commented, is not acceptable under any circumstance as he has given a weapon to the BNP and others to

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MOST UNFIT VEHICLES OFF THE ROADS

Hasty repair on to dodge mobile court

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

To avoid being penalised by mobile courts, owners of unfit buses and trucks have taken their vehicles off Dhaka streets and are having them repaired.

Dhaka district administration and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority mobile courts have fined around 400 unfit vehicles Tk 5.18 lakh between Monday and Thursday last week.

This has awakened the transport owners who run unfit vehicles almost unabated throughout the year. They are now hurriedly repairing their vehicles.

At different workshops and garages in the capital during the last two days, workers were seen busy welding, giving buses a fresh coat of paint, replacing shattered windows, broken indicator lenses and headlights, and refurbishing the interiors.

"At least eight to 10 buses have come to our garage in last two days. Additionally, many bus owners have requested us over the phone to go to their garages for repairs to their vehicles," said Mohammed Salam, a worker of Mayer Doa Workshop at Matuail in Dhaka, on Wednesday.

Over fifty workshops and garages are located in the area and talking with mechanics of over a dozen garages there, it had become apparent they were having a very busy time since Monday.

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