

## ILLEGAL STAY

# 12 Bangladeshis held in Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Raiding a market in Bukit Mertajam of Penang state, Malaysian Immigration Department has detained 55 foreigners, including 12 Bangladeshis, who were reportedly working there illegally.

Abdul Rashid, chairman of the department, said sixty-two foreign workers were screened during the two-hour raid carried out on Friday morning, reported local newspaper The Star yesterday.

The 55 detainees were found either to be working without any work permits or have overstayed in the country. Among the detainees, 42 were from Myanmar, said Rashid.

Meanwhile, an official of the Bangladesh High Commission in

Kuala Lumpur said the Bangladeshi workers might have to stay in a detection centre until the necessary verification by the immigration department is completed.

"The Bangladeshis might be deported to their country or face a short detention term," said the official, who did not want to be named.

After Friday's drive, Rashid told the Malaysian daily that the detained workers were taken to the state Immigration Department office in Seberang Jaya for investigations.

In a bid to curb human trafficking, the Malaysian home ministry was engaging all stakeholders while stepping up enforcement on those who exploit foreign workers by withholding their travel documents, added the newspaper.



Garbage, filth and water hyacinth accumulate and form a thick layer on the surface of the Dhanmondi Lake. The photo was taken yesterday near Kalabagan ground.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Navy to get 2 submarines

Says PM

UNB, Chittagong

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said two China-made avant-garde Corvettes, lightly armed warships, would be added to the Navy fleet next year and two submarines by 2016.

She said this while addressing the Winter President Parade of the direct entry officers and midshipman of the Navy at Bangladesh Naval Academy in Chittagong.

Mentioning the high prospects of getting oil and natural gas in the Bay of Bengal, she said steps have been taken to extract oil and gas resources which could play a very important role in strengthening the country's economy.

About the Navy's shipbuilding capacity, Hasina said the Navy members were constructing warships at Khulna Ship Yard and Narayanganj Dock Yard.

Hasina said the government has undertaken massive short-, medium- and long-term programmes under Forces Goal Goal-2030 to develop the Navy as an effective three dimensional force. "Bangladesh Navy has entered a new era as the government has already provided two modern helicopters and two maritime patrol aircraft to the force alongside adding 16 new ships."

Talking about Maritime boundary cases against India and Myanmar, Hasina said her government was able to establish Bangladesh's sovereign rights in the huge 1.18 lakh square kilometres of the sea, settling the cases peacefully through international courts.

## Stop maligning Zia family

Tarique asks Hasina, AL leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman has urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the ruling Awami League leaders to stop passing "obscene comments" on former president Ziaur Rahman and members of the Zia family.

In a press release issued from London yesterday, he also requested the PM not to use indecent words about his mother, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

"We have seen whenever the Awami League comes to power, it slanders my father late president Ziaur Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh and the proclaimer of independence. However, they could never produce documents to back the nasty propaganda," said Tarique.

Justifying his recent controversial comments on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, he said, "I presented proofs to substantiate my claims."

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# 100pc hike proposed

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economic progress has been good and it is vital to have an efficient and satisfied administration for its management. The government has the money to implement the pay hike.

"Government's money is people's money and it has to be spent for the wellbeing of the people," the minister said.

The existing budget has Tk 28,709-crore allocation for salary and allowance of around 13 lakh government employees. Implementation of the recommendations will require another Tk 18,247 crore. This is excluding the enhanced salary of some 6 lakh non-government school and college teachers.

Asked if it would push up inflation, Muhith said, "Absolutely not. It will have no impact on inflation."

The minister said the budget allocation for salary would not increase because of this pay hike and that it would rather come down.

The allocation for salary in the current fiscal year is 15.7 percent of the total budget.

But the budget gets bigger every year. So if this pay hike is implemented in full, salary of the government employees will eat up only 14.2 percent of the budget, said Farashuddin, also former Bangladesh Bank governor.

The commission suggested cutting down the number of grades to 16 from existing 20. It also recommended lowest basic salary at Tk 8,200, up from Tk 4,100. The proposed maximum basic salary is Tk 80,000, up from existing Tk 40,000.

Outside the grades, Tk 88,000 has been recommended as basic pay for senior secretaries instead of existing Tk 42,000. Tk 1 lakh monthly basic salary has been proposed for the cabinet

Grade	Existing Pay Scale (Basic Salary)	Proposed Pay Scale (Basic Salary)
1	Tk 40,000	Tk 80,000
2	Tk 33,500	Tk 70,000
3	Tk 29,000	Tk 60,000
4	Tk 25,750	Tk 52,000
5	Tk 22,250	Tk 45,000
6	Tk 18,500	Tk 37,000
7	Tk 15,000	Tk 32,000
8*	Tk 12,000	Tk 25,000
	Tk 11,000	
9	Tk 8,000	Tk 17,000
10	Tk 6,400	Tk 13,000
11*	Tk 5,900	Tk 11,500
	Tk 5,500	
12	Tk 5,200	Tk 10,500
13	Tk 4,900	Tk 10,000
14	Tk 4,700	Tk 9,500
15*	Tk 4,500	Tk 9,000
	Tk 4,400	
	Tk 4,250	Tk 8,200
16*	Tk 4,100	

GRADES WITH ASTERIX (\*) HAVE BEEN MERGED WITH ANOTHER ONE.

secretary and the principal secretary to the prime minister. At present, they get Tk 45,000 in basic pay.

The existing grade 9 will be merged with grade 8 and the basic salary has been suggested Tk 25,000 instead of existing Tk 12,000 and 11,000.

The current pay scale was implemented in 2009, four years after the previous one. The new pay scale comes into force in the span of six years.

The cumulative inflation rose by 63 percent in these six years and the com-

mission kept that in mind while preparing the recommendation, said Farashuddin.

Recommendation for yearly increment has been made in a way so that the basic salary doubles in 15 years.

The yearly increase of 4th to 16th grade employees has been fixed at 5 percent and it will increase in an incremental way.

The commission chairman said those who will fall in the first grade will get an additional 5 percent of the basic pay or Tk 4,000 every month for performing additional responsibilities outside their duty.

Farashuddin said the commission recommended making the house rent and other allowances more logical.

### NON-GOVT SCHOOLS

The commission suggested implementing the new pay scale for the schools under Monthly Pay Order (MPO) six months after it is implemented for government service holders.

Farashuddin said the time for implementing the pay scale for the teachers is required for its objective evaluation. He said they recommended that the non-government schools deposit to the government exchequer a part of the money they receive from students.

### SEPARATE PAY SCALE

The commission suggested a separate pay scale for Bangladesh Bank but urged the government not to give any separate pay scale for the public organisations incurring losses.

Farashuddin said there was no logic for giving separate pay scales for public universities, state-owned banks, financial institutions and insurance firms.

### SPECIAL PACKAGE FOR FLATS

The commission made several alternative recommendations so that every government employee may own a flat. One of them is building flats by real

estate companies by dismantling old government buildings.

The government will own 60 percent shares of the flats while the developers 40 percent. The flats will be distributed among public servants on hire-purchase basis.

Another recommendation is that a group of 10-20 government employees will be given 5-10 kathas of land where they will build flats. For the construction, they will be given loans equivalent to 50 months' basic salary.

Another alternative is that a group of government employees will purchase land and providing the proof of the purchase they will get house building loans equal to 50 months' basic salary at the bank rate.

### INSURANCE POLICY

The commission recommended providing government staff with mandatory health insurance. The government would deposit Tk 400 for each employee for general insurance policy, which would cover death in accidents, and treatment cost. It would also deposit Tk 100 for life insurance.

An employee would receive a maximum of Tk 5 lakh in insurance and the compensation package would be paid directly to the hospital.

Farashuddin said if it was done, the insurance sector would also throb. Though the government expenditure on insurance premium would be high in the first year, it would gradually come down.

He added they also suggested that the government set up a 500-bed cardiac hospital with the premium money for government employees.

### CAR LOAN

The commission proposed a maximum of Tk 25 lakh car loan facility for officers of grade three and above and that the facility could be extended to

grade four officers later.

### PENSIONERS' BENEFIT

The commission recommended making the rate of pension 90 percent instead of existing 80 percent of basic salaries.

It also suggested that the facilities for pensioners be increased at the rate of the salary hike of the government employees.

### SEPARATE BANK

The setting up of a bank styled "Bank for Steps to Prosperity", owned and run by the government employees, has also been recommended.

Farashuddin said the government welfare fund has a piece of land at Dainik Bangla intersection and selling 20-25 kathas of it could fetch Tk 400 crore, enough for the capital of the new bank. Each government employee would have a Tk 4,000 share in the bank.

He added the bank would provide development and commercial loans possibly on single-digit interest rates.

### CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

The commission made several recommendations for civil service reforms. It suggested making the job tenure for voluntary retirement 20 years instead of 25.

It also proposed forming a development management pool, with officials selected on merit and efficiency. The commission also suggested taking exams for promotions.

Muhith said the government could take various initiatives as it had enough money. He said more initiatives would be taken in the next four years.

Finance Secretary Mahbub Ahmed said even if 100 percent of the Pay Commission recommendations were implemented, there would be no shortage of money and the government was capable of making it effective from this fiscal year.

## Freedom in the air

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especially the Bangladeshi women. Their brutality was exposed, during and after the war, by local and international media.

According to different official fact sheets on the Liberation War, as many as 200,000 to 400,000 women, aged between eight and 75, were raped by the Pak army and their local collaborators in 1971. Tens of thousands of them were made pregnant. At least 23,000 abortions were performed in Dhaka alone and 300-400 "war-children" were born in 22 clinics in the city.

These are the figures that have been recorded. Now that rape was, and still is, considered to be a social stigma in the country, how many such incidents remained untold and unreported is left to our imagination.

While mining contents for its special online repository on the Liberation War -- 'Freedom in the Air', The Daily Star Online gathered rare video footages, photos and reports run in the local and foreign media on the bone-chilling atrocities of the occupation army.

Available at [freedomintheair.thedailystar.net](http://freedomintheair.thedailystar.net), the online repository also contains exclusive interviews of war heroes, key diplomatic cables including then US Consul General Archer K Blood's "Dissent Cables", famously known as "Blood Telegrams", and the report of Pakistan government-formed Hamoodur Rahman Commission which censured the politicians and army for genocide in Bangladesh in 1971.

Three of those rarely watched videos vividly present Pakistan army's disgraceful acts on Bangladeshi women.

In a video report ([tinyurl.com/kexpnpx](http://tinyurl.com/kexpnpx)) broadcast on February 20, 1972, Liz Trotta of

NBC told the story of Sayeba, 16, who was a widow of a local Mukti Bahini commander. The Pak army broke into their house during the war, raped her in front of his husband at gunpoint, and then forced her to watch her husband getting killed by the raiders. She remained with her parents after December 16. But her parents were worried for no man would ever marry their daughter who had become a "disgrace" to the society. But Sayeba was apparently lucky that at least her family provided her a shelter. There were women, who were raped during the war, who did not have anywhere to go. They were rejected by their husbands, their parents and by everyone they knew.

Another video ([tinyurl.com/lvm3owv](http://tinyurl.com/lvm3owv)) showed the story of Khadija, a 13-year-old schoolgirl, who along with her friends was abducted by the Pak army. She was taken to army barracks in Mohammadpur and kept as a sex slave along with 40 others like her for six months till the Pak army surrendered on December 16. The Pakistani hyenas used them as they wished, kept them naked so that they could not run away in the daylight. When she was rescued after December 16, she was visibly traumatised and burst into tears saying, "I want to go back to my mother!"

A clip ([tinyurl.com/p7weh6y](http://tinyurl.com/p7weh6y)) from "9 Months To Freedom" (1975), taped in Agartala of India, narrated a teenage Bangladeshi girl's heartbreaking story. She, sister to a Bangladeshi student leader, was taken and kept in a Pakistani camp as a sex slave. Unable to bear the torture, she tried to escape from there. A bullet hit her skull when the barbarian army opened fire on her. She died a few days after the documentary was filmed.

## Cuba won't change

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decision of US President Barack Obama. It represents the removal of an obstacle in relations between our countries," he said.

"We reiterate our willingness for respectful and reciprocal dialogue concerning disagreements," Castro said, adding that Cuba "accepted dialogue... on any topic about all things here but also in the United States."

But he emphasized that his country was a "sovereign state" that would not bow to pressure to change its political or economic system.

"In the same way that we have never suggested the United States change its political system, we will demand respect for ours," Castro said.

Meanwhile, Obama said his plan to normalize relations with Cuba gives the US a chance to influence events at an important moment of change for the communist nation, and he brushed off critics who accuse him of kowtowing to dictators.

Obama said a half-century of trying to push out the Castro government through isolation has not worked. He said his administration is taking a look at whether to remove Cuba from the US list of state sponsors of terror, acknowledging that Havana's inclusion makes it difficult for the US to pursue closer ties.

"If we engage, we have the opportunity to influence the course of events at a time when there's going to be some generational change in that country," Obama told CNN's "State of the Union" in an interview aired yesterday. "And I think we should seize it and I intend to do so."

The United States and Cuba made the breakthrough in their Cold War standoff Wednesday, launching measures to ease a five-decade US trade embargo as well as a prisoner exchange. First official talks are scheduled for January.

Castro repeated Saturday his stance that "the most important thing, the end of the economic, trade, and financial embargo against Cuba, still needs to be resolved."

## Two NY cops shot dead

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won't be going home to their loved ones tonight." Attorney General Eric Holder promised the support of the Justice Department throughout the investigation.

In a statement Obama said: "I unconditionally condemn today's murder of two police officers in New York City."

"Officers who serve and protect our communities risk their own safety for ours every single day and they deserve our respect and gratitude every single day," said Obama, who is on holiday in Hawaii, reports BBC.

The two men were attacked outside a housing project in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn at a tense time for the NYPD, the largest police force in the country.

Protests over policing tactics have roiled the city since a grand jury declined this month to indict a white NYPD officer in the killing of Eric Garner, a black man who died after being placed in a chokehold during a July arrest on Staten Island.

The shooter fired through the passenger-side window of their



Rafael Ramos



Wenjian Liu

marked patrol car, striking both officers in the head before they had a chance to respond, Bratton said. The suspect fled on foot, followed by other police, then took his own life on a subway platform.

Bratton said the gunman, identified as Ismaaiyl Brinsley, 28, had made "anti-police" comments online. Shortly before the double shooting, a message on an Instagram account apparently belonging to Brinsley said "They Take 1 Of Ours... Let's Take 2 of Theirs."

The posting was followed with hashtags referencing Garner and Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager shot and killed by a white officer in Ferguson, Missouri in August, reports Reuters.

Bratton said investigators were

checking whether Brinsley had attended any of the recent protests.

The killings also revealed bitter anger among some police toward New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio who they see as not being supportive in the face of public anger.

Several officers turned their backs on de Blasio when he arrived at the Brooklyn hospital where the two officers were taken after they were shot, video showed.

Patrick Lynch, head of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, the country's largest municipal police union, said, "There's blood on many hands tonight."

It was unclear why the gunman chose Brooklyn.

Authorities said Brinsley, who previously lived in Georgia, had shot and wounded his girlfriend in Baltimore early Saturday morning before heading north to New York City.

Baltimore County Police said in a news release officers had learned of the Instagram threat and contacted the NYPD by telephone about 30 minutes before the shooting, following that warning with a faxed photo of the Brinsley.

## Black, white tomatoes

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tomato type to produce the groundbreaking black and white plant.

While the black tomatoes have a more savoury taste, the white ones pack a sweet and fruity punch, the growers say.

A spokesman for Sutton Seeds, which is based in Paignton, Devon, said: "This year we have upped the ante by grafting Indigo Rose to a creamy-white cherry variety to produce the first black and white tomato plant.

"We promise amazement from your

friends, neighbours and family, not to mention rather groovy salads and sandwiches."

The hybrid plants are best planted in May for a July to October harvest and cost £12.99 for three.

Indigo Rose was originally created earlier this year by mixing red and purple tomato strains and is heralded as a 'superfood'.

The American-bred purple tomatoes contained anthocyanin, an antioxidant said to help fight diabetes and obesity.

Speaking of the black tomatoes, Alfie Jackson, assistant product manager at Suttons Seeds, said: "They are not as sweet as normal tomatoes and have a more savoury flavour, and are nice roasted or eaten in salads.

"There are some dark coloured tomatoes but Indigo Rose is the only real black tomato and is the darkest that has ever been bred.

"During the growth process it starts out green like all tomatoes and when the sun hits the fruit it turns black rather than red."