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MANPOWER EXPORT TO REOPENED SAUDI JOB MARKET

Govt focuses on checking those with criminal past

REZAUL KARIM and BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLOB

The government is planning several measures to check the ones with criminal records, particularly the Rohingyas, from landing jobs in Saudi Arabia.

The move comes as the government wants to reap the benefits of reopening the Saudi manpower market for Bangladeshis.

The Middle Eastern country has recently lifted a ban on hiring Bangladeshi workers on condition that Dhaka would not send nationals with criminal records to Riyadh, said highly placed sources.

Home to over 15 lakh Bangladeshis, the KSA would prefer hiring 10,000 skilled workers from next month under 12 categories of domestic services workers such as maids, drivers, housekeepers, security guards and gardeners.

To make it happen, the two countries yesterday inked the Domestic Services Workers' Recruitment agreement.

Expatriates Welfare Secretary Khandker

Md Iftekhar Haider and Ahmed Al Fahaid, visiting deputy minister for international affairs of the Saudi labour ministry, signed the deal at the ministry.

The agreement covers areas including recruitment costs, air travel, salary, work hours, overtime, accommodation, food, workplace safety, and other admissible benefits.

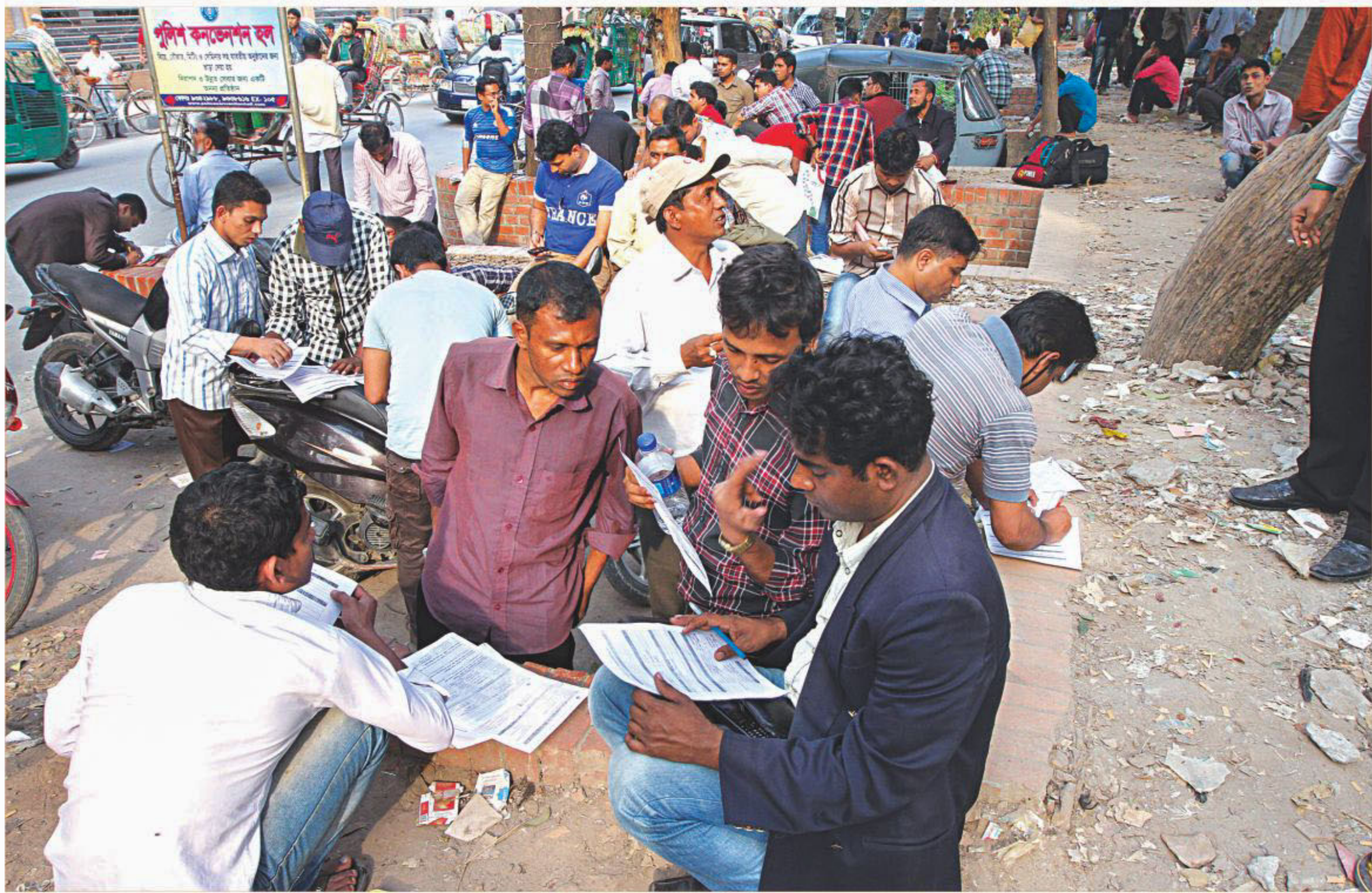
Private recruiters from both the countries will hire the workers. Each worker will get a minimum salary of SR 800 [Tk 16,000] with free accommodation and food, said the secretary.

"We'll strictly monitor the recruitment process so that not a single person with a criminal record can depart Bangladesh for Saudi Arabia," added Iftekhar.

The Saudi deputy minister said the jobseekers should not let themselves be exploited by any quarters as their employers will bear the recruitment and travel costs.

The Saudi government will look into any violation of workers' rights, he added.

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Jobseekers busy doing registration with Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) for overseas recruitment. Many rushed to the BMET office in the capital's Eskaton yesterday amid rumours that registration for jobs in Saudi Arabia under a new deal has to be completed within three days.

PHOTO: STAR



Selina Hossain wins Saarc Lit Award

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Eminent Bangladeshi writer Selina Hossain has been chosen for the prestigious Saarc Literature Award in

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Boys included in govt stipend list

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time, poor male students at the higher secondary level are going to get government stipend.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) yesterday at a meeting approved a Tk 513 crore project titled "Higher Secondary Stipend Project" under which 17.03 lakh students will get the financial support.

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal briefed reporters after the meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Of the total students at the higher secondary level, 40 percent female and 10 percent male students will receive the financial aid under the project.

The amount of stipend for the students of science section will be higher than that of other groups to encourage science education in the country, according to the project document.

A student from the science group would get a monthly stipend of Tk 175 and Tk 1,600 at a time for purchasing books and bearing examination fees.

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DELAY IN SAGAR-RUNI MURDER PROBE

Long wait for justice

RAFIUL ISLAM

Justice seems like a never-ending wait for the families of Sagar and Runi.

After the gruesome killing of the journalist couple, three investigators have already been changed. Ministers, and chiefs of different law enforcement agencies assured the families of arresting the killers and bringing them to justice.

Three years have elapsed but the proceedings of the trial are yet to start. Even the killers are yet to be identified.

The delay has not only frustrated the



families whose hope for justice is fading, it also intensified their grief.

"We have waited long for justice," said Nowsher Alam Roman, younger brother of Runi.

"We suspect that some influentials are behind the killing and the law enforcement agencies are either trying to protect them or it is totally their failure," he said.

Meherun Runi, senior reporter of private TV channel ATN Bangla, and her husband Sagar Sarowar, news editor of another TV station Maasranga, were murdered in the

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A traffic official on duty at the capital's Shajahanpur intersection yesterday, wearing some protection gears as there is no let-up in violence on the streets amid the nationwide blockade.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

KHALEDA'S OFFICE

Mobile phone network active again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mobile network surrounding BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's office at Gulshan-2 was restored last afternoon following a directive on the mobile operators from Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC).

The operators had disabled the mobile services on February 1, affecting around 10,000 people in the area.

Sources said the network was restored after repeated complaints from a number of diplomatic missions near the BNP chief's office at Gulshan in the capital.

However, BNP alleged that the government was again trying to cut off the

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Incas first victims of greenhouse gases

MAIL ONLINE

The ancient Incas were among the first victims of man-made greenhouse gases when Spanish Conquistadors forced them to mine silver at Potosi 240 years before the industrial revolution, it was claimed yesterday.

The earliest evidence of large-scale human-produced greenhouse gases in South America was

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

India's top court doubts country's secular future

AGENCIES

Expressing concern over growing influence of religion on social issues, the Indian Supreme Court on Monday wondered how long India would remain a secular country but battled for a uniform civil code.

"It is a secular country but I don't know how long it will remain so," Justice Vikramjit Sen said during the hearing on a PIL seeking recognition for Christian courts set up under its personal law, PTI reported.

Justice Sen said law should not be compelled to recognise dictates of personal law in civil and family matters like divorce, marriage and adoption.

The bench, also including Justice C Nagappan, however, said courts should not go into the area as every religion then would say that the law should incorporate their personal law. "We have to stamp religion out of civil matters," it said.

It, however, granted four weeks time to the Centre to file a reply on the peti-

tion which said 'Canon Law' was the personal law of Indian Christians and that a decree of dissolution of marriage granted by an ecclesiastical court should be held valid and binding.

The petitioner, Clarence Pais, a former president of the Catholic Association of Dakshina Kannada in Karnataka, said many Catholics, who married after getting divorce from Christian courts, faced criminal charges of bigamy as such divorces were not recognised by the courts. He

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The Daily Star



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ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with Prof Dr Anwar Hossain of DU that a dialogue between the government and the BNP is quite unlikely?

Yes (73%)
No (27%)

TOTAL VOTES: 456

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with International Crisis Group that the political crisis in Bangladesh is fast approaching to the point of no return and could gravely destabilise the country?

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জরুরী মতবিনিময় সভা

বিজিএমইএ, বিকেএমইএ ও বিটিএমইএ'র যৌথ উদ্যোগে চলমান সহিংসতার কারনে স্টপ অচলাবস্থা এবং বস্ত্র ও পোশাক শিল্পে এর নেতিবাচক প্রভাব বিশেষ করে এ খাতের উদ্যোক্তাদের দেউলিয়া হয়ে পড়া সহ লক্ষ লক্ষ শ্রমিক ভাই-বোনের কর্মহীন হয়ে পড়ার আশঙ্কা সৃষ্টির প্রেক্ষিতে আজ ১১ ফেব্রুয়ারী ২০১৫ তারিখ (বুধবার) বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকায় কারওয়ান বাজারস্থ বিজিএমইএ কমপ্লেক্স এর অডিটোরিয়াম (নুরুল কাদের অডিটোরিয়াম)-তে এক জরুরী মতবিনিময় সভার আয়োজন করা হয়েছে।

উপরোক্ত সভায় বিজিএমইএ, বিকেএমইএ ও বিটিএমইএ'র সম্মানিত সকল সদস্যগণকে উপস্থিত থাকার জন্য বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

মহাসচিব, বিজিএমইএ