



## Mad rush for 'Saudi ticket'

Job-seekers throng expat welfare office for registration

SAJJADUR RAHMAN and BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLOB

Thirty-two-year-old Zakir Hossain travelled more than 170 kilometres from Netrakona to the capital early yesterday only to have his name registered with the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) for a job placement in Saudi Arabia.

Not even fears of arson attacks by alleged blockaders could deter him from taking bus rides after his elder brother told him about the low cost of migration to the Kingdom -- only Tk 20,000 -- agreed between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia a couple of days ago.

"Soon after getting a phone call from my brother, I made up my mind that I would reach Dhaka anyhow," said Zakir, who runs a small shop at his village.

Like him, 25-year-old Mizanur Rahman, a garment worker in the capital, also had his name registered with the BMET with a hope to get a job in the oil-rich Middle Eastern country.

Saiful Islam, a graduate student at Titumir College in Dhaka, also rushed to Probashi Kalyan Bhaban to have his name registered for overseas job placement. The youth thinks he wouldn't get a decent job in Bangladesh.

Not only them. In the last two days, around 5,000 jobseekers got their

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Ignoring the barbed wire on the walls, overseas jobseekers try to get into Probashi Kalyan Bhaban, which houses the expatriate welfare and overseas employment ministry at Eskaton Garden, following a rumour that they have to register for jobs in Saudi Arabia by yesterday.

PHOTO:  
SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Touts cash in on confusion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manpower touts made some quick bucks from hundreds of jobseekers desperate for filling in a form to register their names online.

People from across the country in the last two days thronged the Probashi Kalyan Bhaban in the capital's Eskaton Garden to register their names with the BMET on rumours that the deadline for registration would expire yesterday.

Touts came apparently from nowhere and offered help for filling in the registration form for Tk 50 to Tk 200.

Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Khandaker Iftekhar Haider said some unscrupulous people created confusion among jobseekers about a newspaper advertisement.

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## No end to crisis without polls

Says Khaleda

AFP, Dhaka

Opposition leader Khaleda insisted yesterday that there could be no resolution of the growing political crisis unless Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina agreed to stand down and allow new elections.

"Every conscious and conscientious person in Bangladesh knows that the only way to resolve the current political crisis is to hold an inclusive, competitive and meaningful election," Khaleda told AFP by phone.

"The more quickly it can be arranged, the better it is for everyone. If it is delayed, the crisis could become even more



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## EU deplores violence, calls for dialogue

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The European Union has deplored the ongoing violence against innocent citizens of Bangladesh and reiterated its call for dialogue to break the current political impasse.

Pierre Mayaudon, ambassador and head of EU delegation to Bangladesh, made the call when he paid a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office

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## Anger over hills ban

Experts at roundtable term Home's directive anti-CHT peace accord, unconstitutional

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens have slammed the recent government order banning Bangladeshi or foreign individuals or organisations meeting and talking unsupervised with indigenous people of the hill districts.

The order states that such interaction must take place in presence of members of the armed forces and local administration.

The order came from people who were against implementation of the CHT Peace Accord, the eminent citizens said, terming it unconstitutional, undemocratic and racist.

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No local/foreign organisation or individual will meet indigenous people unsupervised

Foreigners' access to the CHT is restricted

Former Shanti Bahini members in Police and Ansar will be removed from CHT

High alert at check posts at CHT districts

Joint operations against anti-peace-accord groups

Law enforcement agencies will coordinate with 24 Infantry Division

24 Infantry Division responsible for the overall law and order

## In pain, yet they smile

Tk 10 lakh savings certificates for each arson victim

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Victims of recent arson attacks have heaved a sigh of relief at the financial assistance provided by the prime minister. They have said it will dispel their current financial worries.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, during her visit at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday, promised each burn victim savings certificates worth Tk 10 lakh, said Dr Partha Shankar Paul, resident surgeon at the unit.

The victims, however, have stressed that nothing can make up for the pain and trauma those heinous attacks have inflicted on them.

Md Selim, a 35-year-old human hauler driver with 36 percent burns, told this correspondent yesterday that the money would mitigate his current financial hurdles as it would be impossible for him to resume work anytime soon.

The only earning member in his

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina wipes her tears as does two-year-old Jui Akhter in her bed at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Hasina visited victims of recent arson attacks there yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

## Trial, not talks

PM accuses Khaleda of inciting, patronising violence; warns against provocative comments in TV talk shows; rejects call for talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government would sue BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for "instigating, patronising and financing" the ongoing violence that left around 70 people dead in the country.

She also warned that actions would be taken against civil society members who would make provocative comments in television talk-shows.

Replying to a lawmaker's query in parliament, Hasina said, "Many cases have been filed against her [Khaleda]. Investigation is going on. Proper punishment will be handed down to her if she is found guilty. Her trial will take place in the country."

She said there was no doubt that the BNP chief had "involvement" in patronising and financing the recent subversive activities.

Hasina, also the leader of the House, said the government had been intensively monitoring the "subversive activities" committed by the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

"I want to tell through this House that we will be as tough as necessary to resist those resorting to subversive activities," she said.

Replying to another query, she said the government would take all measures to try those who had been resorting to firebomb attacks and violence.

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## Hunger strike Saturday to protest unrest

RMG makers, transport owners, workers to join

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Garment makers along with transport vehicles owners, insurers and bankers will go on a token hunger strike on Saturday, demanding an end to the political limbo that has been inflicting great damage to their businesses.

The hunger strike, which will be observed in front of the headquarters of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, will start at 11am and will go on until the evening.

The decision to go on a hunger strike was taken yesterday at the joint

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HELP IN CATCHING BOMB-ATTACKERS

## Three BCL men awarded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police yesterday rewarded three Chhatra League leaders with Tk 50,000 for catching a Chhatra Dal leader who was fleeing after blasting crude bombs in Bakshibazar on January 7.

A rickshaw puller was also given Tk 1 lakh for helping arrest another person who blasted bombs near the capital's Kataban Baitul Aman mosque on Monday night.

The three BCL leaders are Nahian Khan Joy, general secretary of Dhaka University's Jahurul Haq Hall BCL, Ruhul Amin, general secretary of AF Rahman Hall unit, and Yeaz-al-Riad, general secretary of Bangabandhu Hall unit.

On the evening of January 7, they saw Raju Ahmed Raj and his friend Saddam, both DU unit JCD leaders, on a rickshaw in Bakshibazar area, Riad said.

The BCL men wanted to catch them but they tried to flee, blasting three crude bombs. They, however, captured Raju and handed him over to the police, while Saddam fled.



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## 'BCL man' hurt while making bombs

BCL denies his link with it

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

An alleged activist of Chhatra League had his three fingers of the left hand blown off in a blast while "making crude bombs" at his house at Dhaoyakola Namapara of Bogra Sadar upazila.

The injured, Khairul Islam Sohag, a first year BA (pass course) student at



Sohag

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