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MACHINE READABLE PASSPORTS

30 lakh expats may lose jobs

No encouraging progress from Malaysian contractor as Nov 24 deadline draws nearer

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and BELAL HOSSAIN BIPOB

About 30 lakh Bangladeshi migrant workers could lose their jobs and face deportation as they would be carrying the old passports after the November 24 global deadline, when only machine readable passports would be acceptable.

Malaysian company IRIS Corporation Berhad, assigned to enrol the expatriates for MRPs, has failed to perform and is to be blamed for the looming disaster, said officials at the expatriates welfare ministry.

The government was supposed to take the issue seriously and ensure that all expatriates get the MRP before the deadline, set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

From November 25 onwards, foreign governments might not accept the old passports. Expatriates carrying them might first lose their jobs and then get deported, fear officials at different foreign missions.

According to the expatriates welfare and overseas employment ministry, an estimated 60 lakh expatriate workers live abroad, most of them in the Middle-East.

Of them, 20 lakh expatriate workers have MRPs.

With the current pace of MRP issuance, some nine lakh more could have MRPs before November 24, which would leave some 30 lakh people with

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Sanga walks away happy

REUTERS, Sydney

Kumar Sangakkara bid farewell to limited-overs cricket on Wednesday, disappointed with a World Cup quarterfinal defeat but happy that Sri Lanka were in a better place than when he came into the side in 2000.

The elegant left-hander scored 45 runs against South Africa to take his tournament tally to 541, including his record four successive centuries, but it never looked like being enough as Sri Lanka were blown away at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

"It's disappointing to lose but to win against a side like South Africa we have to do really well," he told reporters.

"If you take our innings, it was a lot of stop starts, but a lot of wickets falling together... We weren't good enough today.

"Someone has got to lose in a quarterfinal. It's a do-or-die situation. Disappointments are a part of our career, and you just take it on the chin and move on."

The 37-year-old, who will continue playing Tests, departs having accumulated 14,234 one-day runs -- second only to Indian great

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'Dreams have no end'

BISHWAJIT ROY from Melbourne

The Yarra River, which runs right through the middle of Melbourne, flowed gently yesterday. The city life buzzed just like any other occasion. As you turn the pages of the local newspapers one can't help but be puzzled about the lack of coverage. Is there a big cricket game due on Thursday?

However, the people from the sub-continent, excitedly flocking around the Melbourne Cricket Stadium, would give you a

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different impression. None of them, both fans from India and Bangladesh, could wait for the ultimate face-off between the two sides at the MCG today.

The last few days have seen fans from both sides almost go head-to-head on the social media with

videos and posts elaborating their side's advantages. One thing's that for certain is that the Yarra Park, surrounding the MCG, would definitely get into its festive groove well before

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TOTAL expatriate workers	MRP given to	REST to be given in	DISMAL PERFORMANC OF IRIS		
60 lakh	20 lakh	8 months	Country	Enrolled	MRP delivered
			Saudi Arabia	15,410	568
			UAE	6,477	2,513
			Malaysia	61,922	57,794

TOP QUOTE

"2007 won't help; 2011, when we lost, won't help either. In short-form cricket, what's important is how you do on the day."

BANGLADESH SKIPPER
MASHRAFE BIN MORTAZA
AHEAD OF TIGERS' QUARTERFINAL CLASH WITH INDIA

Dhaka, Ctg city polls on Apr 28

EC asks aspirants to remove posters in 48 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Elections to Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations will be held on April 28, according to the polls schedule announced yesterday.

Mayoral and councillor aspirants can file applications from today till March 29 seeking candidature in the polls.

More than 42 lakh voters are entitled to exercise franchise in the long-overdue polls to Dhaka north and south city corporations and over 18 lakh voters in Chittagong.

They are to elect three mayors and 179 councillors for the three city corporations.

Announcing the schedule at a press conference, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad sought wholehearted support from all political parties and city dwellers to hold the polls in a free and fair manner.

"Electoral laws and the code of conduct are the major things. We urge all aspiring candidates to follow these rules for the holding of free and fair elections," he said at the Election Commission Secretariat.

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CITY CORPORATIONS ELECTIONS 2015

Last date of filing nomination
MARCH 29

Nomination scrutiny
APRIL 1 AND 2

Last date of nomination withdrawal
APRIL 9

Symbol allocation
APRIL 10

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