



## WORLD'S HUNGRY PEOPLE

The number falls below 800m, as the UN targets zero hunger in a generation

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## 'AUTO-FIT' SHAHID

Bangladesh's newest international pacer claims fitness was never an issue for him

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MRP WORRY FOR EXPATS

## Trips so funny

Top trouble-shooters take wrong flights, far away from crisis

M ABUL KALAM AZAD

They are keen on visiting European countries, the United States, Australia and Canada but not Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Malaysia, where they are needed the most to ensure new passports for all expatriates.

Important people like State Minister for Home Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, Senior Home Secretary Md Mozammel Haq Khan and Project Director of Machine Readable Passport (MRP) Brig Gen Masud Rezwan are going overseas frequently "to inaugurate MRP" in different countries.

However, they are not going to the three countries where the MRP issuance is in trouble.

They discuss the MRP crisis in the three countries but do not feel the need to go there. Thanks to Malaysian company IRIS, about 30 lakh expatriates are likely to not get the new passports in time in those countries, which will jeopardise their jobs and future there. They may even be deported.

As the MRP issuance to expatriates is

riddled with problems due to IRIS's inefficiency and irregularities, the state minister in a meeting on April 15 decided to send the senior secretary to Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Malaysia to identify the problems and resolve them.

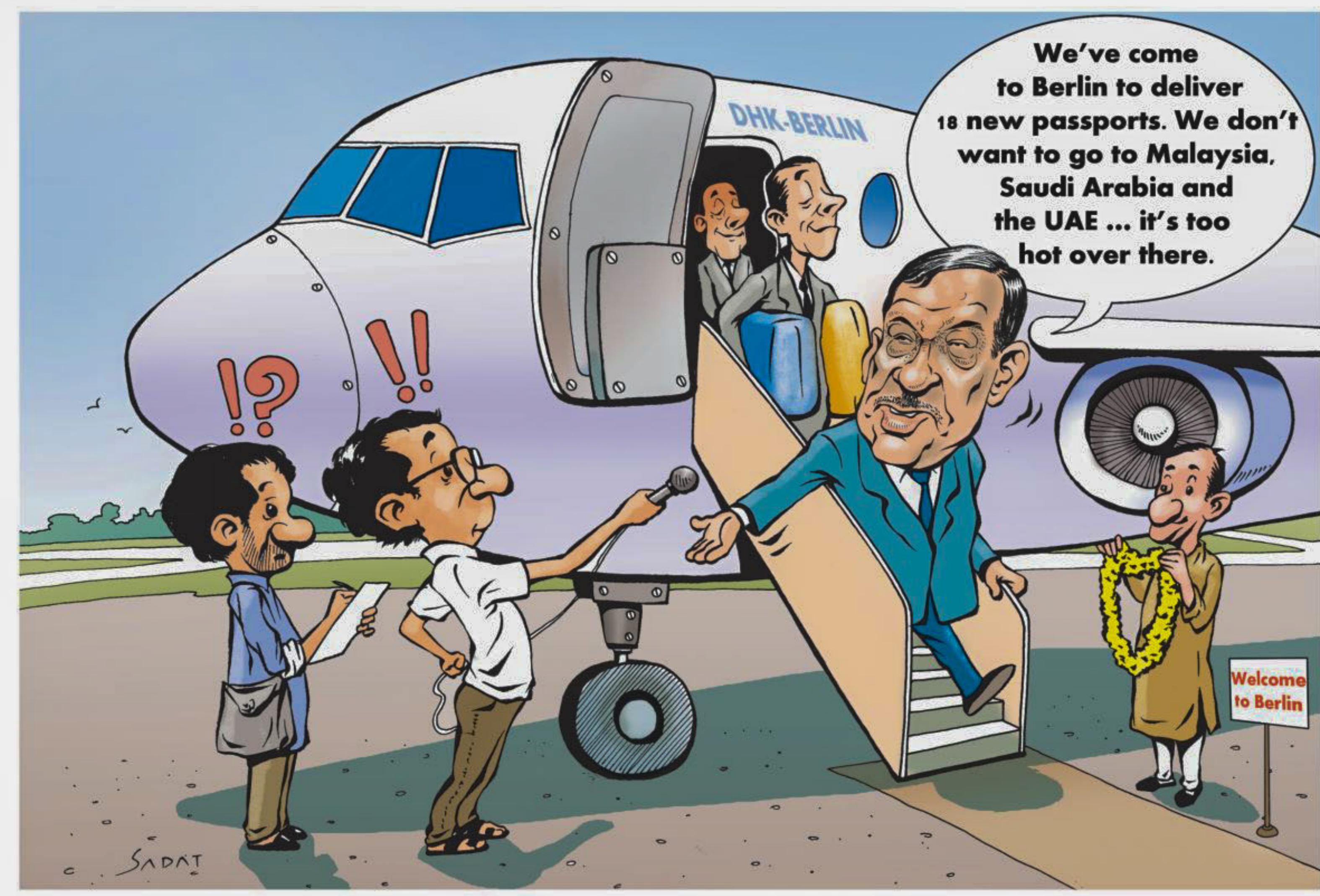
But the senior home secretary preferred to visit Europe and the USA instead, regarding a project of Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Mozammel Haq returned home over a week ago after visiting Italy, the UK, Switzerland and the USA.

The state minister left for Germany early Tuesday with his private secretary Harun-or-Rashid Biswas, the MRP project director, and the additional secretary (planning) of the home ministry to "deliver 18 MRPs" to expatriates.

Mozammel Haq cannot go to Saudi Arabia or Malaysia now as being the senior secretary he has to shoulder the responsibility of the ministry in the state minister's absence, home ministry officials said.

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## 8 'traffickers' caught

STAR REPORT

Law enforcement agencies yesterday arrested eight alleged human traffickers from Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

Police nabbed three "human traffickers" and rescued two India-bound victims from Bank Colony area under EPZ Police Station in Chittagong city, a staff correspondent of Chittagong reports.

The arrestees are Mohammad Selim, 25, of

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## Rohingyas whisked away

Report reveals how Myanmar's seized boat was made to look 'full of Bangladeshis'

REUTERS

When the Myanmar navy seized a boat used by people smugglers last week, it announced that the 200 people found aboard were mostly Bangladeshis seeking better economic prospects in Southeast Asia.

The message was clear -- that very few of the people on the boat, and by extension in the wave of Asian "boatpeople" drifting on the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea, were members of Myanmar's Rohingya minority. Myanmar denies discriminating against the Rohingya or that they are fleeing persecution.

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But in interviews with Reuters, people who were on the boat said between 150-200 Rohingya were aboard at one point. Many were quietly whisked away by the traffickers in the week before the navy brought the ship to shore, they said. The number is far larger than what Reuters reported previously.

"All of the Rohingya got off the ship. The Bangladeshis stayed behind," said a 27-year-old Rohingya woman who was on the boat with her five children. All six of them returned to their village of Thek Kay Pyn before the ship was seized last Thursday.

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## Rohingyas forced to leave Myanmar

Says HRW, urges countries to look into the root cause of the Rohingya plight

CNN ONLINE

Advocacy group Human Rights Watch (HRW) has alleged that some of the thousands of displaced boat people -- many of whom are still stranded at sea -- were forcibly removed from their homes and put on migrant ships.

The agency has collated witness reports from Rohingya Muslims -- a minority which endures persecution in Myanmar -- who say they were forced to leave the

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## Refugee camps to be moved to Hatiya

STAR REPORT

The government has planned to relocate thousands of registered Rohingya refugees living in refugee camps in Cox's Bazar for over two decades to Hatiya of Noakhali.

"The relocation of the Rohingya camps will definitely take place. So far informal steps have been taken according to directives of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina," Amit Kumar Baul, head of the government's Myanmar Refugee Cell, told AFP yesterday.

The move was partly prompted by concerns the camps were holding back tourism in Cox's Bazar, where locals flock to beach hotels and resorts, said Baul.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mohammad Abdullah, divisional commissioner of Chittagong, said they primarily selected some land in Hatiya for the relocation, but it was

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PHOTO: REUTERS

Members of a police forensic team carry a body bag with human remains exhumed from a grave near an abandoned human trafficking camp in a jungle close to the Thailand border at Bukit Wang Burma in northern Malaysia yesterday.

## WOMEN, CHILDREN REPRESSION

## Crimes aplenty but conviction rate low

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Filing of false cases, lack of evidence, out of court settlements and weak police investigation are some of the main reasons for low conviction rate under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000, according to a research.

The study shows that from 2009 to 2014, the overall conviction rate of the Nari-o-Shishu Nirjaton Daman (Women and Children Repression Prevention) Tribunals of Dhaka, Comilla and Pabna was only 0.86 percent.

This means, no one was convicted in 99.14 percent cases.

During the same period, 37,915 cases were filed in the three districts under the

### REASONS FOR LOW CONVICTION RATE

- Filing of false cases
- Lack of evidence
- Out of court settlement
- Weak police probe
- Case backlog
- Dissatisfactory role of prosecution

law, 22,073 (58.22 percent) cases were disposed of, 21,492 cases saw acquittal, dismissal or out of court settlements and 186 cases saw conviction.

The statistics were shared at a programme at the Brac Centre yesterday, where the research report on "Reasons behind low conviction rate and legislative inconsistencies in the Violence Against Women (VAW) cases" was released.

The research project, implemented by Brac University's School of Law, was conducted with data collected from seven Nari-o-Shishu Nirjaton Daman Tribunals of Dhaka, Comilla and Pabna.

The six-month study was done with

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143-year-old law needs change

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Law Commission wants the repeal of a draconian provision of the Evidence Act of 1872, which permits a man accused of rape to question the character of the victim to defend himself during trial.

Section 155 (4) of the act says, "... when a man is prosecuted for rape or an attempt to ravish, it may be shown that the prosecutrix [the girl or the woman who has been raped] was of generally immoral character."

The British had enacted the evidence act in 1872 with this provision, which still remains in force.

The commission is now drafting proposals for a new evidence law to replace the colonial era evidence act,

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## MASS GRAVES IN MALAYSIA

## Locals contradict govt's version

AGENCIES

Malaysia's government has expressed shock at finding human-trafficking camps and graves near the Thai border, but for local villagers the clues were right there in plain sight.

Sani is one of many residents of the remote area in Perlis state who say that starving illegal migrants -- some bearing

signs of mistreatment -- have for years staggered from nearby thickly jungled hills, where a network of graves and camps was recently found.

Their accounts stand in stark contrast to those of Malaysian authorities -- long accused by activists of tolerating an abusive and deadly regional human-trafficking trade -- who claim the grisly discovery came

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