

Multiple entry Indian visa for businessmen of Saarc region

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India is all set to issue multi-city, multiple-entry business visa to businessmen of Saarc countries beginning from April 1.

The business visa, to be called "India Business Card", is expected to be granted for a period of up to five years or for a shorter duration as per the requirement of the businessmen of member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc).

"We are planning to launch it [the business visa] by April 1," said a senior Indian home ministry official yesterday.

Pakistani entrepreneurs seeking special business visa, known as "India business card", for the Saarc nations should run an enterprise worth one crore Indian rupees and should have an annual income of at least 10 lakh Pakistani rupees to be eligible for a three-year multiple entry card.

The other condition is that one should be a member of any chamber of commerce in Pakistan that is recognised by India.

Other than Pakistan, there are no visa conditions for rest of the Saarc countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. Nationals from Bhutan and Nepal do not require a visa for India.

But there are reliefs for Pakistani travellers too. Pakistanis availing the facility can travel to 15 cities for three years.

Currently, they are eligible for multiple-entry business visa for a maximum period of one year and can only travel to 10 places.

Under the new scheme, Pakistani entrepreneurs will be exempted from reporting at the local police station, a must for Pakistanis coming to India on any other visa now.



Relatives of the victims of a fire crying inconsolably at the DMCH burn unit. The blaze, believed to have originated from accumulated gas, killed two members of a family and burnt three others inside their apartment at Uttara in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Gas fire at house kills 2 children

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"Opening my eyes, I only saw fire all around."

The condition of the couple, who are receiving treatment at the High Dependency Unit, is very critical, said Munny Momotaz, duty doctor of the burn unit.

They had suffered burns in their respiratory tracks.

Firemen and police said the fire started as accumulated gas came into contact with a flame.

Ali Hossain Khan, officer-in-charge of Uttara Paschim Police Station, said they found in primary investigation that the fire was caused by accumulated gas. But they are yet to be sure whether there was a gas line leak or somebody forgot to turn off the burner.

Hamim said the family moved in to the residence on the top floor of the seven-storey building at Sector-13 from Sector-5 in Uttara just a week ago.

Shah Newaz, sensing emission of gas, made several complaints to the

house owner about the "faulty gas line". The owner did not take it seriously, saying such emissions often occur, Hamim alleged.

The casualties took place, of course, due to the negligence of the house owner, he said.

The house owner, Mirza Delwar Hossain, who visited the victims at DMCH, however, claimed that he repaired the gas line on receiving the complaints.

"I do not know what caused the

incident," he said.

Mozammel Hoque, deputy director of Dhaka Division Fire Service & Civil Defence, told The Daily Star that to prevent such incidents, residents have to ensure there is sufficient ventilation in kitchen and the burner is turned off when they go to bed.

They also should open all the windows before lighting stoves in the morning, he said. Besides, the gas lines have to be checked at least once a month.

Scam-hit FIFA gets new chief

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before the first round.

The Congress was given tough warnings before the vote that the result and a series of agreed reforms had to convince a world shocked by several years of corruption scandals and doubts about World Cup bidding.

International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach said football and all sports had to improve governance.

"Today you have this great chance to turn the page," he told the congress. "We need to give new answers to the new questions with regards to credibility and good governance."

Earlier a reform package was

adopted by 179 members, while 22 voted against and six abstained.

The measures are designed to limit the authority of the new president and his deputies and end the patronage and waste that prevailed during Blatter's 18-year term.

The president's job has been altered to function like a corporate chairman of the board, providing strategic guidance but with less management authority.

FIFA's executive committee, which had become an epicentre of graft allegations, has been re-branded as a FIFA council. It will operate like a corporate board of directors.

Measures such as declaring the salary of the new president to improve financial transparency were also included.

After several years of suspicions, scandal erupted at FIFA when seven top officials were arrested at a FIFA congress in May last year.

Infantino will face immediate financial problems.

Acting Secretary general Markus Kattner said "general uncertainty" following the crisis had created tough economic times and FIFA was roughly \$550 million (500 million euros) behind in its \$5 billion budget plan for 2015-2018.

Infantino has proposed increasing the World Cup from 32 to 40

teams and to more than double the amount given back to the 209 national associations to more than one billion dollars in total every four years.

Sheikh Salman, who is seen as closer to the FIFA old guard, had said the proposal could bankrupt FIFA.

Infantino countered that his proposals were far from reckless and that his record at UEFA proved his credibility as a financial manager.

"When I speak about figures...I know what I am speaking about," he said.

Blatter, 79, was the big absentee at the congress. The Swiss sports baron suffered a spectacular fall over the last nine months. Swiss

police, acting under US warrants, arrested seven FIFA officials in Zurich two days before his re-election last May. Blatter has since been banned from football for six years for ethics breaches and could face criminal charges.

Each of the rivals went into the vote with political problems.

Infantino was for seven years the right-hand man of Michel Platini, the UEFA president also banned for six years for ethics breaches.

Sheikh Salman had faced tough questions about the clampdown on pro-democracy protests in the Gulf state. He has called allegations made by human rights groups "nasty lies."

QUARREL WITH HUSBAND Woman takes own life after poisoning two children

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

After giving poison to her two children, a woman allegedly committed suicide by taking poison over a quarrel with her husband in Hargaj-Beparipara village of Saturia upazila on Thursday night.

The dead, Rahima Akter, 28, was the wife of Rahim Uddin.

Their daughter Taslima Akte Meghla, 8, and son Akash, 5, are fighting for their lives at Manikganj Sadar Hospital.

Locals said Rahima's husband is a construction worker. They have two kids. Rahima and her husband Rahim often quarrelled with each other over family affairs. On Wednesday night, a quarrel broke out between the two again.

Following the quarrel, Rahima first administered poison to her children around 9:00pm on Thursday, telling them that it was medicine for cough. She then took poison herself. When their neighbours noticed it, they took the three to Saturia Upazila Health Complex.

Nobody was at home during the incident, according to locals.

On-duty doctors declared Rahima dead and referred the two kids to Manikganj Sadar Hospital as their condition was critical.

Doctor Anisur Rahman of the hospital said they found the presence of pesticides in the stomachs of the children. They were giving treatment properly, but they were not out of danger.

Rahima's husband Rahim went into hiding soon after the incident.

The body of Rahima was sent to Manikganj Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy, said Habibullah Sarker, officer-in-charge of Saturia Police Station.

A case was filed.

Family of Chinese MH370 victim sue Malaysia Airlines

AFP, Beijing

Two family members of a Chinese passenger who disappeared on flight MH370 have filed suit against Malaysia Airlines, a Beijing court said yesterday, as a two-year deadline to do so approaches on March 8.

The case was successfully registered at the Beijing Rail Transportation Court, the court said in a statement on its official website.

Citing the plaintiff, it read: "According to the Montreal Convention and the relevant laws and regulations, Malaysia Airlines is requested to provide compensation of 4.7 million yuan (\$719,000) in relation to the plane crash."

The family was notified about the crash on March 8, 2015 -- exactly a year after the incident, the plaintiff added, according to the statement.

The victim, surnamed Wang, had been one of 239 people on the fateful overnight flight from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing, which vanished soon after take-off. More than 150 of the passengers onboard were Chinese nationals.

Investigators believe the plane diverted and crashed in the southern Indian Ocean, but neither a crash site nor cause have been confirmed.

Under international agreements, families have two years to sue over air accidents.

Several US, Malaysian and Australian law firms told AFP they had begun filing suit on behalf of dozens of relatives, seeking undisclosed damages.

Bowlers do the job

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For all the excellence of the bowlers, they must thank Riyad for giving them a total to defend. Riyad executed a fine paddle past the fine-leg fence off the very first ball of the final over and then the right-hander slog-swept spinner Mustafa for six over midwicket, resulting in a total of 17 runs coming from the last over. Bangladesh ended the first session with momentum on their side through Riyad's 27-ball 36, though at one stage 160 looked like a reality.

Some clean hits from opener Mohammad Mithun in his otherwise erratic batting display provided the home side an opportunity to post a

big total as Bangladesh reached 74 for two after 10 overs. But after Mithun's ridiculous run out, the two most experienced batsmen in Mushfiqur Rahim and Shakib Al Hasan were not able to take charge.

Mushfiqur was dismissed for 4 after playing eight balls as UAE stormed back into the match. He tried to hit a short and wide delivery from Mohammad Naveed through point, but only succeeded in nicking it to the keeper. A streaky innings from Shakib soon ended in ungainly fashion when he was bowled by a stump-high full toss from Amjad Javed.

Mithun however was in a position to carry the Bangladesh batting to a

big total after a shaky start. The right-hander was the top scorer in Bangladesh's innings with a 41-ball 47 but his dismissal -- if not the shaky nature of his innings -- raised many eyebrows. When he was required to stick around, Mithun set off for a run aimlessly as if he was playing street cricket and was promptly run out.

Mithun could have gotten out off the very first ball when he fished at a delivery outside off. Fortunately, the ball went along the ground to slip. Mithun had another reprieve as he was dropped on 10, trying to clear mid-off. However he played some magnificent shots to enthrall the crowd.

He dispatched a short delivery from Amjad with disdain and then thrashed a delivery outside off through the gap at point for four. Later, his timing was on full display as the right-hander flicked Shahzad into the stands behind midwicket in majestic fashion. The next one was a poor delivery from Shahzad and Mithun punished it for four with a flick.

The other opener, Soumya Sarkar, also looked to get rid of his long bad patch and struck a monster hit over square leg to regain the form he displayed during the ODI contests last year, but off the very next ball he hit uppishly straight to

mid-on off Shahzad, walking back with 21 runs.

The in-form Sabbir Rahman also struggled and was dismissed for 6 off 12 balls. Mustafa tossed the ball up on middle and leg and Sabbir came down to clout it, but the ball only reached as far as a few metres inside the midwicket fence where Fahad Tariq took an easy catch.

UAE bowled with some bite on the sporting wicket, but it was again the Bangladesh batting which lacked sensibility and firepower. Riyad's finishing touch was brilliantly aided by the pacers to paper over the cracks and finish the match on a happy note.



Senior police officials yesterday displaying weapons claimed to have been used in the recent murder of a Hindu priest in Panchagarh. The machete, inset, had 'blood stains' that looked surprisingly fresh even five days into the incident.

PHOTO: STAR

'Breakthrough' in priest killing

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Shonto Gauro Temple at Debiganj's Sonapota, on the early morning of February 21.

Two devotees were injured as the criminals fired shots and exploded homemade bombs while fleeing. The injured are now under treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

QUESTIONS OVER MACHETE

Some weapons -- including a Japanese 9mm pistol, a US-made pistol of 7.65 bore, three cocktails, five bullets, three magazines, two knives and a blood-stained machete -- were displayed on a table to the media during the briefing.

The DIG claimed those were used in the murder.

However, the blood stains on the machete still looked red. Under normal circumstances, the stains should have dried up and blackened by now.

When journalists asked the DIG about it, Humayun Kabir dodged the question.

Immediately after the murder, police claimed to have recovered a blood-stained machete from the crime scene.

newspaper made several calls to the DIG and Gias Ahmed, superintendent of police of Panchagarh district. But neither of them answered the calls.

However, a source in the local police said the machete showed to journalists was the one recovered from the murderscene.

Asked why the blood stains on the machete were still fresh, he said the machete "was preserved under special arrangements".

He would not say what the "special arrangements" were.

The source requested anonymity as he was not authorised to talk to the media about the issue.

On the other hand, DIG Humayun Kabir last night told BBC Bangla that the machete was recovered during the raids the night before.

NO DETAILS ON RAIDS
A day after the murder, police said they had arrested three suspects -- Khalilur Rahman, 45, Babul Hossain, 30, and Jahangir.

firearms and explosives.

Based on information gleaned from them, police conducted the raids on Thursday night and arrested the three "key suspects", said DIG Humayun Kabir at the press briefing yesterday.

Asked where exactly the raids were conducted, he refused to give details.

The chief of Rangpur range police went on to claim that police seized a bicycle used by some of the attackers to keep an eye on the area when the priest was being murdered.

However, the red motorcycle of Bajaj brand used by the killers could not be found yet, he added.

PROTESTS ON

Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajot yesterday formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, demanding capital punishment for the killers of the priest.

They also brought out a procession that marched the nearby streets.

The platform demanded that the government form a permanent commission for conducting investigations into attacks on the members of ethnic and religious minorities in the country.