

Gone broke for broker

Promised salary, job not there once jobseekers landed in Oman, Kuwait

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPLAB

Hashem Rahman made a Tk 3.5 lakh contract with a local broker in Comilla to get a restaurant job in Oman in 2015. His poor family managed the money by selling a small piece of land, cattle and by borrowing money from relatives and neighbours.

Unfortunately, Hashem could not make a fortune there. He is now regretting for making the deal with the broker.

"When I reached Oman, a dalal [broker] took me with some other Bangladeshis to a dormitory where I was kept for three nights," said the man who is from Comilla's Daudkandi.

One night, he said, the owner of the restaurant where he was supposed to work came and seized their passports and took them to a government office to verify the documents. The next day he took them to their place of work.

As the kitchen was still under construction, the owner asked Hashem to work in a construction firm until the kitchen was ready. Though Hashem took up the job, he came to know from other Bangladeshis working there that the company didn't pay regular salaries.

"Like me, many of them were supposed to be working in a restaurant, but were forced to work in the construction field. This situation left me completely hopeless."

He worked there for one month, but didn't get any salary. Whenever he asked, the owner said it would be given later.

On days when there was little work at the construction site, Hashem was assigned small jobs like working in a vegetable garden.

"One day I was forced to climb a tree to trim some branches. Suddenly I fell from the tree and became unconscious. I was taken to a hospital where I

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A truck dangerously loaded with iron rods, some more than twice the length of the truck bed, travels near Sonargaon intersection on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. A few rags were tied to the end of the rods as warning to other traffic. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Two killed in 'crossfire'

STAR REPORT

Two men -- an alleged robber and a suspected drug peddler -- were killed in two separate "gunfights" with policemen in Brahmanbaria and Feni yesterday.

With this the total number of people killed in "gunfights", "shootouts" or "crossfire" across the country from January till yesterday rose to 55, according to rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra and The Daily Star reports.

The deceased robber was identified as Zahirul Islam, 35, of Kayempur village under Kashba Upazila in Brahmanbaria.

A team of police launched a drive at Kayempur village in Kasba Upazila around 4:00am yesterday after they came to know that robbers were preparing for a robbery there, Mahiuddin Ahammed, officer-in-charge (OC) of Kasba Police Station said.

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VIOLENCE ON ROHINGYAS China, Russia block UNSC statement

REUTERS, United Nations

China, backed by Russia, blocked a short UN Security Council statement on Myanmar on Friday, diplomats said, after the 15-member body met to discuss the situation in Rakhine state, where the country's military is conducting a security operation.

The UN human rights office last month accused the military of mass killings and rapes of Rohingya Muslims and burning their villages since October in a campaign that "very likely" amounts to crimes against humanity and possibly ethnic cleansing.

UN political affairs chief Jeffrey Feltman briefed the council behind closed doors. Britain requested the meeting.

"We did put forward... some proposed press elements but there was not consensus in the room," British UN Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, president of the council for March, told reporters after the briefing.

Such statements have to be agreed by consensus. Diplomats said Myanmar neighbor China, backed by Russia, blocked the statement.

The short draft press statement, seen by Reuters, would have "noted with concern renewed fighting in some parts of the country and stressed the importance of humanitarian access to all affected areas."

Some 75,000 people have fled Rakhine state to Bangladesh since Myanmar's military began a security operation last October in response to what it says was an attack by Rohingya insurgents on border posts in which nine police officers were killed.

The European Union called on Thursday for the United Nations to send an international fact-finding mission urgently to Myanmar to investigate allegations of torture, rapes and executions by the military against the Rohingya Muslim.

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SITAKUNDA RAID Police quizzing 'militant couple'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday recovered 12 bombs and a huge cache of bomb-making materials from the militants' hideout "Chhayaneer" in Sitakunda where four militants were killed during a raid on Thursday.

The militants' den was sealed off at the end of an operation named "Assault-16".

A bomb disposal unit along with forces from the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) entered the den around 11:45am yesterday and searched the three-room flat on the ground floor in Premtala area till 4:30pm.

As a large amount of explosives littered the rooms, the den was sealed off on Thursday night to avert any untoward explosion, said Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Shafiqur Rahman of Chittagong Range.

During the search, 12 bombs, five jars each containing 40 litres of Hydrogen Peroxide and 50 litres of acid were found in the front room of the flat, said the DIG.

"It will take several days to deactivate the bombs," he added.

The police have meanwhile started interrogating the militant couple -- Jasim

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Trump refuses to shake Merkel's hand

AGENCIES



Donald Trump has apparently refused to shake Angela Merkel's hand during a joint appearance at the White House.

Stark differences between the two leaders on everything from trade to immigration were in full view during an icy first meeting at the White House Friday.

In a frequently awkward joint press conference, Trump and Merkel showed little common ground as they addressed a host of thorny issues including Nato, defense spending and free trade deals.

For most of the 30 minutes in the East Room, Merkel was stony-faced as Trump ripped into Washington's Nato allies for not paying for their "fair share" for transatlantic defense and demanded "fair and reciprocal trade" deals.

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AL leader held over 'molestation' of schoolgirl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An Awami League leader of the capital's Sabujhbagh was arrested after a class X student filed a case yesterday accusing him of molesting her in his Bashabo office on March 13.

General secretary of the party's ward 5 unit in the area, Masud Parvez Akanda, 45, is also a managing committee member of Kadamtola Purba Basabo School and College.

The victim claimed that Masud called her to his office in the afternoon saying he wanted to discuss matters related to her examinations, Sabujhbagh Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abdul Kuddus Fakir told The Daily Star.

Once inside, he started molesting her and at one point she managed to

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Law enforcers frisk a man and check his vehicle at the entrance of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Inset, policemen check a biker's documents just across the Airport Road as security was heightened in and around the airport yesterday following a suspected suicide attack at a Rab barrack in Ashkona.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

396 more homes get power in Rajshahi

BSS, Rajshahi

A total of 396 more households, including some charitable organisations, got new power connections in nine villages under Charghat upazilas of the district on Friday.

In this connection, local office of Rural Electrification Board (REB) installed 6,058 kilometers of power distribution line and 31 transformers at a cost of around Taka 18.02 crore.

State Minister for

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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 19

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN	5-00	12-45	4-30	6-14	7-45
JAMAAT	5-35	1-15	4-45	6-18	8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SECURITY SCARE AT PARIS AIRPORT

Man shot dead after he seized soldier's gun

Same 'radicalised Muslim' man, known to police, earlier shot a cop

AGENCIES, Paris

Security forces shot dead a man who tried to seize a soldier's gun at Paris Orly airport yesterday, forcing the evacuation of the busy airport and putting security back in the spotlight in the middle of France's presidential election campaign.

The man, identified as a 39-year-old radicalised Muslim Ziyed Ben Belgacem, who was already on the radar of police and intelligence services, had earlier shot and wounded a police officer with an air gun after a routine traffic stop north of Paris, officials said.

"Put your weapons down, hands on your head, I'm here to die for Allah. In any case people are going to die," Ziyed Ben Belgacem told the troops, according to Paris prosecutor Francois Molins.

Before attacking the soldier at the airport, Ben Belgacem "threw to the ground a backpack containing a can of petrol", Molins said, adding the man had in his pocket a packet of cigarettes and a lighter, 750 euros (\$805) and a Koran, AFP reports.

"The two minutes (of confrontation) with the soldiers demonstrate quite clearly the very strong determination of the attacker," Molins said.

With the country in the throes of a highly-charged election campaign after two years of attacks on civilians and public targets by Islamic State militants -- several of them in Paris -- the anti-terrorism prosecutor opened an

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