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Expat workers in Singapore face trouble

2 Singaporean NGOs send a report to UN on forced labour, debt bondage of Bangladeshis

PORIMOL PALMA

Two Singaporean NGOs have sent a report to the United Nations, detailing that Bangladeshi expatriate workers face forced labour and debt bondage, but Bangladesh is not doing enough to protect them.

The Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME) and Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2) sent the joint shadow report to the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW) early this month.

The UN committee meets in Geneva next month to review Bangladesh's commitment to protecting its migrant workers under the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

The HOME has provided legal aid, employment advice and financial assistance to 776 Bangladeshis, while TWC2 has provided services to 2,834 Bangladeshis in last two years.

The experiences of handling the cases, personal interviews and surveys helped them understand the extent of

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(From L) Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Soumya Sarkar and Mosaddek Hossain train with a football during a practice session at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium, where Bangladesh will take on Sri Lanka in the first ODI of the three-match series starting at 3:00pm (BST) today.

Upbeat Tigers look for ODI success

SAKEB SUBHAN from Dambulla

The ongoing tour of Sri Lanka seems to have a recurring theme -- that of Bangladesh confounding expectations. In the first Test at Galle, there was the expectation that Bangladesh would play well there as they made their highest Test score to date there in 2013, but they came up with one of their worst Test batting performances in recent memory. At the P Sara Oval in Colombo the situation was reversed as Bangladesh had three innings defeats to look back upon at the venue, but they put in one of their best sustained performances in a Test to win their 100th. That trend bodes well for Bangladesh fans as in the series-opening ODI today starting at 3:00pm (Bangladesh time), they will be playing at a venue where they have lost all their matches by big margins.

Bangladesh have played

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Ex-husband held over Arifa killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives have arrested Fokhrul Islam Robin, the lone suspect in the murder of his former wife Arifa Nesa Arifa, an employee of a private bank in the capital.

Robin was held from a distant relative's home in Dhanbari upazila of Tangail early yesterday, said Abdul Baten, joint commissioner of Detective Branch of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

During primary interrogation, Robin confessed to stabbing Arifa in the throat in front of her rented flat in the city's Central Road area on March 16, Baten told a press briefing at the DMP media centre.

Arifa married her childhood friend Robin without her parents' consent and then quickly became disillusioned as she was subjected to abuse and torture. She finally divorced him marriage last year.

Robin had since been pestering her to get back together. But she was firm in her decision, which infuriated him, the



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TERROR ATTACK NEAR UK PARLIAMENT

Police make 2 new 'significant' arrests

Raids on as Londoners vow not to bow down to terror

AFP, London

British police yesterday said they had made two further "significant" arrests over the Islamist-inspired terror attack on parliament, as they appealed for information about the homegrown killer who left four people dead.

Nine people are now in custody over Wednesday's rampage in Westminster, in which at least 50 people were injured, 31 requiring hospital treatment, counter-terrorism commander Mark Rowley said.

Police have searched 16 addresses, with five more raids still underway, mainly in London and the central city of Birmingham, where the attacker reportedly lived and near where he rented the car used in the assault.

The police officer also revealed the attacker's birth name as Adrian Russell Ajao, after naming him Thursday as Khalid Masood, a 52-year-old who used "a number of aliases" and had a history of violent offences but no terrorist convictions.

The Islamic State group claimed the assailant behind Britain's deadliest terror attack in 12 years was one of its "soldiers" acting on a call to target countries in the US-led coalition fighting the jihadists.

Prime Minister Theresa May has said that Masood was known to intelligence services as a "peripheral" figure some years ago but there was no warning of his intention to mount an attack.

Rowley yesterday said that police were trying to establish whether Masood acted totally alone "or if others have encouraged, supported or directed him".

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TEESTA DEAL

Indian govt rejects claim of Mamata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The Indian government yesterday rejected the claim of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee that she was not being consulted on the Teesta water-sharing treaty with Bangladesh.

"I would not like to comment on the remarks of the [West Bengal] chief minister in the interview. At this stage, I can only make some remarks in general. As you have seen, the approach of the [federal] government is quite cooperative federalism," said Gopal Baglay, spokesman for the ministry of external affairs.

"The leadership of the government has been to put a lot of emphasis on cooperative federalism," he told the weekly media

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Jane Austen faked her marriage twice



AFP, London

British author Jane Austen, known the world over for her insightful take on 19th century society, created fake marriage documents with two separate men, archives have revealed.

In her novels, Austen wove tales of heroines navigating the patriarchal customs of the time to find stability and social status through advantageous marriages.

But the author herself never wed.

However, two fake marriage entries, written by Austen herself and announcing her union with two men believed to be imaginary, will soon go on

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SC BAR POLLS

BNP-backed lawyers take 8 of 14 posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-BNP lawyers have won eight posts, including that of president and secretary, out of 14 posts of the annual Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) election.

BNP leaders advocate Zainul Abedin and barrister AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon have been elected SCBA president and secretary respectively.

Pro-Awami League lawyers have obtained the rest six posts, including that of treasurer and a vice-president.

The results of the election were announced yesterday morning after the two-day voting of SCBA election ended on Thursday. Some 3,928 lawyers out of 5,081 cast their votes at the SCBA auditorium in the capital.

Two elected vice-presidents are pro-BNP lawyer Umme Kulsum

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Hosni Mubarak walks free after 6 yrs

AFP, Cairo

Hosni Mubarak, the former Egyptian autocrat toppled during the 2011 Arab Spring, left a military hospital yesterday where he spent much of the last six years in detention.

The release of the 88-year old who ruled Egypt for three decades would

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A truck lies on its side along Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Mymensingh's Bhaluka upazila yesterday hours after the accident that left 10 people, including three children, killed and four others injured. The truck was carrying bags of cement.

PHOTO: STAR

ANOTHER MIGRANT TRAGEDY

Around 250 feared dead

AFP, Rome

Over 250 African migrants were feared drowned in the Mediterranean Thursday after a charity's rescue boat found five corpses close to two sinking rubber dinghies off Libya.

The UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) said it was "deeply alarmed" after the Golfo Azzuro, a boat operated by Spanish NGO Proactiva Open Arms, reported the recovery of the bodies close to the drifting, partially-submerged dinghies, 15 miles off the Libyan coast.

"We don't think there can be any other explanation than that these dinghies would have been full of people," Proactiva spokeswoman Laura Lanuza told AFP. "It seems clear that they sunk."

She added that the inflatables, of a kind usually used by people traffickers, would typically have been carrying 120-140 migrants each.

"In over a year we have never seen any of these dinghies that were anything other than packed."

Lanuza said the bodies recovered were African men with estimated ages of between 16 and 25. They had drowned in the 24 hours prior to them being discovered shortly after dawn on Thursday in waters directly north of the Libyan port of Sabrata, according to the rescue boat's medical staff.

Vincent Cochetel, director of the UN refugee agency (UNHCR)'s Europe bureau, said NGO boats patrolling the area had been called to the aid of a third stricken boat on Thursday afternoon, raising fears others may have perished on what Proactiva called "a black day in the Mediterranean."

Despite rough winter seas, migrant departures from Libya on boats chartered by people traffickers have accelerated in recent months from already-record levels.

Nearly 6,000 people have been picked up by Italian-coordinated rescue boats since the end of last week, bringing the number brought to Italy since the start of 2017 to

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PRAYER TIMING MARCH 25
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-55 12-45 4-45 6-16 7-45
JAMAAT 5-30 1-15 5-00 6-20 8-15
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION