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BANGLADESHI WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

Crackdown sets off fear, anxiety

PORIMOL PALMA

Hundreds of Bangladeshis and other foreign workers usually throng popular destinations like Bukit Bintang, Kota Raya, Jalan Petaling and Jalan Silang in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, the weekend there.

However, these places were almost deserted yesterday, as the Malaysian immigration police began a major crackdown on the undocumented migrants on September 1. The foreign workers are now avoiding public gatherings. Some are staying indoors, while others are passing the nights in areas where they work.

More than 500 undocumented migrants, including several Bangladeshis, were detained on the first day of the crackdown. The number of arrests made yesterday could not be known immediately.

Malaysian Immigration Department Director General Mustafar Ali said the crackdown would continue to free the country of all illegal foreign workers.

Saravana Kumar, a deputy director of the department, said they have planned to arrest and deport around 400,000 illegal immigrants and arrest about 45,000 employers in the first phase of the operation that would continue until the yearend, reports The Wall Street Journal yesterday.

The crackdown began after a government deadline for irregular migrant workers to return to their respective countries expired on August 30. Under an amnesty programme that began two years ago, the government allowed the workers to return home by paying a fine equivalent to Tk 8,000.

During the same period, the Malaysian government announced a rehiring programme.

Migrants and rights activists alleged that several of the undocumented migrants have applied for regularising their immigration status and paid hefty sums to agents and companies appointed by the previous Malaysian government, but they are yet to be regularised.

"Those who have applied for rehiring are also facing arrest. It is totally unfair," said Amir Hossain, a Bangladeshi, who works in Ampang area of Kuala Lumpur.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



This area in Jalan Petaling in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, usually remains crowded with Bangladeshi and other foreign workers on Sundays. Yesterday, however, it wore a deserted look amid a crackdown on irregular migrant workers.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

NO DRIVING LICENCE

Footballers get off team bus, take Uber

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh football team coach Jamie Day and a few of his players disembarked from the team bus and took Ubers home on Thursday after learning that their driver was not carrying a licence, said a team official preferring not to be named.

Posts about the incident went viral on social media and numerous posts popped up throughout yesterday and, when contacted last night, Bangladesh Football Federation General Secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag confirmed the matter.

The football team had flown to Dhaka from Nilphamari, where they had lost a FIFA friendly 1-0 against Sri Lanka on Wednesday.

Shortly after leaving the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, the bus, which was hired by the transport department of the BFF, was stopped by traffic police for a routine documentation inspection.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

DELTA PLAN 2100

Draft made for spending \$37b by 2031

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government would spend \$37 billion by 2031 for ensuring food and water security and fighting disasters, according to a draft of the Delta Plan 2100.

The draft would be placed for approval at tomorrow's National Economic Council meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

At least 80 projects have been selected for implementation. Of them, 65 would be infrastructure projects and 15 others would aim at enhancing institutional capacity, efficiency and research.

A planning ministry official said they selected these projects from 133 priority projects of various ministries and divisions.

The General Economics Division (GED) of the ministry has prepared the draft with the assistance of the Dutch government and the World Bank.

GED member Shamsul Alam said, "We are going to take up the long-term plan to tackle the adverse impact of climate change."

He said they had 26 studies done by local experts and prepared the plan in consultation with different stakeholders. It took them three and a half years.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

FAILURE TO TACKLE MILITANTS

US moves to scrap \$300m in Pak aid

AFP, Washington

The US military plans to cancel \$300 million in aid to Pakistan due to Islamabad's lack of "decisive actions" in support of American strategy in the region, the Pentagon said Saturday.

The US has been pushing Pakistan to crack down on militant safe havens in the country, and announced a freeze on aid at the beginning of the year that an official said could be worth almost \$2 billion.

The Defense Department has sought to cut aid by \$300 million "due to a lack of Pakistani decisive actions in support of the South Asia Strategy," Lieutenant Colonel Kone Faulkner said in an email to AFP.

"We continue to press Pakistan to indiscriminately target all terrorist groups," Faulkner said, adding that the latest aid cut request was pending Congressional approval.

The announcement came days before US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is scheduled to visit Islamabad to meet new Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Pakistan has fought fierce campaigns

against home-grown militant groups, and says it has lost thousands of lives and spent billions of dollars in its long war on extremism.

But US officials accuse Islamabad of ignoring or even collaborating with groups, which attack Afghanistan from safe havens along the border between the two countries.

The White House believes that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency and other military bodies have long helped fund and arm the Taliban for ideological reasons, but also to counter rising Indian influence in Afghanistan.

It also believes that a Pakistani crackdown could be pivotal in deciding the outcome of the long-running war in Afghanistan.

'NO MORE!' US frustration has boiled over before: President Donald Trump's predecessor Barack Obama authorised drone strikes on Pakistani safe havens and sent US commandos to kill jihadist kingpin Osama bin Laden in his Abbottabad hideout.

But Trump's aggressive language has especially angered Pakistani officials.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Farm uses lasers to keep birds at bay



ODDITY CENTRAL ONLINE

A blueberry farm in Oregon was having big problems with birds stealing up to 25% of their crops and this year, they addressed the problem using a somewhat unconventional new technology.

At the start of the blueberry growing season, the farm installed 6 Agrilaser Autonomics—automated laser guns which are mounted on a pedestal. These laser guns shoot a steady green laser beam across the bushes. The birds seem to mistake the laser for an incoming predator, and will immediately flee whenever the laser comes close to them.

The results have been immediate; Bird Control Group, the company that makes the lasers, claims that their technology has reduced the number of birds on the farm by 99%. The farm believes that

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

100 bikers get free helmets in Joypurhat

NGO rewards them for having valid papers

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Law enforcers in Joypurhat yesterday gave free helmets to motorcyclists who had valid papers and driving licences to raise awareness on road safety and encourage bikers to follow traffic rules.

On Saturday and Sunday, SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



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PRAYER TIMING SEPTEMBER 3

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-35 12-45 4-30 6-20 7-45
JAMAAT 5-10 1-15 4-45 6-25 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Egypt enacts law to control social media

AFP, Cairo

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has ratified a law granting authorities the right to monitor social media users in the country as part of tightening internet controls, the official gazette said Saturday.

Approved by parliament in July, the state's Supreme Council for Media Regulations will have the power to place people with more than 5,000 followers -- on social media or with a personal blog or website -- under supervision.

The council will be authorised to suspend or block any personal account which "publishes or broadcasts fake news or anything

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Even a year ago, this area was a safe haven for wild elephants who would pass through this road at Kutupalong in Ukhia, Cox's Bazar, as the signboard on the left says. However, right next to it, the authorities erected another signboard for road crossing, to facilitate movement of the Rohingyas living in the area. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

OPENING OF CHINA-FUNDED BRIDGE

India boycotts Maldives event

Bangladesh, Sri Lanka envoys turn back when asked to walk to spot

AGENCIES

China's flagship infrastructure project in the Maldives, a bridge linking capital Male with the airport island, has again brought into focus the widening gulf between India and its Indian Ocean neighbour.

India chose to stay away from the inauguration on Thursday of what is officially known as the Sinamale Bridge with its ambassador Akhilesh Mishra not attending the event, reported TNN.

However, it is not only India which stayed away from the event. According to opposition party spokesperson Ahmed Mahloof, envoys from Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also did not attend.

Indian officials chose not to comment on the issue. It is learnt that an invitation was extended to the Indian Ambassador to Maldives Akhilesh Mishra to attend the event.

Ahmed, in a tweet posted on August 31, said: "Ambassadors of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh boycotted the bridge inauguration event as their cars were stopped by Yameen's security and they were asked to walk. Only Chinese Ambassador's car was allowed to pass up to the venue. Such an insult to traditional friends."

Maldives President Abdulla Yameen described the \$200 million bridge as the biggest achievement in the country's diplomatic history.

The opposition has termed the bridge, which is meant to

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