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VISA EMBARGO FOR COVID Migration to South Korea in limbo

JAMIL MAHMUD

A visa embargo imposed by South Korea on Bangladesh for the last four months has left potential migrant workers wishing to work in the East Asian country under its Employment Permit System in limbo.

South Korea first put an embargo on Bangladesh and several other labour-sending countries in June last year amid the global surge in coronavirus cases, according to an official of the Bangladesh Embassy in Seoul.

South Korea withdrew the embargo on Bangladesh in February this year following an improvement in the Covid-19 situation. However, a fresh visa embargo was imposed in April after positive cases were detected among newly-arrived Bangladeshis there, the official said.

In July, three such Bangladeshis tested Covid-19 positive after they arrived in South Korea, the official said, adding it is unlikely that South Korea will lift the visa embargo if such positive cases continue to be found.

In the meantime, South Korea has been taking workers under the EPS from at least five other sending countries -- China, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand.

A total of 21,260 Bangladeshi workers have been employed in South Korea under EPS from 2008 when it started till January 2020.

Under the EPS, South Korea has been recruiting foreign workers from 16 countries including Bangladesh, according to the 2019-2020 annual report of Bangladesh

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Thousands of people queuing up to get their jobs yesterday, the fifth day of the special vaccination drive, in front of Narayanganj General Hospital in Narayanganj city. The line began forming at 6:00am and vaccine-seekers waited for their turns till around 4:00pm.

PHOTO: SANAD SAHA

FLIGHTS TO INDIA Resumption from next week likely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Air communication with India is likely to resume from next week on a limited scale considering the urgency of people of both countries, sources at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh said.

"Last week we sent a proposal to India citing different conditions to resume flight between the two countries. We hope to get a reply from our counterpart within a day or two. And we hope to resume flight with India from next week under air bubble arrangement," Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman, chairman, CAAB, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Flights between the two neighbouring countries will be operated under an "air bubble" agreement meaning that passengers of the two countries won't be able to visit any third destination after their landing in Bangladesh or

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BFIU seeks bank account details of Pori, 5 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) has asked banks to submit details of accounts of five people, including actor Pori Moni and businessperson-turned-politician Helena Jahangir, who have recently been arrested on various grounds.

The three others are film producer Nazrul Islam Raz and models Faria Mahbub Piyasha and Moriom Akter Mou.

The BFIU has also asked banks to provide details of accounts of journalist Rozina Islam.

The BFIU, the intelligence agency of the country's financial sector, issued four letters to banks on Tuesday, asking them to submit the information within five working days.

Seeking anonymity, a BFIU official said the agency had taken the initiative to check whether the five were involved in any money laundering activities.

The official declined to give details. Meanwhile, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has been tasked with investigating six more cases filed against Pori Moni, the two models and their associates.

The cases were filed with Banani, Bhatara, Gulshan and Khilkhet police stations under Narcotics Control Act,

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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

'The fate of Sheikh Mujib'

AUGUST 12, 1971
SHAMSUDDOZZA SAJEN

TIMES CONDEMNS BANGABANDHU'S TRIAL
The Times (London), in an editorial titled 'The Fate of Sheikh Mujib', wrote today that the decision to try Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in secret was lamentable.

"The manner of it is shameful, and where justice is secret there is a strong assumption that it is in fact unjust," it added.

"The charge of 'waging war against Pakistan'," continued the Times editorial, "is on the face of it absurd, an inflation in words of a retrospective judgment arrived at by the military leaders whose disastrous policy was put into effect when Sheikh Mujib was arrested. The opportunities for defence that should be freely available even to a man who is tried in secret have at least in part been denied, judging from the letter we published yesterday from his lawyers in London. In view of the Pakistan Army's record in East Pakistan since the end of March it is difficult to have any confidence that this secret trial by a military court will abide by acceptable rules of law."

The Times feared that if Bangabandhu was removed from the scene his place would be taken by extreme leaders and the hopes of negotiations would be dashed.

The editorial called upon all to make the strongest pleas that Bangabandhu be spared.

APPEALS FOR BANGABANDHU
The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Tajuddin Ahmed made an impassioned appeal to the big powers to save Bangabandhu's life.

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HIGHWAY ROBBERY Five out of 20 gold bars still missing

Six cops placed on remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A Feni court yesterday placed DB Inspector Saiful Islam on a four-day remand and five other officials on a three-day remand in a case filed in connection with robbing a gold trader of 20 bars.

Abdullah Khan, senior judicial magistrate, gave the order after a remand hearing.

Investigation officer Inspector Monir Hossain of Feni Model Police Station sought five days' remand for each of the arrestees.

Feni court Inspector Golam Jilani said the six arrestees were sent to Model Police Station for interrogation.

On Tuesday night, a robbery case was filed against DB Inspector Saiful Islam, officer-in-

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Terrifying 'dragon' was Australia's largest flying reptile



CNN ONLINE

There was once a species of terrifying "dragon" flying over Australia 105 million years ago, according to new research. The fossil of a pterosaur with a nearly 30-foot (7-metre) wingspan once belonged to Australia's largest flying reptile.

A study on these findings published Monday in the Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology.

The pterosaur likely soared over a large inland sea that once covered much of outback Queensland, known as the Eromanga Inland Sea. Its spearlike mouth was perfect for plucking fish from the sea.

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SUBPAR ANTIBIOTICS HC issues contempt rule against 5 officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a contempt of court rule against the health secretary, director generals of the health directorate and drug administration, and two others on charge of ignoring its directives to stop production of substandard antibiotics.

In the rule, the HC asked the five officials to explain in four weeks why contempt of court proceedings should not be drawn against them

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 12

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------|---------|------|
| Fazr | Zohr | Asr | Maghrib | Esha |
| AZAN 4:25 | 12:45 | 4:45 | 6:41 | 8:00 |
| JAMAAT 5:00 | 1:15 | 5:00 | 6:44 | 8:30 |

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Upazila chairman gets jab at home

Health officer issued show-cause notice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Luta Haider Rashid, chairman of Rajshahi's Tanore upazila, was administered his second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine in his government residence on Tuesday, flouting vaccination rules.

The vaccine can be given only at the vaccination centres designated by the government.

Also, the vaccine was administered by a man who works as a porter at the upazila health office, not by any health staffer.

One of Rashid's aides took a photo of the porter injecting the dose and posted it on Facebook. The post was later removed, but it had already gone viral, drawing flak.

Asked, Rajshahi Civil Surgeon Quiume Talukder said administration of Covid vaccines outside the government centres is

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Risks of serious accidents do not seem to be on its mind as Dhaka South City Corporation continues its work on the development of the sewage system below Hanif flyover in Gulistan's Phulbaria without taking enough safety measures. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

COVID DELTA VARIANT Herd immunity 'not a possibility'

Says head of Oxford Vaccine Group, warns vaccination won't stop spread altogether

AGENCIES

Herd immunity is "not a possibility" with the current spread of the Delta variant due to it still infecting vaccinated individuals, the head of the Oxford Vaccine Group Andrew Pollard said.

Pollard, who was involved in the development of the Oxford/AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine, told the UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group on coronavirus that, unlike measles — where 95 percent vaccination of the population would stop transmission — the same couldn't be said for coronavirus spread by the Delta variants.

"That does mean anyone still unvaccinated at some point will meet the virus," he warned on Tuesday.

Pollard said that vaccines may slow the process of transmission, with data indicating that people who are vaccinated and test positive seem to be shedding the virus for a slightly shorter period of time.

However, given the circulation of the highly transmissible Delta variant vaccination wouldn't stop spread altogether.

"We are in a situation with this current variant where herd immunity is not a possibility because it still infects vaccinated individuals," he said.

"I suspect that what the virus will throw up next is a variant which is perhaps even better at transmitting in vaccinated populations. So that's an even more of a reason not to be making a vaccine program around herd immunity."

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