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BANGLADESHI WORKERS Marooned in Lebanon meltdown

1.20 lakh suffer due to dollar crisis; many seek way back home

JAMIL MAHMUD

Migrant worker Mashiur Titu saw his monthly income in Lebanon drop by half in two years due to a prolonged economic crisis in the Arab country.

The 40-year-old Bangladeshi expatriate and a service technician at a packaging company in Beirut said he used to earn \$900 a month. After the crisis unfolded in 2019, the company started paying him in Lebanese pounds.

His employer in November last year agreed to pay him in two currencies -- \$400 and 7.5 lakh Lebanese pounds (equivalent to \$500 at a rate of 1,500 Lebanese pounds per US dollar).

"But you will not get US dollars at commercial banks. If you want to convert 7.5 lakh Lebanese pound in the black market, you would get about \$40-\$50 at that time," he told The Daily Star over the phone.

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BY WARMTH THEY BOND ... An underprivileged child cuddles a puppy to give it some warmth in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan area. The kid doesn't have any warm cloth for himself, but he certainly has true love for animals. The puppy seems to have handed itself to his care and compassion. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

We acted fast to shield the vulnerable

Hasina writes in Fortune magazine on how her govt tackled pandemic fallout

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said the Covid-19 pandemic could not impact Bangladesh as hard as it did in other countries due to prompt action to protect both the most vulnerable people and businesses.

"Bangladesh could have fallen prey to Covid-19, but we acted fast to protect both our most vulnerable people and businesses. As a result, the pandemic didn't hit Bangladesh as hard as other countries. We're emerging from the pandemic in a good position to continue the economic resurgence that began a decade ago," she wrote in her commentary published in New York-based multinational business magazine -- Fortune -- on Monday.

The PM wrote, "Our approach to fighting Covid-19 was to balance lives and livelihoods, focusing on the needs of people first and then assisting the businesses that employed them."

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Frontliners, 60 plus can now get booster jabs

Says health minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People aged 60 years and above, and the frontliners can now take booster shots of Covid-19 vaccines by showing vaccine cards, Health Minister Zahid Maleque said yesterday.

He came up with this statement while talking to the journalists at the secretariat.

"Booster shots are being given in limited scale now. People aged 60 years and above, and the frontliners can now take booster shots of Covid-19 vaccines by showing vaccine cards," Zahid Maleque said.

For others, the booster dose campaign will be launched at the end of this month once the Surokha app is updated, the minister said.

Earlier on Sunday, the government

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AVIJIT MURDER MASTERMINDS

Holed up somewhere inside Bangladesh

Counter-terror officials say about top Ansar Al Islam leaders Major (sacked) Zia, Akram

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Police officers believe that the two fugitive leaders of Ansar al Islam, for whose information the US State department declared a \$5 million reward, are hiding somewhere in Bangladesh.

Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit officials, who have been trailing the militant outfit, confirmed this to The Daily Star yesterday.

Ansar al Islam was previously known as Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT).



Zia



Akram

Sayed Mohammad Ziaul Haque alias Major (sacked) Zia, chief of ABT's military wing, and Akram Hossain Abir, an intelligence wing member of ABT, are the two fugitives. They were the conspirators behind the killing of Bangladesh-born American writer Avijit Roy and the attack on his wife Rafida Ahmed Bonya in Dhaka.

The US State Department's Counter-Terrorism Rewards Programme called Rewards for Justice on Monday offered five

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No legal way for Khaleda to be sent abroad

Says Anisul again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday once again said that there was no scope for BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to go abroad for treatment as per the law.

"There is no legal base of the demand placed by pro-BNP lawyers seeking permission for her visit abroad. The government cannot take arbitrary decisions," he said.

"I will give my opinion soon on the application for allowing her to go abroad," he added.

The minister

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WEAPONS SUPPLY TO MYANMAR Dhaka urges sanctions

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh wants the international community to put pressure on Myanmar by imposing economic and arms sanctions so that the southeast Asian country takes back Rohingyas from Bangladesh at the soonest.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen also floated the idea of forming a coalition of friends willing to address the Rohingya refugee problem, which has been creating huge problems for Bangladesh and the region.

"Many of our development partners have been selling weapons to Myanmar. This is very sad. There are countries providing arms worth \$2.4 billion," he said at a seminar on the Rohingya crisis organised by a "DIPLOMATS", a local magazine, at the Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden in the city yesterday.

Besides China and Russia, India, South Korea, North Korea, Israel, Ukraine and the Philippines are supplying weapons to Myanmar, which is now being run by the military after a coup in February.

"There should be sanctions on Myanmar so none can supply weapons to Myanmar.

"Unless Myanmar is under effective pressure, they are not going to do anything. That pressure is missing," Momen said.

He also said many of the western countries that oppose genocide and

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