

'It is very hard to find work'

Battered by economic crisis, Sri Lankans seek passport to a better life

REUTERS, Colombo

R.M.R Lenora stood in a snaking queue outside Sri Lanka's Immigration and Emigration Department headquarters for two days last week, hoping to get a passport and, with it, a chance to leave a country wilting under an economic crisis.

A garment worker, 33-year-old Lenora decided to apply for a job as a maid in Kuwait after her husband was laid off from a small restaurant where he worked as a cook.

"My husband lost his job because there is no cooking gas and food costs have skyrocketed. It is very hard to find work and the salaries are very low," said Lenora, who said she earns about 2,500 Sri Lanka rupees (\$6.80) a day. "With two children that is impossible."

So last week, carrying a change of clothes and an umbrella to fend off a blistering sun, the petite woman boarded a train from the town of Nuwara Eliya, in Sri Lanka's central hills, and travelled 170 km to the commercial capital, Colombo, to hand in her papers for her first passport.

In the queue, Lenora was joined by labourers, shop owners, farmers, public servants and housewives, some of whom camped out overnight, all looking to escape Sri Lanka's worst financial crisis in seven decades.

In the first five months of 2022, Sri Lanka has issued 288,645 passports compared with 91,331 in the same period last year, according to government data.



Activists hold the image of missing UK journalist Dom Phillips and Brazilian Indigenous affairs specialist Bruno Pereira during a protest near the European Commission building in Brussels, Belgium yesterday. Activists protest against the apparent killings of the British journalist and Brazilian Indigenous expert in the Amazon, and urge stronger rules of deforestation-free products in the EU.

PHOTO: AFP

Women 'essential' to peace talks

AFP, United Nations

Men must stop excluding women from peace talks around the world, UN chief Antonio Guterres said Wednesday, warning that in conflicts such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine the situation is actually "going backwards."



The UN secretary-general said

the lack of female representation in such negotiations from Ukraine to Afghanistan, Myanmar and Mali shows "how enduring power imbalances and patriarchy are continuing to fail us." It results in "men in power and women excluded, their rights and freedoms deliberately targeted," he told a meeting of UNSC.

But women's "right to equal participation at all levels, is essential for building and maintaining peace," said Guterres. He noted that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has forced millions of women and children to flee the country, "putting them at high risk of trafficking and exploitation of all kinds." "Women who chose not to evacuate are at the forefront of healthcare and social support," said Guterres.

Padma Bridge

FROM PAGE 12 Grameen Bank managing director, flouting the country's laws.

The PM said she had given the Grameen Bank Tk 400 crore in three phases to revive it from ruin in 1997-98 despite the country facing difficulties due to various adversities, including flooding. Mentioning that there are about 53 banks in the country and all of them have MDs, she questioned, "How many MDs of those banks have given lakhs of dollars as donation and made frequent visits to foreign countries like Yunus did?"

The PM thanked the people of the country for their spontaneous support when she made the announcement on building the Padma Bridge with own finances. Three Palli Janopad

schemes are being implemented in Rangpur, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions at a cost of Tk 247 crore. Of them, the work on the Palli Janopad project in Rangpur has already been completed.

A total of 272 beneficiaries have got flats under the Palli Janopad project in Rangpur lower prices on the basis of cooperative society by paying 30 percent of the total cost. The rest of the amount is payable in next 15 years.

After inaugurating BAPARD, Kotalipara in Gopalganj, Hasina said the Padma Bridge would help the organisation gear up its activities on poverty alleviation, research and employment generation.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Tazul Islam spoke at the event as the special guest.

'Arsa member' shot dead

FROM PAGE 2 to a Cox's Bazar court implicating 29 Rohingyas in the grisly murder of Mohib Ullah, the chairman of the Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights. He was shot dead at the Kutupalong camp on September 29 last year.

Soon after the murder, Mohib's brother Habib Ullah alleged that

Myanmar's banned outfit Arsa, locally known as Al-Yakin, was behind the killing.

On March 6, members of APBn-14 arrested the chief commander of Arsa's Ulama Branch from a Rohingya camp. Police said the Arsa leader, identifying himself as Zakaria, 55, issued a fatwa (decree) for the assassination of Mohib.

UK PM loses 2nd ethics chief

AFP, London

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's top ethics advisor said he had quit after the government forced him into an "impossible and odious" position, according to a letter released yesterday. Christopher Geidt is the second official to quit the role in two years in protest at Johnson's actions. His resignation on Wednesday came after the prime minister was enmeshed in the "Partygate" scandal, which saw him receive a police fine. Lord Geidt had stayed on despite expressing unease over the lockdown-breaching parties in Downing Street. Johnson's office was "surprised" at his decision to step down now.

NEW ARMY RECRUITMENT PLAN Protests break out in India

REUTERS, Lucknow

Angry crowds in India set an office of the ruling party on fire, attacked railway infrastructure and blocked roads yesterday, in widening protests against a new military recruitment system, police officials said. PM Modi's government this week announced an overhaul of recruitment for India's 1.38 million-strong armed forces, looking to bring down the average age of personnel and reduce pension expenditure. But potential recruits, army veterans, opposition leaders and even some members of BJP raised reservations over the revamped process.

I am also grateful for the (US) leadership in mobilising the help of all partners. Zelensky on new US arms package to Ukraine

BFCC Biman Flight Catering Centre বিমান ফ্লাইট ক্যাটারিং সেন্টার INVITATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE NO. 59/2022

মেঘনা পেট্রোলিয়াম লিমিটেড (বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম কর্পোরেশন এর একটি অঙ্গ প্রতিষ্ঠান) ৫৮-৫৯, আছাবাল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, চট্টগ্রাম (www.mpl.gov.bd)

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh Establishment of Clearing House for Integrating Transport Ticketing System in Dhaka City and Adjacent Districts (Phase-II) Request for Expression of Interest for Selection of Consultant/Jr. Consultant