



# KL to take 10k workers under G2G system

PORIMOL PALMA

The Malaysian government has made a new move to hire Bangladeshi workers under a government-to-government arrangement as the labour recruitment through private agencies that began in August has been slow and there were allegations of high migration cost and syndication.

“Yes, we are entering a direct government-to-government arrangement for at least 10,000 workers. The airfare and all the cost in the Malaysian end will be borne by the Malaysian employers,” Imran Ahmad, expatriates’ welfare and overseas employment minister, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said Malaysia is in a huge shortage of workers, but the recruitment via private sector has been slow. This prompted the Malaysian government to take the new initiative and expedite the labour recruitment.

Asked if the recruitment through the private sector would be discouraged then, the minister said all options – private and public – should be open for positive competition.

The Malaysia’s human resources ministry will be implementing the one-off recruitment of 10,000 workers, involving Malaysian Employers’ Federation (MEF) and Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Ltd (BOESL), a state-owned recruiting agent.

“We will continue to work on a better recruitment system – either through public or private sector,” Imran Ahmad said.

According to a letter of MEF sent to all its members on

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



One of the oldest and most traditional sources of underground water -- the well -- is something rarely seen in the ever-growing concrete jungle that is the capital city. However, this particular centuries-old well, in a household in Old Dhaka’s Shankhari Bazar, is still in use and has been for generations. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## ATTACK ON JCD DU VC asks proctor to probe

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani has been asked to investigate Tuesday’s attack on Chhatra Dal activists allegedly by Chhatra League men on campus.

He was instructed to report his findings in four working days, said Vice Chancellor Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman.

At least 15 leaders and activists of the pro-BNP student body were injured in the attack.

Contacted yesterday evening, Prof Rabbani said he already started investigating and the probe report would be turned in by the deadline.

Meanwhile, the body of pro-BNP DU teachers blamed the proctor’s team for failing to ensure safety.

“We learnt that members of the newly formed Chhatra Dal committee went to the campus to meet the VC. Therefore, it was the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

# Fair polls not possible amid violence

Says Peter Haas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador Peter Haas yesterday said free and fair elections could not happen amid political violent clashes like the ones that took place recently over political rallies and demonstrations in Bangladesh.

“The recent violent clashes in political rallies and demonstrations here in Bangladesh remind of that fact: Free and fair elections simply cannot not take place in an environment of political violence,” Haas added.

It is so important for everyone – demonstrators, political parties, law enforcement agencies, the government – to respect the rule of law and to refrain from violence, harassment and intimidation.

“I want to make one thing very clear here: the United States does not support any particular political party,” Haas told a meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh at The Westin Dhaka.

“But we do want free and fair elections conducted according to international standards so that people of Bangladesh can freely choose their own government.”

To ensure free and fair elections, the election commission, government, media, law enforcement agencies, civil society, political parties, and everyone has an important role to play, he said.

If any one of them fails to play their responsibility, free and fair election is essentially impossible, Haas said.

The US has five goals here, including keeping a peaceful and stable Bangladesh, promoting trade and investment, and supporting Bangladesh’s efforts to host the Rohingya refugees until their repatriation to Myanmar.

“I really believe these five goals are mutually reinforcing,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



## ‘Rab uses force only if necessary’

Says outgoing Rab DG

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdullah Al Mamun Chowdhury, the outgoing director general of Rab, yesterday said the law enforcement agency only uses force where necessary.

“We do not use it, where it is not necessary,” Mamun replied to a question about gunfights while talking to reporters at the Rab media centre in the capital’s Kawan Bazar.

The number of gunfights dropped significantly since December 10 last year, when the US imposed sanctions on Rab and seven of its current and former officials, including Mamun.

After serving as Rab

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Handicraft in the form of flowers, trees and other shapes made of palm leaves. Swapan, and his helpers, Milan and Ripon, have been using this talent to earn a living for almost two years. They sell their artwork at Tk 50-500 per product. The photo was taken at a footpath adjacent to Gulistan Shaheed Matiur Park in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## OCCUPIED UKRAINIAN TERRITORIES

# Putin to proclaim annexation in days

REUTERS, Zaporizhzhia

Moscow was poised to annex a swath of Ukraine yesterday, releasing what it called vote tallies showing support in four partially occupied provinces to join Russia, after what Kyiv and the West denounced as illegal sham referendums held at gunpoint.

On Moscow’s Red Square, a tribune with giant video screens has been set up, with billboards proclaiming “Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson - Russia!”

President Vladimir Putin could proclaim the annexation in a speech within days, just over a week since he endorsed the referendums, ordered a military mobilisation at home and threatened to defend Russia with nuclear weapons if necessary.

The Russian-installed administrations of the four Ukrainian provinces yesterday formally asked Putin to incorporate them into Russia, which Russian officials have suggested is a formality.

“The results are clear. Welcome home, to Russia,” Dmitry Medvedev, a former president who serves as deputy chairman of Russia’s Security Council, said on Telegram, after the release of the results.

Russian-backed authorities claim to have carried out the referendums over five days on

territory that makes up around 15 percent of Ukraine.

Residents who escaped to Ukrainian-held territory in recent days have told of people being forced to tick ballots in the street by roving officials at gunpoint. Footage filmed during the exercise showed Russian-installed officials taking ballot boxes from house to house with armed men in tow.

Russia says voting was voluntary and turnout high.

“This farce in the occupied

**“This farce in the occupied territories cannot even be called an imitation of a referendum.”**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

territories cannot even be called an imitation of a referendum,” Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in video address overnight.

Denis Pushilin, the Russian-installed leader in Donetsk, one of two Ukrainian regions Moscow had previously proclaimed independent states, said he was on his way to Moscow to complete the legal process of joining Russia.

“Now we are moving to a new stage of military action,” he said, amid speculation that Putin is set to change the status of what he

has so far called a “special military operation” to a counter-terrorism operation.

The Russian annexation plan gathered pace as leaking gas bubbled up in the Baltic Sea for a second day after suspected explosions tore through undersea Russian pipelines on Tuesday. The Nord Stream 1 pipeline, once the main route for Russian gas to Germany, was already shut but cannot now be easily reopened.

Nato and the European Union warned of the need to protect critical infrastructure from what they called “sabotage”, though officials stopped short of saying who they blamed. The Kremlin said any theory that might point the finger at Russia for blowing up its own pipelines would be “stupid”.

The United States is preparing a new round of sanctions to punish Russia for the annexation move and a \$1.1 billion arms package for Ukraine that will be announced soon, US officials said.

The United States will introduce a resolution at the UN Security Council calling on member states not to recognise any change to Ukraine and obligating Russia to withdraw its troops, US envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield said.

China told the United Nations Security Council on Tuesday that “territorial integrity” should be

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

# Handwritten lyrics of Bowie’s ‘Starman’ sell for £203,500

AFP, London

David Bowie’s original handwritten lyrics for the pop classic “Starman”, part of an album that catapulted him to international stardom, on Tuesday sold at auction in Britain for £203,500.

Released as a single in 1972, the song about a Starman who would “like to come and meet us but he thinks he’d blow our minds” featured on the Ziggy Stardust concept album.

The handwritten lyrics sold for five times as much as the £40,000 estimate.

The winning bidder was Olivier Varenne, director of acquisitions and alliances and collections at the Museum of Old and New Art in Tasmania, on behalf of a private collector.

“We had almost unprecedented interest from around the world for this historic piece of memorabilia,” said Paul Fairweather of Omega Auctions.

“We’re very pleased with the incredible price achieved and are sure the lyrics will be rightly prized and treasured by the winning bidder.”

The lyrics were previously on display as part of the V&A Museum’s David Bowie Is collection. They had been owned by the same person since the 1980s.

The A4 page features handwritten amendments and edits by Bowie, including corrected spelling mistakes and additions.

The lyrics were sold as part of a David Bowie and glam rock sale on Tuesday.

In 2019, the first demo of Bowie singing Starman sold for 51,000 pounds after gathering dust in a loft for nearly five decades.

Bowie can be heard telling his guitarist Mick Ronson, who died in 1993, that he has not finished singing the song when he tries to end the demo.

The singer, born David Jones, died aged 69 in New York in 2016.



# Shaon died from brickbat wounds, not bullets: SP

BNP says police lying

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Shahidul Islam Shaon, the Jubo Dal activist who was killed in a clash with police during a rally in Munshiganj’s Muktarpur upazila, died due to head injuries from brickbats, not bullets, claimed Mahfuzur Rahman Al Mamun, superintendent of Munshiganj police.

At a press conference in his office yesterday, he said this citing the post-mortem report.

“BNP leaders and activists in Muktarpur locked in an intra-party clash that day. When police tried to bring the situation under control, the BNP men, along with Shaon, attacked the law enforcers and started hurling brick chips.

“Shaon, at one point, collapsed after being hit by brick chunks thrown by other Jubo Dal men,” he claimed.

“All the medical documents, including the autopsy report, show that Shaon died from injuries at the back of his head. Those wounds were not from bullets.”

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

## Surprise awaits parties reluctant to join polls

Says election commissioner Ahsan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret) Ahsan Habib Khan yesterday said the EC may take a surprising step about the political parties that are against joining the upcoming parliamentary polls.

“Many are saying they are against participating in the election and there are some complaints about the EC. Wait and see our steps regarding the matter. There might be surprises,” Ahsan told reporters at the EC office.

The EC is working for the betterment of the country and the 39 registered

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6