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LAUNDERED MONEY Yunus seeks support from Singapore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus yesterday called on Singapore to assist Bangladesh in recovering billions of dollars laundered out of the country and help lower the cost of migrant labour recruitment.

He said this at a meeting with Singapore's Ambassador to Bangladesh, Derek Loh, at his Tejgaon office in Dhaka.

"A lot of money was siphoned off from Bangladesh to many countries, including Singapore," Yunus told the Singapore ambassador.

"We need full cooperation from Singapore," he added.

Ambassador Loh pledged Singapore's support in assisting Dhaka with this issue.

During their hour-long meeting, Yunus also urged Singapore to collaborate with Bangladesh on reducing recruitment costs for Bangladeshi migrant workers, which would enable them to remit more earnings back home.



Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the latter's office in the capital's Tejgaon yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

Legitimacy of this govt comes from people's uprising

Asif Mahmud tells meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Conspiracies are being hatched openly to provoke the working class, said adviser to the interim government Asif Mahmud on the recent labour unrest yesterday. The adviser made this comment in response to a question from reporters after a coordination meeting on "Reviewing the Current Labor Situation" at the Secretariat in Dhaka.

When asked whether, like previous governments, the current administration also attributes labour unrest to conspiracies, the adviser said, "The official page of the Awami League, which operates from abroad, published content yesterday [Saturday] clearly intended to provoke workers. I noticed it, and the conspiracy is evident to all social media users. You [journalists] should play a role in countering this. We are doing our part."

He said workers did not respond to Awami League's recent calls for mobilisation, saying, "It didn't appeal to



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Ex-Grameen Bank chair, 18 others sued over vandalism

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Grameen Bank's former chairman AKMSaifulMajid and 18 others, including the bank's 12 employees, were sued yesterday on charge of illegal gathering and damaging properties.

AKM Moinuddin Chowdhury, managing director of Grameen Kalyan, filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Partha Bhadra, a court staffer told The Daily Star.

The magistrate recorded the statements of the complainant and directed the officer-in-charge of Shah Ali Police Station to register the complaint as the First Information Report, he said.

Grameen Bank's research and development department members Raju Mia and Mizanur Rahman, adviser S Abdur Rashid and public relations officer Tanan Khan, bank's deputy managing director Propid Kumar Saha, assistant manager general Foyzul

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Dhaka, KL must act to end trafficking

Say labour migration experts

PORIMOL PALMA

Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur need to act quickly to bring to book the perpetrators behind the criminal networks engaged in money laundering and labour trafficking from Bangladesh, say labour migration experts.

They said the Bangladesh police's initiative to probe the syndicate of 101 recruiting agencies and related individuals is a welcome move.

They also said Malaysia must extradite the two controversial businessmen -- Aminul Islam, a Bangladesh-born Malaysian citizen, and Ruhul Amin Swapan, owner of recruiting agency Catharsis International -- for investigation.

"Over the last decade, a vested quarter with government influence in both countries manipulated the labour recruitment from Bangladesh. Our people have long been victims of extortion, exploitation, and trafficking," said Prof CR Abrar, executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) of Dhaka University.



Over the last decade, a vested quarter with government influence in both countries manipulated the labour recruitment from Bangladesh. Our people have long been victims of extortion, exploitation, and trafficking.

PROF CR ABRAR
Executive Director of RMMRU

About a million Bangladeshi workers were recruited by Malaysia over the last decade. Between 2016 and 2018, a syndicate of 101 recruiting agencies was engaged in recruitment.

The recruitment was suspended

in September 2018 due to labour exploitation and huge corruption involving some top Malaysian politicians.

The market reopened in August 2022 but was suspended on May 31 this year following reports of massive corruption and exploitation of migrant workers.

During both periods, Malaysian government had selected the recruiting agencies, though Bangladesh had requested to allow all licensed agencies to send workers. Malaysia gave no explanation about the criteria of the recruiting agencies selected.

A study by US-based non-profit Verite, published in May, said 96 percent of Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia reported facing risks of exploitation resulting from recruitment debt.

On average, workers paid at least Tk 5,44,000 (US \$5,000), which is equal to three years of pay to a casual labourer in Bangladesh, in recruitment fees for a job in Malaysia.

After the fall of the Awami League regime, Altaf Khan, a

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ACC APPOINTMENTS Govt forms selection committee

UNB, Dhaka

The government has established a five-member selection committee to recommend appointments for the positions of Chairman and Commissioners of the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The committee is chaired by Justice Md Rezaul Haque from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

An order was issued by the Cabinet Division yesterday to form this committee under Section 7 of the ACC Act, 2004, specifically to assist with ACC leadership appointments.

The committee members include Justice Farah Mahbub of the High Court Division, Comptroller and Auditor General Md Nurul Islam, Chairman of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission Prof Mobasser Monem, and former cabinet secretary Md Mahbub Hossain.

ZIA ORPHANAGE TRUST No money was misappropriated

Says ACC lawyer; SC order on Khaleda's petitions today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Md Ashif Hassan yesterday told the Supreme Court's Appellate Division that no money of the Zia Orphanage Trust has been misappropriated, as there is no evidence in this regard.

It has been evident from the first information report (FIR), charge sheet, and trial court judgement that relevant funds have been moved but the money has been deposited in the bank accounts, he said.

He said this while placing arguments before the apex court during its hearing on two leave-to-appeal petitions filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia challenging the High Court verdict that doubled her five-year jail term in the case.

After concluding the hearing yesterday, a three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Ashfaul Islam fixed today for delivering order on the petitions.

Yesterday, Khaleda's lawyers told the SC that, being politically motivated and influenced by the then Awami League government, the trial court sentenced Khaleda to five years' imprisonment in this case.

The HC has illegally enhanced her jail sentence

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BNP slams AL for 'using image of Trump'

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leaders Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and Hafiz Uddin Ahmed yesterday slammed Awami League for trying to stage a political comeback through various covert means, including the use of the photos of US President-elect Donald Trump.

Speaking at separate programmes, they also said the AL is resorting to such ploys as the party has lost its political standing.

The BNP leaders came up with the reactions as the Awami League, ousted through a student-led mass upsurge on August 5, yesterday tried to stage a protest rally on the occasion of Shaheed Noor Hossain Day.

Briefing reporters after a meeting between BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Singapore's non-resident

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To resist the Awami League's bid to bring out processions towards Zero Point to mark Noor Hossain Day, leaders and activists of the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, BNP, and Jamaat took positions at Bangabandhu Avenue and Zero Point areas yesterday. Wreaths cover Noor Hossain Square after several organisations paid their tributes. *Inset*, at least 10 people were beaten up in Gulistan and neighbouring areas on suspicion of being associated with AL and its front organisations. Meanwhile, police early yesterday arrested 10 persons with posters of newly-elected US President Donald Trump in Dhaka. According to the DMP, AL President Sheikh Hasina, through an audio clip, allegedly instructed her party leaders and activists to hold rallies using such posters as part of a plan to damage the friendly relations between Bangladesh and the US.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, DMP

