





Voting rights of expatriates must be ensured

Two advisers tell event

UNB, Dhaka

Two advisers yesterday emphasised importance voting rights for expatriates, calling it a critical step





towards their greater inclusion in the nation's democratic

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Adviser Asif Nazrul and Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud made the remarks at a programme held at the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

The event was organised marking the International Migrants Day and National Expatriate Day-2024.

The expatriates' welfare adviser said, "We are committed to assist our expatriates in securing their voting rights. Though the matter primarily falls under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission, our ministry will do everything within our powers to support this cause."

Asif Nazrul, also the law affairs adviser, said remittance inflow saw a remarkable 26 percent rise from August to November under the interim government compared to the same period the previous fiscal year (2023-24).

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



Taskin Ahmed celebrates with teammates after one of his three dismissals during Bangladesh's 27-run victory in the T20I against West Indies at Kingstown in St Vincent yesterday which ensured a 2-0 victory in the three-match series for the Tigers. PHOTO: CWI

Tigers push for whitewash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following their first T20I series victory over the West Indies since 2018, Bangladesh will be eyeing a rare clean sweep over the two-time world champions when they play the third and final match of the series in St. Vincent on Friday.

The match is scheduled to start at 6 am (Bangladesh time) and will be telecast live on T Sports.

Riding on yet another impressive batting performance by Shamim Hossain, who struck an unbeaten 35 off 17 balls, the visitors won by 27 runs in the second T20I at the Arnos Vale Stadium in Kingstown yesterday, despite scoring a subpar 129 for seven after being asked to bat.

The bowling unit, led by pacer Taskin Ahmed's three for 16, responded SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

CONFLICT IN RAKHINE 300 Rohingyas wait to enter Bangladesh

Say border sources; BGB beefs up security along Myanmar border

MOKAMMEL SHUVO

At least 300 Rohingyas have been waiting to enter Bangladesh after the rebel Arakan Army (AA) claimed to have full control of Rakhine's Maungdaw district, which includes the entire 270km of the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, according to locals and other sources at the border.

They said the Rohingyas, faced with an extreme food crisis and forced labour, have been gathering in the hilly areas of Rakhine, opposite the Bandarban border.

Those living in Cox's Bazaar refugee camps said the Rohingyas across the border are now being pressured by the AA to leave Myanmar, and many have already entered Bangladesh recently.

The AA, who on December 8 claimed to have full control of the border, has imposed restrictions on the Myanmar side of the Naf River, which divides the countries, making it inaccessible to any Myanmar citizen.

On the other side, the Border Guard Bangladesh and Coast Guard are on high alert, with round-the-clock surveillance near and on the river.

Colonel Mahmudul Hasan, BGB sector commander of Ramu sector, said, "We have information that some Rohingyas have gathered on the other side to enter Bangladesh. We have beefed up security SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Rahima (not her real name) left Bangladesh for

Oman to work as a domestic help and support her five-member family after her husband Although she travelled abroad with the

MD ABBAS

hope of securing a better future, she returned

as a domestic help, she was assigned various other tasks, including working in a poultry farm and carrying heavy water drums up mountainous paths with her bare hands.

"I wasn't given adequate rest, and after missing work for a day due to illness, they didn't allow me to eat."

When she asked for food, she was met with a torrent of verbal abuse.

"When my health deteriorated from the hard labour, my employer told me to see a doctor at my own expense, which meant walking five kilometres to the hospital."

Eventually, Rahima fled and returned to Bangladesh, where she learned that she had developed uterine problems.

She turned to the Wage Earners Welfare Board (WEWB) for assistance, which has over the past three years given medical help to 125 women migrant workers. Most of them had

returned from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Oman, Lebanon, Qatar, the UAE, and other Middle Eastern countries.

125 WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS

Most returned home

with dire illnesses

Show Wage Earners Welfare Board records

Of 56 returnees

in 2023, 20 had

uterine issues, 10

had kidney issues,

19 were physically

abused and seven

were battling

cancer.

WEWB's records show a concerning trend most of these women, like Rahima, were suffering from uterine issues

In 2023 alone, 56 women applied for medical assistance from the organisation and home within a year — in bad shape. 20 were diagnosed with uterine problems. Despite being told she would have to work Meanwhile, 19 had endured physical abuse, 10

> were suffering from kidney issues, and seven were battling cancer.

> Fifty-four-year-Maksuda Khatun, from Mymensingh's Gafargaon, returned to Bangladesh from Saudi Arabia on March 16 this year after diagnosed with being kidney disease.

Upon her arrival, doctors found that both of her kidneys were damaged. She now requires dialysis

thrice a week, costing her family Tk 35,000 per month. After applying to the WEWB, she received

Tk 1.50 lakh to cover a portion of her medical "Apart from this money. I had to spend all the money I saved while working as a domestic

worker abroad and even sold a piece of land. "I don't know how I will manage my treatment costs in the future," said Maksuda, SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

'ILLEGAL WEALTH' **ACC** starts probing ex-DG of NTMC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission has launched an investigation into complaint that Ziaul

Ahsan. former director general of the National

Telecommunication Monitoring Centre, had amassed illegal wealth. A three-member team was formed yesterday to

conduct the probe, said Akhtar Hossain, director general (prevention). "He is accused of abusing

power to amass substantial illegal assets," said Akhtar, adding that if there were any associates, they would also be investigated. On December

Bangladesh Bank froze the bank accounts of Ziaul, his wife, children, and businesses they own.

In a related development, the ACC has filed cases accusing former lawmakers Nizam Uddin Hazari and Naimur Rahman Durjoy, also a former cricketer, of acquiring illegal assets.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

PROMOTION TO DEPUTY SECY 64 DCs against having more nonadmin officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deputy commissioners of all 64 districts have protested the Public Administration Reform Commission's suggestion for changing the ratio of cadres for promotion to deputy secretary.

The Bangladesh Administrative Service Association (Basa) has also issued a statement of protest. The protest letters were submitted to the Cabinet

Secretary and the Senior Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration yesterday. The Daily Star has obtained copies of these protest letters.

There are 26 cadre services in the country. Currently, 75 percent of the deputy secretary posts are allocated to admin cadre officers. The rest are filled by officers of the other cadres.

On Tuesday, during a briefing at the Secretariat, Public Administration Reform Commission Chairman Abdul Muid Chowdhury indicated that

4 die in 2 bike crashes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Four people were killed in two motorbike accidents in Narayanganj yesterday.

Around 2:00pm in Purbachal, a motorcyclist and his pillion rider were killed when their bike crashed into a road divider.

Abdur Rouf, 32, and Md Shipon, 35, died on the spot. The crash occurred in the Bhuiyanbari Bridge area of Sector-3, Purbachal, according to Mehedi Islam, assistant superintendent of police in Narayanganj.

"The motorcyclist reportedly lost control due to speeding, causing the accident," said Mehedi Islam, assistant superintendent of police (ASP) in Narayanganj.

Md Rakib, a friend of the victims, said 12 shop owners from Jamuna Future Park shopping mall in Dhaka were on their way to Chandpur on motorcycles when the accident happened.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

US worried over conflict in Rakhine State: Millar

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States has expressed concern over the ongoing conflict in Myanmar's Rakhine State and its potential to destabilise the region.

Speaking at a press briefing in Washington yesterday, US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller emphasised the urgency of addressing the crisis.

"We remain concerned by the conflict and its potential to undermine regional stability and security. Helping resolve the Rohingya refugee crisis remains a priority for us.

"We will continue to work with Bangladesh to support the Rohingya and members of other vulnerable communities from Burma [Myanmar] who have taken refuge there," Miller added. The ongoing conflict has significantly escalated the

humanitarian crisis in the region. The Arakan Army, an ethnic armed group, now controls more than 80 percent of Rakhine State, according to media reports. Meanwhile, UN Secretary General António Guterres

has assured UN's full support for the high-level

conference on Rohingya to be held in early next year. SEE PAGE 6 COL 7

Hopes for Gaza truce deal rise

REUTERS, Cairo

The United States, joined by Arab mediators, yesterday sought to conclude an agreement between Israel and Hamas to halt the 14-month-old offensive in the Gaza Strip where medics said Israeli strikes killed at least 20 Palestinians overnight.

On Tuesday, sources close to the talks in Cairo, the Egyptian capital, said an agreement could be signed in coming days on a ceasefire and release of hostages held in Gaza in return for Palestinian prisoners held by Israel.

Medics said an Israeli airstrike killed at least 10 people in a northern town of Beit Lahiya, while six were killed in separate airstrikes in Gaza City, Nuseirat camp in central areas, and Rafah near the border with Egypt.

In Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip, medics said four people were killed in an airstrike on a house.



A fire burns inside a Palestinian house during an ongoing Israeli military operation in Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.