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Speakers at a discussion, titled "Mothers' Role in the Liberation War," held at the Daily Star Centre yesterday. The event was organised by women freedom fighters to commemorate the selfless sacrifices and unwavering support provided by the mothers during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

PHOTO: STAR

Mothers, the unsung heroes of Liberation War

Speakers commemorate their selfless sacrifices at event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The success of the Liberation War was deeply rooted in the selfless sacrifices and unwavering support provided by the mothers, said speakers at an event yesterday.

While it is often assumed that mothers sent their sons to join the war, many also sent their daughters to fight, the speakers said.

Their involvement extended far beyond providing food and shelter; many stood bravely against the Pakistani forces and even participated in combat.

The discussion, titled "Mothers' Role in the Liberation War," was held at the Daily Star Centre. The event was organised by women freedom fighters.

Shaheen Anam, daughter of freedom fighter Musleha Islam, shared her mother's inspiring story. Musleha not only sheltered freedom fighters in her Dhanmondi home but also donated funds to support them.

"I get very emotional when I remember the heroism of our mothers during the Liberation War. Their contributions must be documented and widely shared. These

My mother never feared anything. She always inspired us, saying that we were fighting for our country. With that spirit, she sent us into an unknown future and taught us to protect ourselves if captured.

SYEDA KAMAL,
Daughter of Sufia Kamal

stories, though crucial to our history, are not well known and must come to the forefront," said Shaheen Anam.

Rizwan Faruk, son of Musleha Islam, recalled how their Dhanmondi home became a hub for freedom fighters, where Molotov cocktails were made by his elder brother Wasif Islam and his friends.

Despite the risks, his mother, a widow at 29, provided support and courage.

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Complaints against embassy officials to be investigated

Asif Nazrul assures expatriates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Written complaints accusing diplomatic staff of misbehaving with expatriates will be investigated by the foreign ministry, and guilty officials will face dismissal and legal action, said Prof Asif Nazrul yesterday.

He made the remarks at a cheque distribution event held at the Welfare Board of Overseas Employment. Addressing complaints from expatriates about hostile behaviour from some diplomatic staff, he stressed that verbal accusations were insufficient for action against government officials. "Written complaints will be investigated thoroughly, and if proven, legal consequences will follow," he assured.

The event aimed to honour 186 repatriated workers who were detained in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for participating in unauthorised protests. Each worker received a cheque worth Tk 50,000 as a gesture of solidarity with the July-August uprising.

After the adviser's speech, chaos erupted as the

Written complaints will be investigated thoroughly, and if proven, legal consequences will follow.



yesterday, the remarks distribution Wage Earners' auditorium at the Ministry of Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment.

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Corruption behind shrinking overseas labour market

Says RMMRU report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Corruption, irregularities, and fraud have caused a significant contraction in Bangladesh's labour market for migrant workers, according to a report by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU).

The report reveals that over 97 percent of Bangladeshi migrant workers have been sent to just 10 countries in the last five years.

This year, more than 90 percent of the workers were employed in six countries, with Saudi Arabia receiving over 60 percent of the total.

Malaysia and Qatar were also identified as major destinations.

However, the report highlights a worrying trend concerning female migrant workers.

The number of women migrating has sharply decreased this year, with only 54,696 female migrant workers going abroad.

This marks a 22 percent decline compared to the previous year.

Overall, the total number of migrant workers has fallen, with 906,355 leaving Bangladesh in



AT A GLANCE

22pc decrease in female migrants

30.8pc decrease in overall migrants

32.5pc increase in remittances

2024, a 30.8 percent drop from 1,305,453 in 2023.

Despite this, remittance inflows have seen a notable increase.

It is estimated that remittances in 2024 will total USD 26.4 billion, representing a 32.5 percent rise from the previous year.

Prof Tasneem Siddiqui, founding chair of RMMRU, presented the findings in a briefing at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

She attributed the shrinking labour market to systemic corruption and irregularities.

"In 2021, Malaysia reopened its labour market under a syndicate, but it was closed again in May 2024. This syndicate, led by Datuk Seri Aminul Islam and his Bangladeshi associate Ruhul Amin, embezzled USD 2 billion, which increased migration costs and left many workers stranded or forced to return home," she explained.

Prof Tasneem also said migration to several countries remained suspended in 2024, including Oman, Bahrain, the UAE, and the Maldives.

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'Senior cops complicit in extortion'

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The superintendents of police are directly or indirectly involved with extortion in connivance with sub-inspectors or the officer-in-charges of police stations, said Barrister Zillur Rahman, deputy inspector general (DIG) of the Dhaka Traffic and Driving School yesterday.

He made this statement at a seminar on "Prevention of Extortion in Bangladesh," organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Social Research Trust.

Zillur said if SPs and DIGs are not complicit, extortion could be reduced by 50 percent. He said the focus has mainly been on blaming SIs and OCs for extortion.

The police's image is not improving because of senior officers, he said.

He further explained that responsibility for the issue is split: 49 percent lie with senior officers, 50 percent with political leaders, and 1 percent with other internal problems.

"If senior officers are at least 25 percent effective, the police's image would improve," he said.

If SPs and DIGs are not complicit, extortion could be reduced by 50 percent.

DIG ZILLUR RAHMAN

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TRAGEDY AT TOLL PLAZA

'I have no one left to live for'

Says Iqbal who lost his wife, 2 daughters and grandson in expressway accident

TANJIL HASAN, Munshiganj

"I have lost everything... I don't want to live anymore," cried Jobeda Khatun, the mother of Amena Akhter, who died in an accident at the Dhaleshwari toll plaza on the Dhaka-Mawa Expressway on Friday.

Near 70 years old, Jobeda struggled to express her grief, tears streaming down her face as she kept uttering - "I have lost everything".

When this correspondent visited her place in Nandankona village in Sirajdikhan, Munshiganj yesterday afternoon, Jobeda, the widow of late Suman Khan, sat outside her home, wailing in despair.

Surrounded by relatives who attempted to console her, she mourned the loss of her daughter Amena, 45, along with two

granddaughters: Ishrat Jahan Imi, 26, and Riha Moni, 11. Another granddaughter, Anamika, had also lost her 2-year-old son, Ayaz, in the same incident.

Jobeda's grandson-in-law Sohag and granddaughter Anamika are still hospitalised, receiving treatment.

In addition to Jobeda's family, motorcycle rider Reshma Akhtar, 26, and her 7-year-old son, Md Abdullah, also lost their lives in the tragic accident.

As relatives gathered at Jobeda's home in the village, they shared their sorrow and expressed their outrage to journalists regarding the circumstances of the accident. They demanded justice and accountability for those responsible.

Md Iqbal, Amena's husband, said,



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A woman tries to navigate a dug-up section of a road in Lalmatia C Block. The ongoing development work by the Dhaka Power Distribution Company (DPDC) in Lalmatia C Block, which includes the installation of underground electricity cables, has made the area hazardous for pedestrians, complicating their efforts to move safely through the construction zone. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

One held over deaths on Ijtima ground

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gazipur

Police early yesterday arrested an accused in a case filed over the killings of three devotees at the Biswa Ijtima ground in Tongi on December 18.

Zia Bin Kashem, 45, was arrested in Chattogram, said Iskander Habibur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Tongi West Police Station with which the case was filed.

The accused is now with the Tongi West Police Station.

He will be sent to Gazipur court today, said police.

Kashem is known as a supporter of the Tablighi Jamaat faction aligned with Maulana Saad Kandhalvi, claimed the OC.

Earlier, police arrested Muaz bin Nur, spokesperson of the faction, in the case on December 19.