

# Manpower export to Malaysia likely to reopen soon

As Malaysia is likely to reopen its labour market to Bangladeshi workers soon, a syndicate has become active to re-establish its reign, which had monopolised the recruitment process since 2016 and also brought upon the ban, say Bangladeshi recruiters. They also demanded that the market should be open to all agencies instead of a small number of agencies under the syndicate. Officials of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), the apex body for migrant worker recruiting agencies in Bangladesh, alleged that after hectic diplomatic endeavour, all the processes to reopen the Malaysian labour markets are almost complete. But a syndicate linked to Malaysian Bestinet Sdn Bhd, which earlier obtained monopoly over the process and allowed only 10 agencies of their choice to send workers to Malaysia, has become active again to control the market.

According to reports published by Malaysian newspaper The Star last year, it cost the 10 agents less than RM 2,000 (Tk 40,000) to take each Bangladeshi to Malaysia.

However, the newspaper investigation revealed that Bangladeshi workers coming to Malaysia for job paid RM 20,000 (Tk 400,000) each to the syndicate since 2016, when it monopolised the recruitment, for work permit approvals and flight tickets. Before the introduction of SPPA (Sistem Perkhidmatan Pekerja Asing), an online system for recruitment of foreign workers, by Bestinet Sdn Bhd, Bangladeshi workers only paid between RM 7,000 and RM 8,000 (Tk 140,000 – Tk 160,000) each to go to Malaysia.