

'92 km canal re-excavated'

BSS, Dhaka

A total of 92 kilometres of canals were dug or re-excavated at a cost of Tk 404.84 lakh during the fiscal 2005-06, Water Resources Minister Hafizuddin Ahmed told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday. He said this replying to a question from Jatiya Party legislator Mashiur Rahman Ranga (Rangpur-1).

RMG workers

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Yesterday's clash ensued as the workers found the factory, located at Sena Kalyan Complex in Tongi, closed.

Yesterday morning, the workers found the factory at Sena Kalyan Complex in Tongi closed and came to know that the authorities declared lay off at about 2:00am the same day.

The workers immediately started demonstrating in front of the factory and took to the streets demanding opening of the factory.

Police asked them not to obstruct the streets but they continued the demonstration from Tongi College Road to Tongi bridge and later sat on the street near the complex at around 10:00am.

Some of the demonstrators threw brickbats on the vehicles, prompting the law enforcers to swoop on the workers, said Sub-Inspector Munir of Tongi Police Station.

Later, the Sena Kalyan authorities came up with the assurance to negotiate with the factory authorities to settle the matter.

Additional police and armed police battalion have been deployed at the factory after police dispersed the agitators.

Earlier the factory authorities decided to move the factory to Gazipur but the workers refused to work there and demanded payment of the arrears before shifting, sources said, adding that the authorities' refusal to pay the arrears created tension among the workers.

Following the workers' agitation, the authorities sat in a negotiation meeting in the presence of local administration and police and agreed to pay the arrears.

On Saturday, the authorities fired a female worker and paid only the current month's salary although she worked for four months. This angered the workers and triggered a protest the same day, said a source.

After an emergency meeting, the authorities declared lay off at 2:00am and locked the factory.

None of the factory authorities were available for comments.