



Water remains stagnant on the road adjacent to the Fulbaria Hawkers' Market for hours even after little rainfall due to poor drainage system.

PHOTO: STAR

SAVAR TEXTILE MILLS Release of workers demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different trade unions and human rights bodies yesterday demanded immediate arrest and trial of foreigners responsible for torturing the workers of Ring Shine Textile Mills in Savar.

These organisations staged demonstrations, held rallies, brought out processions at the Export Processing Zone areas in Savar and at Mukhtangon in the capital protesting the police torture and harassment of workers and demanding immediate release of those arrested.

Karmojibi Nari (KN), a women's rights organisation, condemned the police attack on the workers.

Addressing a rally at EPZ area, KN leaders demanded the arrest of the officers responsible for the incidents.

Bangladesh Garments Sramik Trade Union Kendra formed a human chain at Mukhtangon demanding proper treatment of the injured.

Leaders and workers of the Kendra also held rallies at the EPZ gate and Palli Bidyut Bazar protesting the police torture and harassment of the workers.

They also demanded withdrawal of cases against the workers.

The authorities of Ring Shine Textile Mills said they filed two cases with Savar Police Station on July 17 and 21 against over 1250 workers who had been agitating for pecuniary benefits leading to disruption of production for last few days.

They said mill workers beat an officer on July 16 and police arrested two of them on July 18 after the filing of a case against 36 workers on July 17.

After hearing the news of arrests, workers staged demonstrations which were dispersed by police who charged baton on the workers leaving over 200 injured.

Police also picked up over 70 workers from their houses on Tuesday night.

In addition to police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) was deployed at the EPZ area where tension was running high.

'Make migration process for female workers transparent'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh missions abroad should play an effective role in checking abuse of female migrant workers and strengthen the capacity to provide legal support to them in case of abuse, migration experts and women leaders said at a meeting on Thursday.

Although some incidents of physical and sexual abuses took place in the Middle Eastern countries, the wholesale allegations of sexual abuse of female workers do not reflect the reality, they said.

They also called for a transparent migration process for the female workers to check such incidents as mostly undocumented and unskilled workers face abuse.

The Bangladesh Migration Development Forum organised the meeting at the Dhaka office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Shahidul Haque, IOM regional representative for South Asia, suggested that the Bangladesh missions should make more interactions with the civil society and the government departments in the labour receiving countries and appoint legal advisors to deal with abuse cases.

Abdul Alim, executive member of Bangladesh International Recruiting Agencies (Baira), said female workers pay less for their migration but send more remittances. On the other hand, this financial strength gives them social empowerment, he added.

Education and training for the female workers can help them avoid being abused, he said.

Alim also said that if the government restricts the migration of female workers, the incidents of trafficking in women and undocumented migration will go up.

Presently, about three lakh Bangladeshi women are working in Saudi Arabia, but the government puts the figure at 18,919, he added.

"This means that a large number of female migrant workers are undocu-

mented who mainly face abuse as they cannot complain to the mission in case of abuse."

Aysha Khanam, general secretary of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, called on the government to take initiative to send the female workers abroad as semi-skilled and skilled workers.

Salauddin Akbar, deputy secretary of the Ministry of Expatriate

Welfare and Overseas Employment, TIM Zahid of Action Aid, Ferdousi Begum of Asian Development Bank, Rina Roy of PLAGE, Sumayia Islam of Bangladesh Obhivashi Mohila Sramik Association, Shirin Huq of Naripokkho also spoke at the meeting.



PHOTO: STAR

Sammilita Sangskritik Jote stages a token hunger strike at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday to press for the 19-point demand of cultural activists.

Mother Tongue Enriching Movement formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mother Tongue Enriching Movement, an organisation aiming to promote the use of the Bangla language and remove the anomalies in the language, has been launched in the city recently, says a press release.

An 11-member committee of the organisation has been formed with Qazi Md Zaikr Hossain as its president and Rezaul Amin as the general secretary.

Other office-bearers are Krishnadul Ghosh - vice-president, Lemon Awal - assistant general secretary, Gazi Md Monirul Islam - organisational secretary, Bipu Chowdhury publicity and publication secretary, Jotiyar Rahman - treasurer and Nasima Khatun, Mizanur Rahman and Md MainulAhsan Badal - members.

Seminar on 'judicial reforms' begins today

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of judges and lawyers from India will participate in a six-day seminar on 'judicial reforms' beginning here from today.

The Bangladesh Bar Council under the auspices of All India Bar Association (AIBA) and the Indian Council of Jurists invited the delegates. The seminar will discuss important issues, besides the law relating to terrorism.

Prabakaran, representing the Bar from South India, said the trip will further foster the relationship between India and Bangladesh.

Dhaka Zoo to introduce 'animal talk show'

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Dhaka Zoo is going to introduce a special programme titled 'animal talk show' next month to generate interest among children and juveniles regarding animals and birds.

"The developed countries have introduced such programmes much earlier to create awareness among people about animals, environment and ecology," Dhaka Zoo Curator Mafizur Rahman said.

Selim Iqbal, veterinary doctor of the zoo, has taken special training on the 'animal talk show' in London.

Selim hoped that the we would be able to introduce the programme by August.

For the 'animal talk show', the zoo authorities have already imported required machinery, including sound systems, from London.

Under the programme, trained officials will brief visitors about the animals, birds and reptiles and entertain questions from the visitors.

To provide a clear idea about the necessity of animals, the officials will stage drama and show how the deforestation is taking place, how animals are being killed by poachers and how animal resources is being lost, Selim said.

Negative impacts of all these evil activities will also be focused. The children will be taught why endangered species should be protected.

The Dhaka Zoo authorities will also launch a "zoo education cell" for research on animals and birds shortly, another source said.

The concerned ministry has been asked to make the cell a full-fledged institute, the source added.

Indian HC refutes Odhikar report

UNB, Dhaka

The Indian High Commission on Thursday admitted that Border Security Forces (BSF) had killed 265 Bangladeshis during the last five and a half years.

Refuting an Odhikar report that said 394 Bangladeshis had been killed by BSF during the period.

A press release said the Odhikar report is exaggerated. It said most of the killings involved violence against BSF personnel, while the others for breach of the border fence.

Form nat'l govt to free country from misrule of present regime

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion have called for strengthening the movement to form a national government to free the country from the misrule of present regime.

The discussion was organised by Colonel Taher Sangshad at Dhaka University Teachers Students Centre Auditorium on Thursday to mark the 29th death anniversary of Colonel Taher Bir Ullam.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu said a national government is needed to retrieve the spirit of the liberation war.

He said former president Ziaur Rahman killed Taher in a pre-planned way to capture power and to establish communalism in the country.

"The treachery that Zia started by killing Taher has reached its culmination under the period of Khaleda-Nizami alliance government," he added.

"A stable economic base is important to establish democracy. Under the economy of looting, democracy cannot flourish," said Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim.

Sangsad Treasurer Mushtaq Hussain read out a keynote paper

titled 'Democratic State: Politics of Colonel Taher' at the discussion.

The speakers said the military-public upsurge that gripped the country on November 7 to oust capitalism could not be successful as Zia controlled it in a brutal way by killing the freedom fighters.

Presided over by sangsad President Kamal Lohani, the discussion was also participated by General Secretary Advocate Ruhul Kuddus, Prof Akmal Hossain of Dhaka University, BSD Convenor Khalequzzaman, and Dr Beena Shikdar.