

PEOPLES JUTE MILLS
Workers refuse
partial payment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Tension is simmering among the workers of the shuttered Peoples Jute Mills in Khulna over the payment of gratuity and provident fund as they refused to accept any partial disbursement.

The laid off workers are demanding one-off payment of their remaining dues while the government turned down paying off any provident fund and said gratuity payments will be made in instalments.

The government has already paid the workers 15-week wage arrears and other financial benefits, starting from August 7.

Over 200 workers demonstrated in front of the mill's main gate yesterday in protest at the bid for partial payments.

They demanded the chief adviser's intervention to facilitate full payments of gratuity and provident fund, which climb upwards of Tk 23 crore.

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House help
strangled
in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenage domestic help was strangled at Dakhin Khan while a salon employee was stabbed to death at Shyampur in the capital on Friday.

Police said the domestic help, identified as Ramiza Khatun alias Fatema (16) of Goalundo upazila in Rajbari, was found dead with a scarf tied around her neck at the house of her employer Mafizur Rahman at Dakhin Khan on Friday.

Her body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy. The morgue sources said they had found evidence that the girl was strangled.

Police arrested Sumon, 25, a garment factory worker, in this connection.

Fatema's uncle Shahid Mollah

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Second phase of
voter listing
begins in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

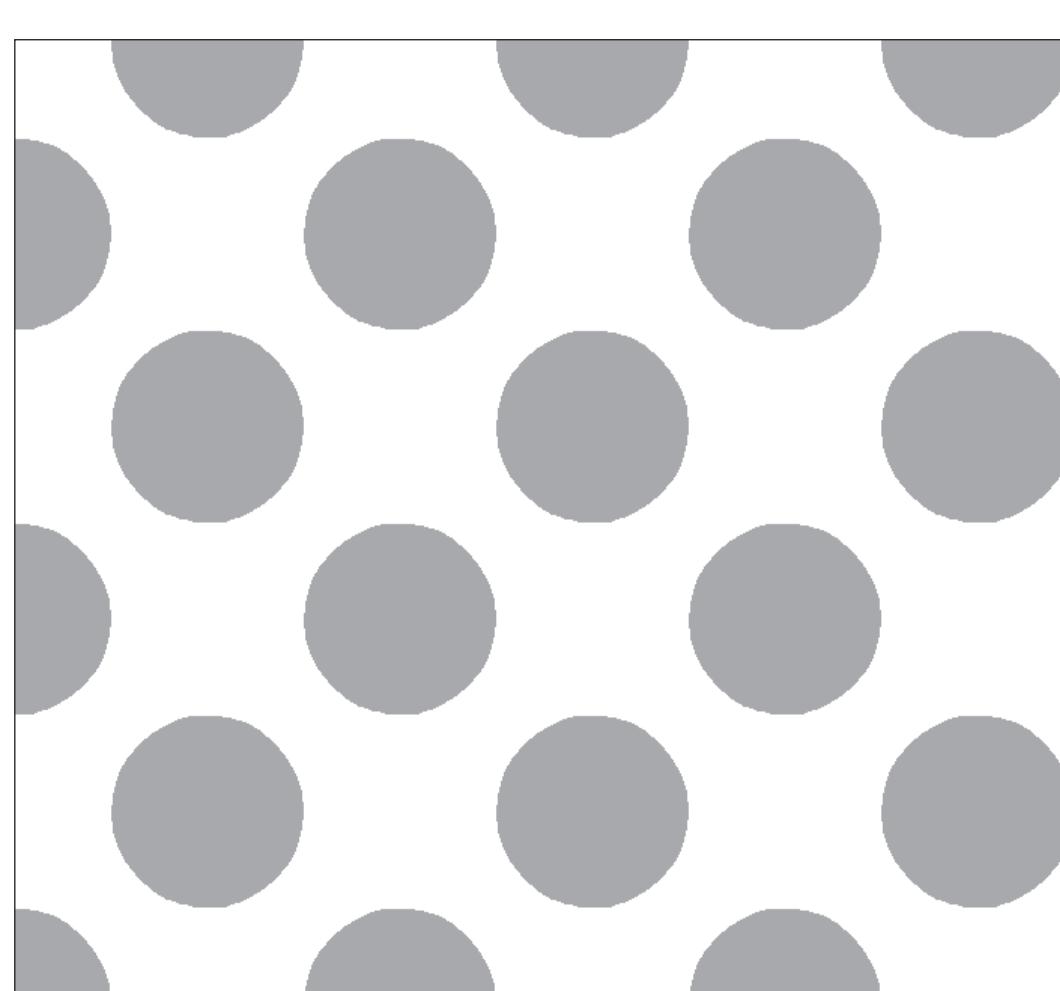
The second phase work on preparing the voter list with photographs and national ID card started in Khulna City Corporation (KCC) yesterday.

The first phase work on voter registration started at 31 centres in the KCC on August 26 and continued until August 30. Under the first phase, 71,447 people have registered their names as voters in wards 5, 11, 13, 14, 16 and 17.

Work on the second phase began at 32 centres in wards 7, 8, 12, 18, 19 and 24 and will continue until Tuesday. Some 68,399 people are expected to register their names as voters.

According to the election officials, the third phase work on voter listing will begin in the city on Wednesday and will continue until September 9.

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Huge amount of fish are caught dead as water mixed with toxic wastes enters fish enclosures with receding of floodwater at Trimohony on the outskirts of the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

DU CRISIS
BBC Sanglap
calls for talks
with teachers,
students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should resolve the Dhaka University crisis through discussions with teachers and students before the public universities and colleges reopen, participants at a BBC Sanglap said yesterday.

They warned that the situation might get more complicated otherwise.

The BNP chairperson's adviser Brig Gen (retd) ASM Hannan Shah, the Awami League central committee member Prof Abu Sayeed, former adviser to the caretaker government Sultana Kamal and former Dhaka University vice chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Miah spoke at the dialogue held at Bangladesh-China Friendship

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ICC-B cautions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to narrow export basket, Bangladesh will face heightened competition in readymade garment (RMG) export as the EU and US restrictions on Chinese garments are withdrawn from January next, International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICC-B) president cautioned yesterday.

In this new competitive scenario, Mahbubur Rahman said, sustaining the current high export growth

will be an uphill challenge in the coming years. "We should, therefore, not only look for alternative markets for our readymade garments but at the same time diversify our products," he said.

To be competitive, Bangladesh must have a long-term strategy to create an industrial base, which will not only help support export diversification but will also help establish a smooth supply chain and control the present price spiral that is seriously affecting the low and

middle income groups, the ICC-B president said.

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PHOTO: STAR
BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, centre, flanked by party leaders places wreaths on the grave of party founder, late president Ziaur Rahman, on its 29th founding anniversary yesterday.

POST-FLOOD CROPPING
Tangail farmers
show resilience

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar A Chowdhury last night left for Russia for a three-day visit, as Dhaka is looking to resuscitate Dhaka-Moscow relations with this first high-level visit from Bangladesh since the Russian Federation emerged from the dissolved Soviet Union in 1991.

"I am looking forward to my Russian visit which I hope will open many doors for us. It promises to be a ground-breaking one," said Iftekhar, who went to Russia at the invitation of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

The Russian minister was Iftekhar's counterpart during his stint as the permanent representative to the UN.

"Russia can be a vast market for

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British general
blasts US
strategy in Iraq

AFP, London

The head of the British Army during the 2003 invasion of Iraq has launched a fierce attack on the United States over its running of the troubled country, a newspaper reported yesterday.

General Sir Mike Jackson branded US post-invasion policy "intellectually bankrupt" and said its then defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, was "one of the most responsible for the current situation in Iraq."

The retired chief of the general staff added that the US's wider approach to tackling global terrorism is "inadequate" because it places too much emphasis on military power at the expense of nation-building and diplomacy.

His comments come at an embarrassing time for the British

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DU provosts
for quick release
of 5 detained
teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka University Provost Committee yesterday demanded immediate release of the five arrested academics and asked the vice chancellor (VC) to prevent arrests without specific charges.

Seventeen provosts of DU halls made these demands at a meeting with VC SMA Faiz yesterday. They also suggested that the university be reopened as soon as possible after ensuring the security of the DU teachers, students and staff.

The provosts and senior teachers also briefed the VC about the

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Luxury car
seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ramna police yesterday seized a Pajero V6 vehicle from the house of a friend of detained Jatiyatabdil Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Azizul Bari Helal in the city's Maghbazar area.

Police suspect that the jeep belongs to the detained JCD leader.

Acting on a tip off, policemen led by Sub-inspector Masud Rahman raided the house of Helal's friend Mezbah Rahman at Maghbazar and seized the jeep worth about Tk 40 lakh from the garage of his house.

Police said they are verifying documents to determine its owner.

Joint forces arrested Helal from his Maghbazar residence on August 23.

Prayer Timing

September 2		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-23	6-26
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

60 Taliban killed
in Afghan battle

AP, AFP, Kabul

Afghan police and foreign forces killed around 60 suspected Taliban fighters, many in the region where the insurgents recently released a group of South Korean church workers they had been holding, authorities said yesterday.

Meanwhile, South Korea's foreign minister defended direct negotiations with the Taliban to free the hostages amid concern the move violated international principles and could spur more abductions.

The US-led coalition said yesterday at least 60 rebels were killed in new strikes against extremist militants, including in villages near Pakistan where insurgent leaders were said to have taken refuge.

The militants were targeted in three major engagements Friday, one of them in the central province of Ghazni where the Taliban last week released 19 South Korean aid workers they had held hostage for six weeks.

More than 20 were killed in an air

and ground assault on compounds in northeastern mountains about six kilometres (four miles) from Pakistan, it said in a statement.

A coalition soldier was wounded and 11 suspects arrested in the raid in Nuristan province, it said.

Police attacked a group of Taliban late Friday who were planning to strike security forces in the central Afghan province of Ghazni, killing 18 and arresting six others, said provincial police Gen. Ali Shah Ahmadai.

Taliban militants abducted 23 South Koreans in Ghazni district six weeks ago. They killed two male hostages, released two women last month and the final 19 were freed last week after the Taliban held unprecedented negotiations with the government in Seoul. They left Afghanistan Friday and were due in South Korea early Sunday.

South Korean Foreign Minister Song Min-soon on Saturday emphasized that South Korean negotiators were tasked with protecting the "innocent lives of

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