

FAO FOOD SUMMIT

Small farmers slam 'empty policies'

AFP, Rome

Dozens of farmers' groups kicked off a forum in Rome yesterday to coincide with the UN food agency's summit on food security with an impassioned plea for an overhaul

Jute mill workers demand payment of arrears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Workers of state-owned Platinum, Crescent and Star Jute Mills in Khulna demonstrated in front of their respective administrative offices yesterday to press home their eight-point demand.

The workers were trying to bring out processions with plates and kitchen utensils in their hands demanding food, shelter and payment of all arrears, but police intercepted them.

The agitating workers held rallies at 11:00am where they declared their decision to lay siege to the offices of the project directors and taking out a procession tomorrow.

The rallies were addressed by Sohrab Hossain, Sadek Ali and Hafizur Rahman of Crescent Jute Mill, Gazi Mashur Rahman, Abul Bashar and Liakat Hossain of Star Jute Mill and Ashraf Hossain, Jahangir Hossain and Hossain Ali of Platinum Jute Mills.

Security measures were beefed up in the Khulna industrial belt to avoid any untoward situation.

of world agricultural policies.

"We have empty plates and we have empty policies," said Paul Nicholson of La Via Campesina, an international farmers' movement.

"Let us protect and defend a farming system that feeds the world and cools the planet," he said at an open-air news conference held across the street from the Rome headquarters of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

The FAO is holding a summit from Tuesday to Thursday at which world leaders will discuss food security as runaway prices have sparked riots across the world.

"On the eve of the High-Level Conference on World Food Security in Rome, farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples and non-governmental organisations have declared a People's State of Emergency," forum organisers said in a statement.

"Free trade policies have seriously damaged the food system over time, leading to the food crisis that we're facing today," said Maryam Rahmanian of Iran's Centre for Sustainable Development.

Alvaro Santin, representing the Movement of Landless Brazilians, said: "We reject the call of the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation for further liberalisation of international trade."

"These very policies have flooded our countries with cheap food, undermined our food sovereignty and devastated our ability to produce food for ourselves."

Rahmanian, who is on the forum's steering committee, told AFP: "The UN doesn't have anything new to say. It's obscene that the food crisis is being used to push stronger on policies" promoting large-scale agriculture, biofuels and the use of GMOs and pesticides.

She said that peasants' groups and NGOs had had a working relationship with the FAO since the 1996 World Food Summit here, but that the groups had become increasingly "marginalised."

"The FAO as an institution in itself is the only forum that could potentially be democratic," she said, noting that each member state has an equal vote.

2 electrocuted in Dinajpur

UNB, Dinajpur

A septuagenarian man and his grandson were electrocuted at Bhuipara village in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Labu Barman and his grandson Limon, 4.

Police said the man and his grandson came in contact with the torn electric wire when they went to a nearby cropland from their house for grazing cows.

On information, police recovered the bodies and sent those to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsies.

4-day public debate workshop begins today

DU CORRESPONDENT

With a view to orienting students with the art of public speaking and techniques of debate, a four-day debate and public speaking workshop begins at Dhaka University (DU) today.

Centre for Debate and Public Communication (CDP) of Bangladesh and the International Debate Education Association (IDEA) of the Netherlands and the USA will jointly organise the programme where students from a number of schools, colleges and universities of the city will take part.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz will inaugurate the workshop as the chief guest at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan auditorium in the morning while Marcin Zaleski, director of training, IDEA, will be present as special guest.

The sessions on June 3 will be held at HURCO International School and Manarat International School and College.

American International University and Ideal School and College will be the venues for the sessions on June 4 while the sessions will be held at Summerfield International School on June 5.

The Daily Star is the media partner of the workshop.

One to die for killing wife

UNB, Bagerhat

A court here yesterday awarded a man to death sentence for killing his wife.

The condemned convict is Ajay Daku, who is tried in absentia.

The court also acquitted nine people as allegations brought against them were not proved.

According to the prosecution, Ajay Daku of Ataikani village in Sadar upazila killed his wife Monika Rani and hid her body in a pond on March 13, 2004 after she filed a case against him under Dowry Act.

Her body was recovered from the pond at Shanpukuria village in Kochua upazila on March 17, 2004. A case was filed against 10 people, including Ajay Daku.

After examining 14 witnesses, Judge of Additional District and Sessions Judge Court-2 M Rezaul Karim pronounced the verdict.

Russian-made SMG recovered, one arrested

CU CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered a sub-machine gun (SMG), three rounds of bullet and two magazines and arrested one person from Kumi Bil area at Anwara upazila in Chittagong yesterday afternoon.

The arrestee was identified as Mohammad Akhter Uddin, 32, son of late Raza Mian of the same area. On information, a squad of the elite crime busters raided the house of Akhter at the Kumi Bil area at around 5:00pm and arrested him, sources said.

According to his confessional statement, the Rab men recovered a Russian-made 9mm SMG, three rounds of bullet and two magazines digging the floor of his house, said the sources.

Akhter was brought to Rab-7 headquarters at Patenga in the port city for quizzing. A case was filed with the Anwara Police Station in this connection, they added.

DU film society executives

DU CORRESPONDENT

The executive committee of Dhaka University Film Society (DUFS) was formed for the year 2008-09 at its annual general meeting held at TSC recently, says a press release.

Shami Suridh and Mahbud Sagor have been selected president and general secretary of the 27-member executive committee of the society.

Other officer bearers are: Quazi Shahreen Haq -- vice president; Umme Salma Lisa -- assistant general secretary; Imdadul Zahid -- finance secretary; Saiful Haider Muhammad Hasan -- publicity and publication secretary; Nahad-ul-Kasem -- information and research secretary; Arafat Hasan -- international affairs secretary; Mehnaz Ferdous -- office secretary; Enamul Majid Khan Siddique -- study circle secretary.

Executive members of the committee are: Imran Firdous, Depannita Kundu, Shahed Hasan Chowdhury, SK Shafayat Hossain, Abdullah Al Sariyat Ullah, Arnab Sen, Ripon Kumar Das, Sheikh Al Faisal, Kamal Mohammad Naser, Saraban Tahura Ithar, Asaduzzaman Raju, AIM Latiful Bari, Siddhartha Goswami Prabal, Tanmoy Shuvro, Shampa Rani Roy, Ani Antonia Baroi and Abid Rabbi.



Counsel to Sheikh Hasina Advocate Abdul Mannan Khan, left, and lawyer to Khaleda Zia Abdul Razzak Khan, right, brief journalists outside the special court on Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan premises in the city yesterday.



PHOTO STAR

SMOKING

22pc above 40 affected with chronic pulmonary diseases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Lung Foundation and University of Development Alternative (UODA) jointly organised a seminar on UODA campus in the city yesterday commemorating the World No Tobacco Day.

World Health Organisation (WHO) also assisted the programme.

Speakers at the seminar titled 'Youth free from Tobacco' said, "Some 21.6 percent people aged above 40 in the country are affected with chronic pulmonary diseases

related to smoking. So it is a must to stop using tobacco right now, as smoking never brings any positive result for our health."

Quoting the research finding of Human Development Research Centre (HDRC), the speakers also said that eight diseases that are caused by smoking claim 16 percent of the total death cases every year across the country.

The seminar was presided over by President of Bangladesh Lung Foundation Prof Mohammad Rashidul Hasan while UODA Vice

Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed was present as special guest.

Prof Emajuddin urged the students and faculty members of UODA, which has already been announced a smoking-free campus, to come forward to resist smoking.

President of the university Mujib Khan, Secretary General of Bangladesh Lung Foundation Dr Mohammad Ali and Technical Officer of World Health Organisation Dr Sohel Reza Hossain also spoke.

10 injured in Bhasani varsity clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

At least 10 people including a teacher and four students of Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology (MBUST) were injured in a clash between the students and the outsiders near the campus at Santosh in Tangail yesterday.

Sources said Azim, an outsider, used to hang around with his girl friend on the campus which Sirajul Islam, a student of Department of Computer Science and Engineering, protested.

Azim beat Sirajul as he protested his hanging around in the campus.

After beating Sirajul, Azim took shelter at a shop near the campus when some angry students came out hearing the news of beating of a university student.

Then Azim's friends came promptly to the spot flowing his phone call and locked in clash with the students.

When the news of clash spread on the campus, several hundred students came out and chased the outsiders.

Delwar Hossain, a teacher of Department of Computer Science and Engineering, was also hurt due to attack of the outsiders when he came forward to control the students.

Later, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

The injured students -- Sohel, Asif, Nasim and Mamun were treated at Tangail General Hospital.

Prof Nurul Islam, registrar of the university, said they would take initiatives to hold a meeting with local elites on the issue.

Road crash kills 2

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Two people were killed in a road accident on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Mirzapur upazila in the district yesterday.

One of the deceased was identified as Abdul Razzak, 35, a timber merchant, but the identity of the other victim could not be known.

Police and witnesses said the accident took place when a Dhaka-bound timber-laden speeding truck from Rangpur hit a sand-laden standing truck at Deohata at around 10:00am, leaving the unidentified person, who was on the timber-laden truck, killed on the spot.

Seriously injured Razzak succumbed to his injuries on the way to Mirzapur Kumudini Hospital.

Call for budgetary allocation for RMG workers' housing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the ready-made garment (RMG) workers yesterday demanded the government to allocate fund in the next budget for building up a housing project for workers.

They also made the call to start permanent rationing system for RMG workers and also fix minimum wage in connection with the market price.

Garment Sramik Sangram

Parishad (GSSP), a platform of 10 garment workers' organisations, demanded this at a press conference at its office in the city's Paltan area.

In a written statement, Convener of the GSSP Mokhlesur Rahman said, "Labourers of the country are losing their work efficiency as they live in unhealthy houses and do not get healthy foods."

"The government should ensure housing facilities for them to ensure an efficient workforce for

the country's highest foreign exchange earning sector," he added.

The GSSP leaders said the government should provide every worker with essential commodities at a half rate of the existing market price by introducing permanent rationing system.

Member Secretary of the Organisation Baharat Sultan Bahar and members Shaidul Islam Shabuj, Shamim Imam and Dr Shamsul Alam also took part in it.



Convener of Garment Sramik Sangram Parishad (GSSP) Mokhlesur Rahman speaks at a press conference at its office in the city yesterday.

Dhaka-financed works to start

FROM PAGE 1

Rakhain State of Myanmar. Apart from bearing the cost of the 2-km road inside the country, Bangladesh will finance construction of the 23-km road in Myanmar.

On March 10, Finance and Planning Adviser ABM Azizul Islam approved Tk 4.97 crore for a feasibility study to be implemented between April 1 and September 30 this year, sources in the communications ministry said.

Eight firms have responded after the Roads and Highways Department (RHD) invited expressions of interest for the consulting job.

By June 5, five to seven firms will be retained for pre-qualification selection. They will be issued request for proposal (RFP) by June 20 and will be asked to submit the

proposals in 45 days.

"After a combined evaluation of the technical and financial bids, the ministry will select one firm and sign contract with it by September," Tajul Islam Chowdhury, a joint secretary of communications ministry, told The Daily Star on Friday.

The feasibility study and cost estimation are expected to be finished by March next year.

Asked about the probable cost of the project, Tajul Islam said, "We have to wait to know this till the selected firm submits the estimation."

On an average, construction of a kilometre road costs Tk 8-10 crore, he added.

The Planning Commission has asked the communications ministry to send it the design and details

of the project before inviting international tenders for the construction, sources said.

After conceiving of the project in April 1994, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on April 4, 2004 and each formed two separate taskforces for technical and financial matters.

According to the alignment decided by one of the technical taskforces, a total of 130-km road needs to be constructed to connect with Myanmar national highway. Starting from Gundum in Cox's Bazar, the highway will link the Myanmar national highway at Chatwa via Tambru-Bawlibazar.

Though Bangladesh kept on pushing Myanmar to sign a deal for beginning the construction of the road, the latter took a long time in this regard.

LEAD AUDITOR COURSE ON ISO 14001:2004 (ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM)

For the Survival of Mother Earth!

Date: 21st June 2008 to 25th June 2008. Registration by 15th June 2008.

Bureau Veritas (Bangladesh) Private Limited

Contact Person: Syed Anwar Hossain. Email: anwar.hossain@in.bureauveritas.com

Tel: 01714 069177, 01714130292, 01713061250, 02-8143387, 031-2525403

'Wage social movement against smoking'

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed has called for waging social movement across the country against smoking to save the new generation from the harmful effects of tobacco.

He made the call when a delegation of ADHUNIK, a leading anti-tobacco organisation, led by its founder president Prof Nurul Islam, called on the president at Bangabhaban yesterday.

President Iajuddin underscored the need for inclusion of different articles in secondary level textbooks highlighting the harmful effects of tobacco.

He also laid emphasis on banning smoking on the educational campuses.

The delegation apprised the president of their activities.

The delegation included Amanullah Khan, Coalition Against Tobacco (CAT) president and ADHUNIK senior vice-president; Yusuf Harun Bhuiyan, managing director of Hamdard (Waqf) Bangladesh; Al Islam, editor of Tobacco News; and Prof Shir Farhad, director (Administration), Hamdard.

Secretary to the President M Sirajul Islam and President's Press Secretary Abdul Awal Hlawader were present.

Ctg RMG workers

FROM PAGE 16

Witnesses said around 3,000 workers of the three factories of Azim Group started demonstration at around 9:00am as the owners allegedly refused to meet their demands, including introduction of basic-pay system.

The clash ensued when police started firing rubber bullets and lobbing teargas-shells on the agitating workers to disperse them, the workers alleged.

Police fired over 100 rounds of rubber bullet, sources said.

The workers said that the factory owners assured them of giving a decision regarding their demands on Friday, but they failed and requested the workers for another meeting yesterday morning.

But police in separate raids on Friday night arrested 10 workers of the factories at their houses, thus forcing them to take to the street, they alleged.

Police also arrested 10 workers from the spot yesterday.

Of the injured, Mahmudur Rahman, 22, Sujun Das, 28, Majeda Akhter, 25, Parvin Akhter, 20, Lucky Akhter, 19 and Krishna Das, 20, with bullet wounds were taken to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

Around 12 platoons of police were deployed for bringing the situation under control.

At one point, some of the workers set fire to tyres at different places inside the BSCIC zone and started pelting the police with stones.

The workers also put up barricades on the Bahadurhat-Kalarghat road at Moulabhi Pukurpur area at around 11:30am that caused a severe traffic gridlock.

Police with the help of Bangladesh Rifles, Rapid Action

Battalion (Rab) and Armed Police Battalion (APBn) dispersed the agitating workers.

Later, four trucks of army personnel also reached the area.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chandganj Police Station Nurul Islam said that the workers of the three factories did not work on Friday demanding introduction of basic-pay system in the salary structure alongside the piece-rate system.

On May 6, workers of the same factories went on a rampage and vandalised over 50 vehicles in the industrial zone demanding an increase in their share of piece-rate on each garment product and breakfast allowances. After a meeting, the owners met their demands.

The new demand of introducing the basic-pay system was raised a few days ago, sources said.

Rashed, a worker of Global Specialised Ltd (Unit-2), said that the workers could not enjoy any overtime bill in the piece-rate system in absence of basic-pay and many of them feel that they are getting lower salary during the off-peak hours.

Contacted, BGMEA First Vice President MA Salam termed the demands placed by the workers illogical.

He said, under the piece-rate system each worker of the sweater factories usually draws Tk 4,000 to Tk 6,000, whereas the minimum basic salary of a worker of a ready-made garments (RMG) factory stands at Tk 1,200, comprising 60% of the minimum wage scale of Tk 1,663.

"As per the labour law, there is no scope for demanding both the basic-pay scale and piece-rate system in the salary structure at the same time," the BGMEA leader added.

NAVANA Residential Projects

@

- Baridhara
- Gulshan
- Banani
- Dhanmondi
- DOHS
- Lalmatia
- Uttara
- Moghbarar
- Shantinagar
- Bashabo
- K. M. Das Lane
- Wari

Navana Real Estate Ltd.

House No. 35, Road No. 9/A (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka.

Tel: 912 1602 (Hunting)

Cell: 01819 411 226, 01819 411 227, 01819 411 228, 01713 424 255, 01713 424 246, 01713 424 247, 01713 424 248, 01817 036 501, 01817 036 502, 01817 036 503, 01817 036 504, 01817 036 505, 01817 036 506, 01817 036 507, 01817 036 508, 01817 036 509, 01817 036 510, 01817 036 511, 01817 036 512, 01819 411 225

Fax: 880-2-911 8292 E-mail: info@navana-realestate.com

www.navana-realestate.com Member REHAB