

## RMG factory

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Apparels Ltd at Agrabad commercial area near BGMEA regional office turned violent around 8:00am when the authority declined to pay their last month's salaries.

Around 10:00am when the factory managing director (MD) announced his inability to pay the arrears and asked for few more days, the workers flew into rage.

They vandalised different machineries including over 40 sewing machines and window-panes and damaged most of the Thai-glass partitions of office rooms in presence of police and BGMEA officials.

The rampage paused for a while when the BGMEA officials from its nearby regional office arrived but it started again around 1:30pm when the MD once more expressed his inability.

The workers said they were facing acute financial crisis as the factory authority had been making such delay persistently every month for last two years.

Sanwara Begum, 30, single-mother of an eight-year-old daughter and a sewing operator of the factory for two years, said she had to vacate her house as she failed to pay rent.

Rajab Ali, 18, another sewing operator, said he had been staying at one of his friend's shanty as his house-owner forced him out for the same reason.

Showing his injured hand, a quality control worker, alleged that some factory officials beat him on April 20 when he demanded his arrears.

MD of the factory Nazmul Hossain told The Daily Star that he incurred a loss of Tk 70 lakh in March 2008 as one of his buyers cancelled his order. He is still struggling and trying to recover the loss, he added.

Nazmul said they had also lost few more contracts recently as they failed to meet the delivery deadline due to acute power shortage in Chittagong. The MD burst into tears watching the workers vandalising his valuable machineries.

Assistant Commissioner (AC) Nirmalendu Bikash

Chakrabarti of Double Mooring Zone said police mediated negotiations between the owner and workers regarding the problem several times but the factory owner could not keep his word.

The workers came out on the street demanding their salaries a few months ago but police calmed them down, he added.

BGMEA Secretary Md Mainuddin said the factory has been constantly suffering with the problem. It might ultimately be closed as the owner sustained huge losses, he feared.

The workers finally left the factory around 2:30pm after the MD held a meeting with police, BGMEA officials and workers representatives and promised to pay the last month's wages on April 28 and this month's wages on May 11.

## Myanmar vows

**FROM PAGE 16**  
ministries in 1998, BDR sources said.

Nasaka also warned Bangladesh of 'not making excesses regarding construction of the embankment,' said a source.

The meeting was held at Dhekhobonia Nasaka outpost in Mondou at noon. Cox's Bazar 17 Rifles Battalion Commander Lt Col Sakawat Hossain led the Bangladesh delegation while No. 3 Sector Commander Major UWang Yiled Nasaka.

After the meeting Sakawat Hossain said, Nasaka presented a one-page paper written in English with 'some conditions' before them but no signature on behalf of Bangladesh government put on it, adding, 'I think the paper is fake.'

He said Bangladesh side proposed to suspend the construction of the dam for 15 days for more talks but Nasaka did not agree.

Nasaka informed the BDR delegation that they are constructing the embankment through Mondou municipality but not by their (Myanmar) army. Nasaka said barbed fence wire would also be hung over the embankment.

## Shamim Osman

**FROM PAGE 1**  
AL leader's main source of income was 'commission' from jhut (garment waste) traders in BSCIC area and Narayanganj town, said sources.

Besides, he would make huge bucks from extortion in the transport sector.

Shamim and his family fled the country after the BNP-led four-party alliance came to power in October 2001.

He returned home in 2006 only to leave again shortly before 1/11.

Despite being wanted by the Interpol, police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), he got back to the port town after the grand alliance swept to power in the December 29 general election last year.

As his moveable property was confiscated during the caretaker government, he is now living in his in-laws' house.

The former MP however denied all the allegations against him. He said, 'If anyone can prove a single allegation against me, I will quit politics forever.'

He said as the High Court has stayed all the cases and no court has issued arrest warrant against him, there's no bar to his movement.

Shamim also claimed the cases were filed to harass him as he has been vocal in demanding trial of the war criminals.

About his being wanted by the Interpol, he said, 'It was the former BNP state minister for home who had my name put on the Interpol website.'

'It's unfortunate that the website does not display any photographs of Bangabandhu's killers and the war criminals.'

Bishwas Afzal Hossain, superintendent of police (SP) in Narayanganj, told The Daily Star, 'Shamim Osman is no more wanted by them in any case as he has obtained stay orders from the High Court.'

Citing HC orders, Lt Col Sazzad Hossain, commanding officer of Rab-11, said, 'He is beyond our reach now.'

## Boro purchase

**FROM PAGE 1**  
low price of rice. Razzaque said they would fix the price on April 26.

'Farmers will be harmed if we buy Boro anything lower than Tk 20 per kg, which will benefit the millers not the farmers,' said the food minister adding that the price would be fixed preserving the interests of both—farmers and the consumers.

He said the government is giving priority to farmers as they immensely contribute in the country's economy and the gross domestic product (GDP). 'The government has decided to buy Boro from this point of view.'

Terming agriculture a very important sector, Razzaque said they would also keep an eye on whether the ongoing global meltdown put any adverse impacts on the sector.

Earlier Razzaque met Dutch ambassador to Dhaka Bea Ten Tusscher at his office and discussed many challenges of the new government including food security and water management.

Tusscher said Bangladesh should immediately formulate a policy on water management for better agricultural production. He offered his government's assistance in this regard.

## Khaleda

**FROM PAGE 1**  
'Soon after the assassination of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman on May 30, 1981, pursuant to a decision of the government, a lease in perpetuity was executed between the President of Bangladesh and our client in consideration of a yearly rent for the aforesaid property demised in favour of our client,' Barrister Khokon said in the notice.

He said the notice served on Khaleda Zia for vacating the residence is 'illegal, mala fide and without jurisdiction.'

It said the lease of Khaleda Zia's cantonment house was duly registered on July 13, 1981 with the office of the sub-registrar, Tejgaon, Dhaka.

Since then, for over 27 years, she has been residing at the house and enjoying it with her family.

Khokon told newsmen at his Supreme Court Bar Association chamber that a writ petition will be filed with the High Court challenging the legality of the government's notice if it is not withdrawn.

**SOHEL TAJ WARS**  
The government will not tolerate any movement launched over the BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's cantonment house issue, State Minister for Home Affairs Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj said yesterday.

The government will face it in a 'democratic way' since it has 63 percent mandate, he said briefing newsmen at his ministry after a meeting on road safety.

The state minister accused main opposition BNP of trying to create chaos in the name of movement and by exploiting the issue.

## JS probe finds

**FROM PAGE 16**  
However, the sub-committee disclosed that former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar appointed 42 peers for standing committees after the eighth parliament was dissolved. They were paid salaries during the two-year tenure of the last caretaker government.

It also revealed that Sircar recruited a total of 256 third and fourth-class employees flouting the law.

At least 42 personal assistants attached to various standing committees, were paid salaries for eight months after the eighth parliament was dissolved on October 27, 2006.

'He (Sircar) ignored the then prime minister Khaleda Zia's decision of not recruiting any third-class employees for a certain period in any government office as the former speaker had appointed several third and fourth-class employees for parliament,' he said.

Chunnu said Jamiruddin Sircar also violated the quota rules in recruiting employees for parliament.

'He (Jamiruddin Sircar) appointed 153 fourth-class employees. Of them, he was allowed to recruit only 2 persons from his district. But we found that he recruited 40 staffs from his district Panchagarh violating the district quota rules,' Chunnu said.

'Besides, of the 103 third-

## Indian envoy

**FROM PAGE 16**  
relationship between the two neighbouring countries 'should be very cooperative' and the relations would further improve if the outstanding problems between them were resolved.

The unanimity of views came when the Indian high commissioner made a courtesy call on the BNP chairperson and former premier at her Gulshan office yesterday evening.

After the meeting that lasted about two hours from 7:05pm, BNP Chairperson's Foreign Affairs Adviser Shamsur Mobin Chowdhury, who was at the meeting, told newsmen that India and its people believe that if a 'stable and strong society builds up in Bangladesh, it would be good for all.'

Both sides also hoped that 'parliament should be active so that all can give and listen to one's opinion.'

The high commissioner expressed sorrow over the killings that took place at the BDR headquarters, Shamsur said.

Speaking at the joint briefing, the envoy said, 'The leader of the opposition has an important role to play in parliament.'

He said what they discussed encompassed what is happening in India and Bangladesh and in its surroundings. He termed his meeting with Khaleda 'excellent and productive talks.'

Asked whether the matter of eviction of Khaleda from her cantonment residence came up during the meeting, the Indian high commissioner said, 'We did not discuss internal issues.'

Replying to couple of questions regarding recent surprise visit by Indian external affairs secretary to Dhaka, he said it was nothing secret and everybody knew it and it was a formal visit. This matter of visit was also not discussed in the meeting, he added.

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain, BNP chairperson's adviser Reaz Rahman and the Indian deputy high commissioner were also present at the meeting.

## 22 held

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Rab handed them over to Kotwali Police Station after daylong interrogation.

The arrestees are Abdul Jalil Howladar, 60, and his wife Sultana Razia, 55, Salama Akhter, 15, Tania Akhter, 16, Marzina Akhter, 12, Zannatul Ferdous, 18, Khadiza Akhter, 17, Aleya Khatun, 48, Anwara, 60, Amena Begum, 65, Shahida Khanam, 18, Hosneara, 40, Rahima, 9, Irina Jahan Tanzila, 19, Monira Akhter, 18, Rahima Khatun, 50, Ayesha Khatun, 45, Rabeya Sultana Minu, 18, Marzina Begum, 60, Shahida Khatun, 50, Nurbanu Khan, and Mohsina, 14.

An 18-member team of Rab-8 led by Lt Commander KM Mamunur Rashid in the morning arrested Jalil and two women at a house near Rab's Rupatoli office. Later, the team rounded up another 19 while holding a meeting at a house at New Circular Road.

The arrestees claimed that they are Tablighi Jamaat members and came to attend Tablighi and Talim from different areas of the region and other districts.

Safura Khatun, 71, a resident of New Circular Road of the city, told The Daily Star that Rab detained them from the house of Rashu Begum.

Rashu resides in Dhaka and Tablighi Jamaat is using her house for last 10 years, Safura said.

Hayatul Islam Khan, assistant commissioner of Barisal Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star that the arrestees would be produced before judicial magistrate court under section 54 of CrPC for their suspicious movements.

class employees he had appointed, 17 were from his locality,' said the sub-committee chief.

Chunnu said the former speaker appointed several security guards for the parliament without following the age-limit mentioned in the job circular.

'He (Sircar) appointed a security guard named Arzu Akhtar aged 39 while age limit for applicants was 30 as per the job circular.'

'There are employees in parliament who were appointed on master roll basis 18 years back but their jobs are yet to be made permanent. But he (Sircar) made permanent the jobs of several employees who were recruited on master roll basis during his tenure.'

An all-party parliamentary probe body was formed on March 19 to investigate the allegations of corruption, misuse of power and financial anomalies against Jamiruddin Sircar.

The main committee on April 13 formed three sub-committees headed by SK Abu Bakr, Shahjahan Khan and Mujibul Haq to enquire into the matters thoroughly.

## CUFL's ex-MD

**FROM PAGE 16**  
not aware of the arrival of the two engine boats carrying the deadly consignment.

'As soon as Mobin Hossain Khan, the then assistant security officer of CUFL, informed me of the offloading I directed him to beef up the security and made a phone call to the then BCIC Chairman. However, he did not receive the call,' said the sources quoting the confessional statement.

'Later in the next morning I met the industry secretary at breakfast and informed him of the matter and also the BCIC chairman of the offloading over phone,' he said.

'At this, the BCIC chairman rebuked me for not informing him of the matter at night at any cost,' he claimed in the confession.

'Later, the BCIC chairman and the industry secretary talked about the matter over phone. But, I did not receive any instruction from them and was kept inactive,' defended the former CUFL MD in the confessional statement.

Sources said, before making the statement under 164 Mohsin Talukder also gave the same statement to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) investigators at Chittagong divisional headquarters.

Meanwhile, two witnesses—Sheikh Ahmed, a Kodomtali based transport broker, and Salim Ullah, an accountant of the Dewanhat overbridge adjacent to Greenways—also gave statements under 164 yesterday.

They identified arrested NSI Field Officer Akbar Hossain Khan as the person who hired seven trucks and a crane from Greenways Transport Agency, which were to carry the seized consignment.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rob recorded their statements, sources said.

Meanwhile, the IO of the case ASP Muniruzzaman of CID filed a petition at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) court, Chittagong yesterday praying for a fresh 10-day remand for Akbar Hossain as they failed to extract anything from Akbar in his earlier two-day remand that ended last Tuesday evening.

## ASK worried

**FROM PAGE 16**  
detailed explanation of each death and access of rights organisations including National Human Rights Commission and the media to Pikhana to see the condition of BDR men there.

The organisation in a press release said that authorities concerned could not avoid the responsibility of such deaths in custody as it was made public through media that dead BDR jawans had bruises and torture marks on their bodies.

Issuing a press release from the BDR headquarters confirming unnatural deaths of some BDR jawans is a positive gesture but it is not adequate to remove the anxiety and suspicion in people's minds, the release said.

The government must take strong measures to dispel the suspicion and concern in people's mind over the unnatural deaths, it added.

The press release issued by BDR headquarters on Wednesday confirmed that on between March 9 and April 16 a total of 16 BDR jawans died. Of them four jawans committed suicides, six died of cardiac arrest and six others died of other diseases.

The press release also expressed concern over the statement of a sepoy Harunur Rashid before the court saying that he was tortured for a week by Rapid Action Battalion.

## 73 killed

**FROM PAGE 16**  
southeastern Baghdad, defence and interior ministry officials told AFP.

Security has improved dramatically in Iraq over the past two years as local and US forces crack down on al-Qaeda fighters, but attacks targeting security forces are still common in some parts of the country, including the capital.

In Muqaddiyah northeast of Baquba, at least 45 people were killed and 55 wounded in the attack on the restaurant, which was packed with Iranian pilgrims on their way to the Shia holy city of Karbala south of Baghdad.

Baquba is capital of the ethnically and religiously mixed Diyala province, which still sees sporadic attacks despite the security improvements elsewhere in Iraq.

In southeastern Baghdad, another 28 people were killed in the attack on a police patrol in the mixed district of Al-Riyadh, officials said.

'Iraqi police were distributing aid to displaced families when a suicide bomber blew himself up,' an interior ministry official said. 'At least 10 police and five children are among 28 dead.'

## Rajasthan win

**FROM PAGE 16**  
After starting the over with a wide, Kamran, 18, dismissed former Indian captain Sourav Ganguly for 46 with his fifth ball.

With two needed to win off the last ball, Ishant Sharma hit a fierce drive which was parried by Royals captain Shane Warne at cover. The batsman ran one but Sharma was run out attempting the winning run.

Kamran was entrusted with the 'super over' and was struck for three successive fours by Chris Gayle as the Knight Riders scored 15 for the one, with Gayle caught off the last ball.

Sri Lankan mystery spinner Ajantha Mendis, who took two for 19 in four overs in the match, bowled the 'super over' for Kolkata but Pathan hit him for 6, 2, 6, 4.

Chasing a modest total of 150 for six, Kolkata twice seemed headed for victory. Gayle was in imperious form as he hit 41 off 33 balls before falling to Warne.

The pendulum swung to the Royals with 44 needed off 25 balls.

But Ganguly slammed a no-ball from Munaf Patel for six, then made use of the free hit off the next ball to thrash another six.

With the target reduced to 31 off 24 balls, Ganguly seemed set to take Kolkata home before chasing a wide ball from Kamran to be caught behind.

Pathan, who top-scored with 42 in his team's full innings, was named man-of-the-match.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
Rajasthan 150-6 in 20 overs (Yusuf Pathan 42; Ishant Sharma 2-36, Anureet Singh 2-35, Ajantha Mendis 2-19) and Kolkata 150-8 in 20 overs (Chris Gayle 41, Sourav Ganguly 46; Shane Warne 2-25, Kamran Khan 3-18)

## Bibiyan power

**FROM PAGE 16**  
processing the tender for Bibiyana power project. Last year the Cell selected a bid of the Malaysian-Korean consortium Powertek with a power price offer almost double the tariff of the past large private power projects.

The cabinet of the caretaker government later rejected that bid.

Powertek had offered a 22-year levelised tariff of 4.53 cents per kilowatt hour (or an unit), in stark contrast to the 1998 AES Haripur 360 mw power plant that charges a tariff of 2.72 cents per unit. In local currency, Powertek's offer stands at Tk 3.15 per unit while other developers now implementing smaller power projects seek a price of Tk 2.28 to Tk 2.79 per unit.

Last year's bidding had also ran into a controversy when the Cell disqualified Summit Power from participating in the bid.

The 2007-08 Bibiyana tender initially attracted pre-qualification bids from AES, Chevron, Powertek, Kepco, Summit and Malaysian YTL. Summit was conditionally selected at first, but then in January 2008 it was arbitrarily disqualified, followed by the YTL.

Summit, which had previously qualified for the Sarajan 450 mw power project, repeatedly requested the Cell to reconsider its decision, but in vain.

Soon after the pre-qualification bid, Powertek and Kepco announced a merger as a single bidder and AES announced its withdrawal. Finally when the bid submission date arrived in July, Powertek appeared as the lone bidder.

## Tamil Tigers

**FROM PAGE 16**  
The rebels have been repeatedly accused of using civilians as human shields. Around 100,000 people have managed to escape rebel-held territory this week, and it was unclear how many were still trapped in the war zone.

Civilian casualties are rising rapidly in Sri Lanka's war zone despite the exodus of tens of thousands as government troops close in on separatist rebels, a medical relief group said yesterday.

The UN Security Council expressed concern Wednesday at the plight of the civilians trapped along Sri Lanka's northeastern coast and asked the Tamil Tiger rebels to lay down their arms, renounce terrorism and join talks to end the nation's 25-year civil war.

It also urged the government to allow international agencies access to those affected by the fighting.

The UN Security Council president also said on Wednesday that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) must now give up.

'We demand that the LTTE immediately lay down arms,' said the current council president, Mexico's UN ambassador Claude Heller, following an informal discussion on Sri Lanka by the council.

There was no immediate comment from the rebels.

The military says 102,790 civilians had escaped the conflict zone from Monday through Wednesday evening, but tens of thousands are believed to still be there.

The medical aid group Doctors Without Borders said a growing number of badly wounded civilians suffering

from blast injuries and gunshot wounds were arriving at a hospital near the zone.

'We've been seeing very severely wounded patients, the numbers of patients have increased rapidly over the last three or four days,' Dr. Paul McMaster, a surgeon for Doctors Without Borders, said in an interview released by the Swiss-based group.

He said the 450-bed hospital now has more than 1,700 patients many housed on the floors, in corridors and outside and is close to being overwhelmed.

President Mahinda Rajapakse has told the rebels to give up, but has ruled out any amnesty for rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, who has led a ruthless decades-long battle for a separate Tamil homeland.

The Sri Lankan army has made major advances in recent months, beating back the guerrillas who at one time controlled more than one-third of the island, and the government insists the rebels are now all but finished.

On Wednesday, two senior Tiger officials -- including their spokesman and main contact with the outside world, Velayudam Dayanidi -- surrendered to government forces.

This was seen as a blow to the LTTE, whose members are under orders to commit suicide by cyanide capsule rather than give themselves up.

But as the army has slowly pinned the guerrillas down in the narrow strip of coastal jungle, the international spotlight has focused on the fate of civilians caught up in a conflict that has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives.

## SC blocks ways

**FROM PAGE 1**  
The lawyers concerned said following the SC order, Omar must have to go to jail on surrender before the trial court since it has no jurisdiction to grant him bail in this case at this stage.

The other convicts, who were sentenced in absentia but did not surrender to the trial courts and are not in jail, must have to surrender to the courts concerned, and suffer the same fate as Omar's, the lawyers said, adding that the High Court (HC) now cannot grant bail to such convicts.

ACC's panel lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan yesterday told The Daily Star that more than 100 people were convicted in the corruption cases and about 70 of them were tried in absentia. But most of the 70 convicts did not surrender to the trial courts in connection of the cases against them.

He said the apex court re-established that a fugitive-convict has no locus standi to seek bail from the HC on surrender without exhausting the trial court process.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) M Enayetur Rahim said he will very soon convey the SC order in the case of Omar to the special bench of the HC dealing with 16 bail petitions of 12 persons who were also sentenced in absentia.

He said all the courts in the country including the HC are bound to comply with any decision, order or verdict of the SC as per provisions of Article 111 of the Constitution.

The AAG however said the convicts have right to move fresh bail petitions before the HC after surrender to the trial courts.

Barrister Rafique-Ul-Huq, a counsel for some convicts including Omar, told newsmen that he would suggest his clients to surrender before the trial courts concerned following the apex court order.

A division bench of the HC on February 23 delivered split verdicts on 16 bail petitions filed by 12 convicts. The presiding judge of the HC bench, Syed AB Mahmudul Huq, directed the petitioners to surrender to the trial courts within eight weeks and then seek bail from the HC. During this period, he said, the petitioners cannot be arrested or harassed.

But the other judge, Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury, ordered the 12 to surrender to the trial courts immediately to serve the sentences already handed down on them.

## Indian polls

**FROM PAGE 16**  
The phase decided the electoral fate of Congress General Secretary Rahul Gandhi, scion of the Nehru-Gandhi family, in Amethi constituency, Uttar Pradesh, Agriculture Minister and NCP President Sharad Pawar in Madhya Pradesh, BJP leader Sushma Swaraj in Vidisha in Madhya Pradesh, Lok Janashakti Party chief Ram Vilas Paswan in Hajipur in Bihar and Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath in Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh.

The states which went to polls today are Andhra Pradesh, 20 parliamentary seats, Assam, 11 seats, Bihar, 13, Goa, two, Karnataka, 17, Jammu and Kashmir, one, Maharashtra, 25, Madhya Pradesh, 13, Orissa, 11, Uttar Pradesh, 17, Jharkhand, eight and Tripura, two seats.

The assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, where Congress is seeking to retain power, and Orissa, where Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is looking for a third successive tenure in office, were also completed yesterday. Elections to legislatures in these two states were held along with parliamentary polls.

Stakes are high for both Congress and BJP in the states that went to polls yesterday as the results there could indicate which way the wind is blowing across the country's political landscape.

Congress main aim is to retain its strength in Andhra Pradesh where the party had won 29 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in 2004 and its allies TRS and Left parties had secured another seven. But this time, Congress is without any allies and waging a tough battle against TDP-TRS-Left combine.

Congress is also hoping to

hold on to its 2004 show in Jharkhand and Assam besides looking to improve its performance in BJP-ruled Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, governed by Mayawati-led BSP, BJD-ruled Or